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Social Protection & Jobs

Migration in Myanmar: from Diagnostic to Policy Solutions

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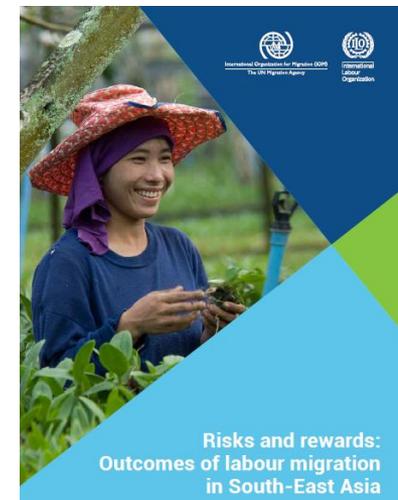
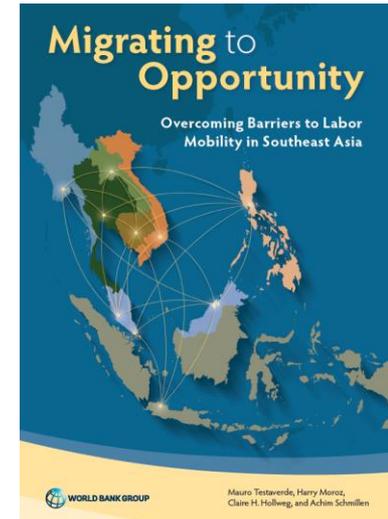
In Myanmar, jobs are not always located where workers are, leading to significant migration for work

- **10% of the total Myanmar population live abroad, while 20% are internal migrants**
 - Myanmar is the largest sending country of migrants in ASEAN (33% of the total)
- **Most migrants move in search of better economic opportunities**
 - 98% of those who migrate internationally do so for jobs
- **Strong push and pull factors are behind migration from Myanmar to its most important destinations**
 - Age and wage gaps with neighboring countries are strong drivers

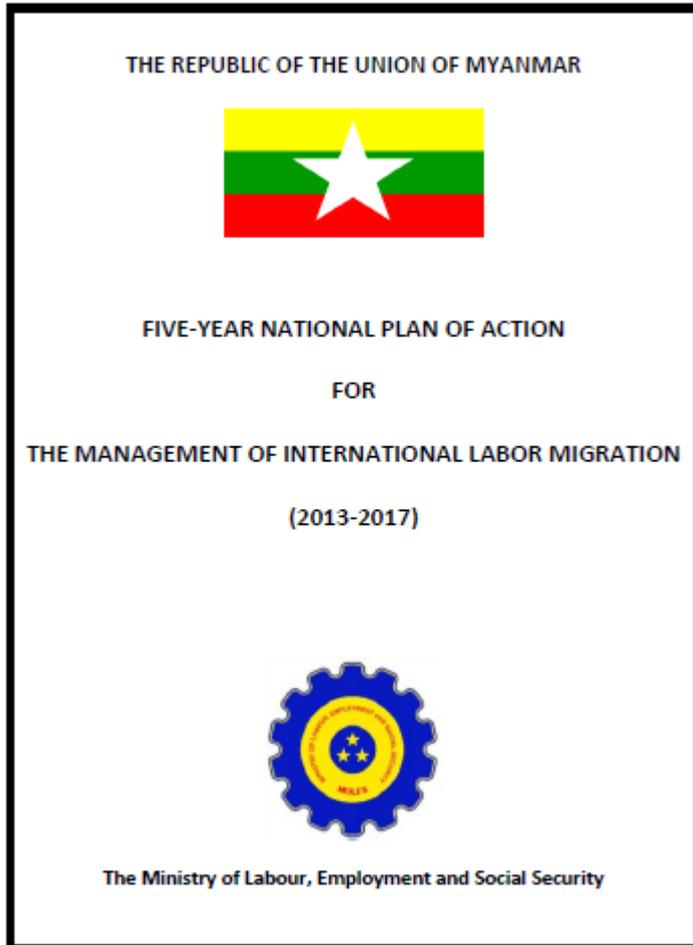
	2014 Census	
	#	% of MMR migrants
Thailand	1,418,472	70%
Malaysia	303,996	15%
China	92,263	5%
Singapore	79,659	4%
Other	49,774	2%
US	37,577	2%
India	17,975	1%
Korea	14,592	1%
Japan	7,597	0%

Recent work shows that Myanmar workers face several challenges

- A large share of Myanmar migrants abroad is **undocumented**
 - Irregular channels are less costly but more risky
- **Recruitment costs are high:**
 - Migrants from Myanmar to Thailand can pay recruitment costs equal to a quarter of their yearly income
 - Those to Malaysia can pay costs equal to nearly a third
- Myanmar migrants have **low levels of education** and thus are less competitive than migrants from other countries
- Migrants **gain skills while abroad** but in most cases they **do not utilize them when they return**
- While remittances account for at least 5% of GDP, **most migrants use informal channels to remit**



