POST-ACTIVITY REPORT

Stakeholder consultation meeting

Driving an Integrated Research Framework for the Well-being and Productivity of Migrant Workers in Thailand Amidst the Heat and Air Pollution Crisis.

7 July 2026 | Best Western Hotel, Chatuchak, Bangkok



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1. Background and Rationale

Thailand is increasingly facing the impacts of climate change, particularly rising temperatures and extreme heat, which pose significant risks to public health. Prolonged exposure to extreme heat can cause heat-related illnesses, including heatstroke, severe dehydration, and acute kidney failure. High temperatures can also worsen existing chronic conditions, particularly cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. These health risks are further compounded by the urban heat island effect, which causes temperatures in major cities to be significantly higher than in surrounding areas. In addition, Thailand has experienced persistent fine particulate matter (PM2.5) pollution over the past decade, with air quality in several major cities reaching critical levels. The combined effects of extreme heat and air pollution contribute to an increasing burden of heat-related illnesses, respiratory diseases, and other chronic conditions, placing additional pressure on the national healthcare system.

Migrant and domestic migrant workers are among the population groups most vulnerable to these environmental and health risks. Many work in physically demanding occupations, particularly construction and agriculture, where prolonged outdoor exposure increases their risk of heat-related illnesses and other occupational health problems. Thailand has over 4.9 million registered migrant workers, alongside a significant number of informal and low-skilled workers. Many face limited bargaining power to negotiate safer working conditions or adequate protection from environmental hazards. Language barriers, limited access to healthcare services, and inadequate welfare benefits further restrict their ability to obtain health information, understand environmental risks, and adapt to changing climatic conditions. Without appropriate protection and support, these challenges may affect workers' health and well-being, reduce labour productivity, and ultimately undermine the country's economic stability.

Despite the growing urgency of these issues, research integrating climate change, public health, population dynamics, and migration in Thailand remains limited. Existing studies often examine these dimensions separately, providing an incomplete understanding of how environmental changes affect the health, working conditions, and mobility of different population groups. This fragmented knowledge limits the ability of policymakers and relevant agencies to develop targeted and effective responses. An integrated research framework is therefore necessary to identify knowledge gaps, establish connections between these interrelated issues, and generate empirical evidence to inform policy development. Such a framework can also support the development of a more resilient and equitable public health system that addresses the needs of vulnerable populations amid increasing environmental and climate-related challenges.

In response to these challenges, the Mahidol Migration Center–Joint Research Unit (MMC-JRU), under the Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University, has developed an interdisciplinary research framework linking climate change, health, and migration. The framework aims to provide a foundation for understanding the interconnected impacts of environmental changes on migrant populations and to guide future research and policy development. To ensure that the framework adequately reflects the actual conditions and challenges faced by affected populations, the research team seeks input and recommendations from relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, academics, civil society organisations, and other concerned parties. Their feedback will be used to refine the framework, strengthen its comprehensiveness, and ensure its relevance to the Thai context. Ultimately, the research aims to generate practical, evidence-based policy recommendations that can guide relevant agencies in developing

appropriate interventions and improving the health, protection, and quality of life of migrant workers in a sustainable manner.

2. Activity Overview

Activity title: Stakeholder Consultation Meeting
Theme: Driving an Integrated Research Framework for the Well-being and Productivity of Migrant Workers in Thailand Amidst the Heat and Air Pollution Crisis
Date: Tuesday, 7 July 2026
Time: 08:30–13:00 hrs.
Venue: Best Western Hotel, Chatuchak District, Bangkok

Target participants:

1. Government agencies
2. Academics and researchers
3. International organisations
4. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
5. Labour representatives and migrant worker organisations
6. Private-sector representatives and employers
7. Other stakeholders working on migrant workers' health, occupational safety, climate change, and air pollution

Activity format:

1. Two panel discussions
2. Two rounds of roundtable discussions
3. Presentations of discussion outcomes
4. A concluding session summarising the meeting's key points

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Organiser: Mahidol Migration Center–Joint Research Unit (MMC-JRU), Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR), Mahidol University.

Objectives:

1. To present an integrated research framework addressing the health risks and productivity challenges faced by migrant workers in Thailand due to heat exposure and air pollution.
2. To gather feedback and recommendations from stakeholders to ensure that the proposed research framework reflects the needs and circumstances of migrant workers and relevant organisations.

3. To facilitate knowledge exchange with national and international experts on climate change, occupational health, heat exposure, and air pollution affecting migrant workers.

3. Participants

The meeting was designed to bring together approximately 25 participants from government agencies, academic and research institutions, international organisations, civil society, labour organisations, and the private sector. The actual attendance was approximately 15 participants, representing different sectors involved in migrant workers' health, occupational safety, climate change, and environmental health.

A total of seven participants completed the evaluation questionnaire. Among the respondents, three represented government agencies (42.9%), two were academics or researchers (28.6%), one represented an international organisation (14.3%), and one represented a non-governmental organisation (NGO) (14.3%).

The organisations identified in the questionnaires included the Department of Disease Control, Department of Employment, International Labour Organization (ILO), Rak Thai Foundation, and WZB Berlin Social Science Center.

Although the number of evaluation respondents was lower than the actual meeting attendance, their responses provided feedback from government, academic, international, and civil society perspectives. The evaluation findings presented in this report are therefore based on the seven completed questionnaires rather than the total number of meeting participants.