Myanmar is committed to protecting migrants, while strengthening the development impacts of migration



- **The Government of Myanmar has taken steps to maximize the benefits of migration**
 - In 2013, the GoM launched the 1st **National Plan of Action (NPA) (2013-2017) on international migration** and is currently drafting the 2nd NPA (2018-2022) focused on:
 - Empowering and protecting migrant workers
 - Increasing the development impact of migration
 - Governance and administration
 - *Protecting the rights and harnessing the productivity of all, including migrant workers is one of the strategies identified in the **Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan** to build *Human Resources and Social Development for a 21st century society* (Pillar 3).*

The WB team is currently supporting the GoM via a labor mobility technical assistance task

▪ Objective of the task

- Provide **technical assistance** to the Government of Myanmar to **identify, prioritize, and implement interventions** that will maximize the benefits of **domestic and international labor mobility** and minimize its risks

▪ Activities and World Bank comparative advantages

- Inputs to the development of the **2nd National Plan of Action** for the Management of International Migration → Convening power
- **Assessment of institutional and legislative frameworks, and current programs** to identify potential areas for improvement → International experience
- **Analysis of current challenges and opportunities** faced by migrants → Analytical rigor
- **Feasibility assessment and operational guidelines** for promising policy interventions → Operational focus

Main findings of our activities so far

Administrative procedures can be simplified

- Internal and international migrants must complete many procedural steps, some of which are not linked to better migration management
- E.g. Regular migration to Thailand under the MOU can take up to 89 days and 25 steps
 - This may require investment in an integrated information system to expedite processes and facilitate communication among parties

Simplification may allow for reorientation

- Labor Exchange Office (LEO) staff seem to spend significant time on administration and less time on employment facilitation
- E.g. Data input tasks seem to take time away from other activities such as job matching services and information provision
 - This may require capacity building for LEO staff

Main findings of our activities so far

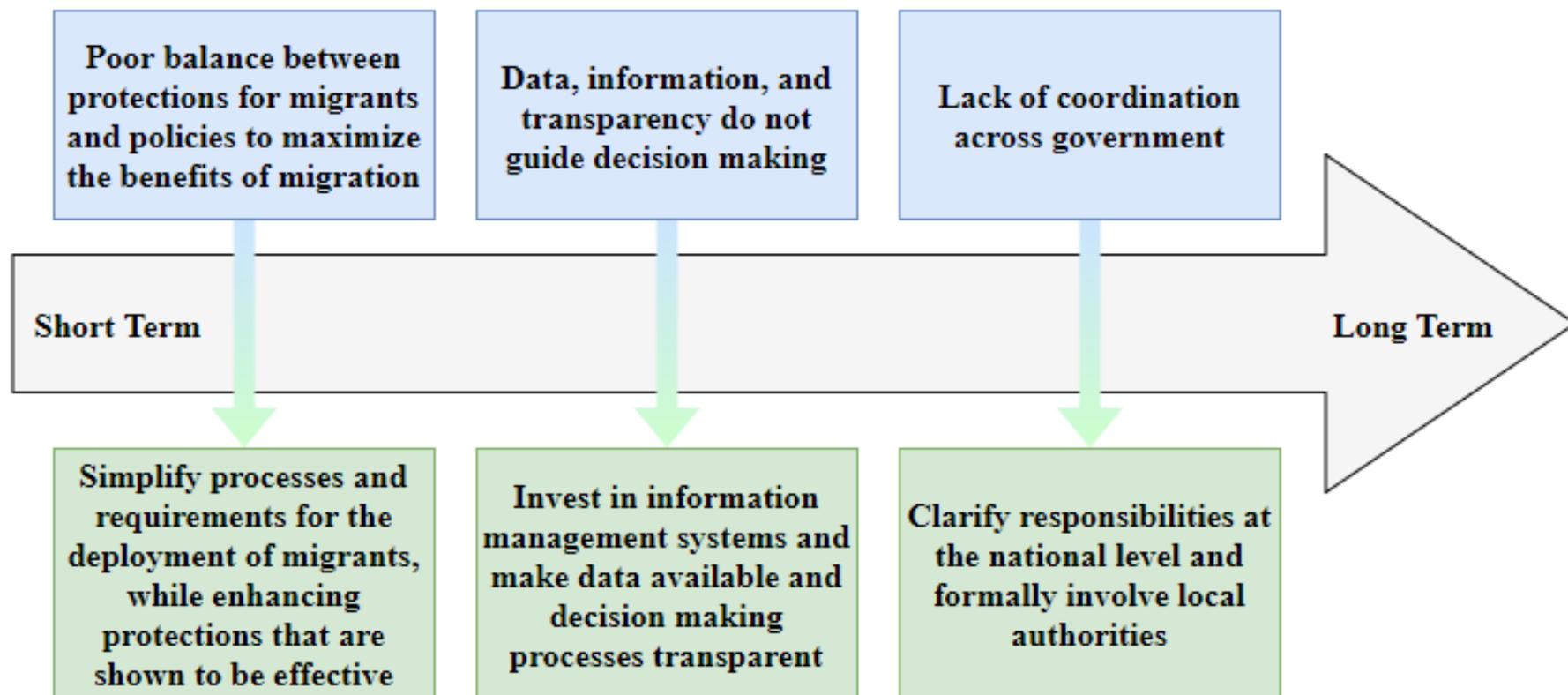
Better services could increase the value of regular migration

- The procedures associated with regular migration do not seem to provide value to migrants
- E.g. Low uptake of some of the services provided to regular migrants
 - This may require linking services to regular migration, such as support for return migrants, portable benefits, and assistance for families left behind

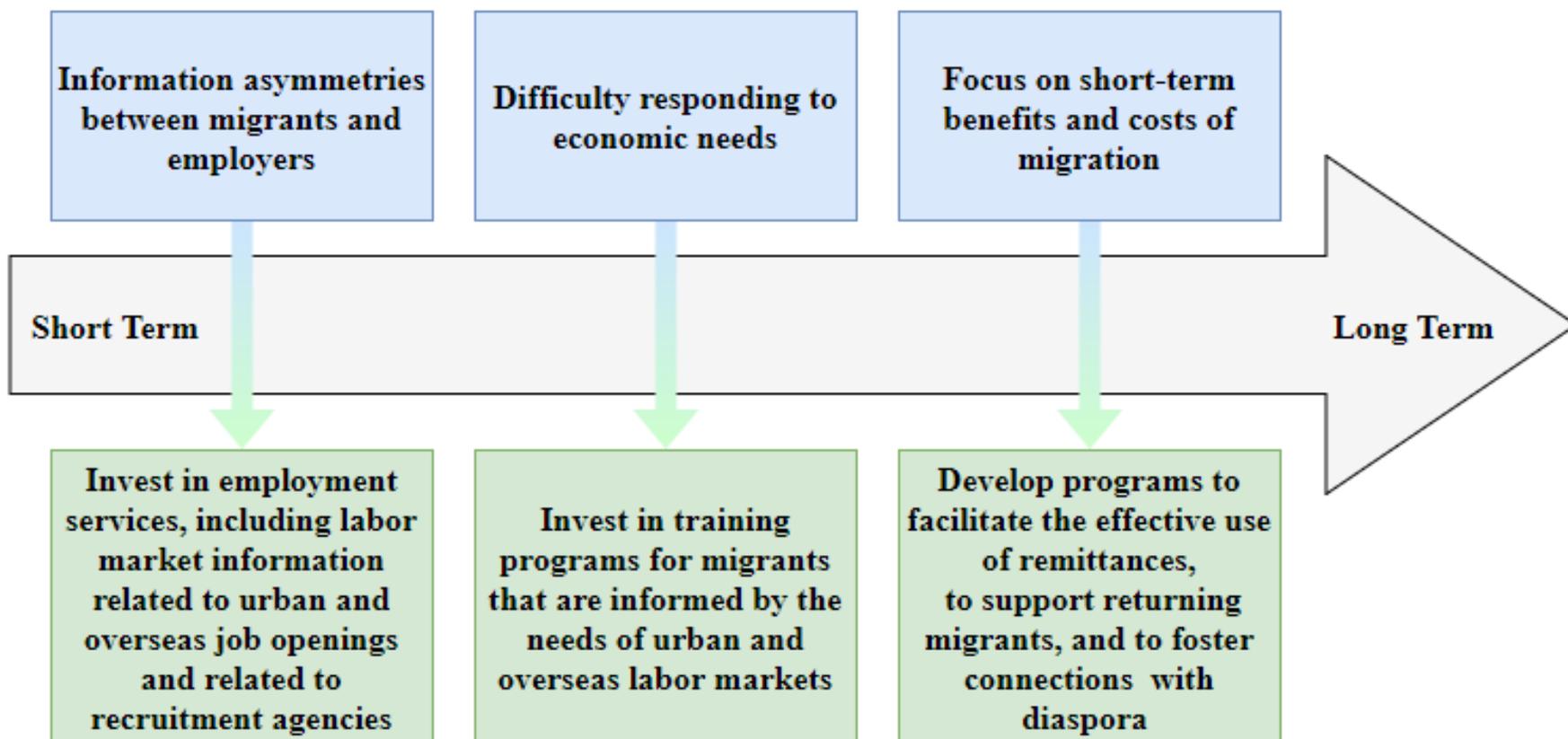
Service provision could be strengthened at the local level

- People face costs, sometimes significant, to access services that are only available outside their village or town
- E.g. Pre-departure training, migration documentation are centralized in Yangon
 - This may involve interventions to increase access to services and information

Key problems and potential solution areas: Governance of the system



Key problems and potential solution areas: Migration services





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Thank you

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