The 12 respondents comprised the following categories:		
Participant category	**Number of respondents**	**Percentage**
Government agencies	3	42.9%
Academics / Researchers	2	28.6%
International organisations	1	14.3%
NGOs	1	14.3%
Total	**7**	**100.0%**

4. Activity Proceedings

4.1 Opening Remarks

The meeting commenced with opening remarks by representatives of the Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR), Mahidol University. The remarks highlighted the importance of addressing the interconnected challenges of climate change, air pollution, migrant workers' health, and labour productivity in Thailand.

4.2 Policy Framework and Strategic Implementation

Representatives from the Occupational and Environmental Diseases Division, Department of Disease Control, presented Thailand's policy framework and strategic approaches to protecting migrant and informal workers from heat exposure and air pollution. The session provided a policy context for the subsequent research presentations and stakeholder discussions.

4.3 Climate Vulnerability of Migrant Workers in Southeast Asia

Dr. Tinh Doan from Adelaide University, Australia, delivered a presentation entitled *"Climate Vulnerability of Migrant Workers in SE Asia: The Lethal Intersection of Extreme Heat, Air Pollution, and Long Work Hours Accelerates Health Risks."*

The presentation examined how extreme heat, air pollution, and demanding working conditions increase health risks among migrant workers in Southeast Asia. It highlighted workers in construction, agriculture, and manufacturing as particularly exposed to environmental hazards, with prolonged working hours and inadequate rest further increasing their vulnerability.

The presentation also identified barriers to protection, including limited access to healthcare and health insurance, language barriers, financial constraints, and concerns about job security. It emphasised the need for stronger labour protection, improved workplace and housing conditions, accessible healthcare, and occupational health information in languages understood by migrant workers.

4.4 Presentation of the Integrated Research Framework

Dr. Marc Völker from the Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University, presented the proposed research framework on reducing health risks and productivity losses associated with heat exposure and air pollution among migrant workers in Thailand.

The framework aims to examine the relationships between environmental exposure, risk perception, protective behaviours, and workplace interventions. It incorporates three key research components: a baseline survey, a randomised controlled trial (RCT), and a Delphi study. The expected outputs include an Economic Impact Report, an Intervention Toolkit, and Evidence Policy Roadmaps to support evidence-based policy development and practical interventions.

4.5 Stakeholder Consultation and World Café Discussion

The stakeholder consultation was conducted using a World Café format to gather feedback on three key components of the proposed research. Participants were divided into three groups, including a designated group for non-Thai participants. Each group rotated through three discussion stations, spending 15 minutes at each station.

The discussions were facilitated by designated table hosts, with participants providing feedback through guiding questions and colour-coded sticky notes. The three stations focused on the following topics:

- **Station 1: Usability of the Research Framework from a Policy Perspective** – explored the relevance of the research framework to policymakers' needs, existing evidence gaps, and potential channels for translating research findings into policy and practice. Hosted by Aj. Marc and Reena.
- **Station 2: Baseline Survey Design** – gathered recommendations on survey methods, workers' health and occupational conditions, barriers to participation, and ways to capture underreported health risks. Hosted by Aj. Sarunya and P'Koy.
- **Station 3: Co-designed Interventions** – discussed the development of practical workplace interventions involving workers and employers, as well as approaches to evaluating their effectiveness and impact on health and productivity. Hosted by Aj. Sudarat and Pin.

Following the three rotations, participants reconvened for a 10-minute plenary wrap-up. Each table host presented the five key insights from their discussion station. The feedback was documented for subsequent synthesis and to inform the further development of the research framework, baseline survey, and proposed interventions.

4.6 Closing Remarks

The meeting concluded with a summary of the consultation process and its importance in incorporating stakeholder perspectives into the research development process. The feedback gathered during the meeting will inform the refinement of the research framework and the development of relevant research activities and policy recommendations.

5. Key Issues and Recommendations from Stakeholder Consultation

The evaluation responses and stakeholder feedback highlighted several areas for further consideration in developing the integrated research framework.

5.1 Baseline Data and Research on Heat and Air Pollution

Respondents highlighted the need for baseline data on migrant workers' health risks associated with climate change, extreme heat, and air pollution. Strengthening health surveillance and access to reliable data was also identified as an important research priority.

5.2 Occupational Health Risks and Workers' Well-being

The health impacts of working in hot, humid, and polluted environments were identified as important areas for further investigation. Respondents also highlighted the need to examine occupational diseases, workers' welfare, and the relationship between income and health under changing environmental conditions.

5.3 Vulnerable Worker Groups and Occupational Diversity

Stakeholders recommended expanding the research population beyond construction workers to include migrant workers in other occupations, particularly fisheries and general labour. This would help capture differences in occupational exposure and health risks across employment sectors.

5.4 Policy Development and Institutional Coordination

Respondents emphasised the importance of translating research findings into practical policy measures, including labour protection, workplace management, occupational health programmes, climate adaptation, and public health interventions.

They also recommended involving additional institutions with relevant expertise, particularly the Thailand Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (Public Organization), to strengthen the research framework and its practical applications.

6. Evaluation Results and Analysis

Evaluation results from seven respondents indicated a high overall level of satisfaction, with a mean score of 4.57 out of 5. The clarity of the meeting objectives received the highest score among the general meeting criteria, at 4.71, while overall meeting organisation received 4.43.

6.1 Overall Satisfaction and Meeting Objectives

The overall satisfaction score was 4.57, while the clarity of the meeting objectives received 4.71. These findings suggest that respondents generally considered the meeting well-structured and its objectives clearly communicated.

6.2 Quality and Relevance of Presentations

The expertise and insights provided by Dr. Tinh Doan received a mean score of 4.71. Overall satisfaction with the speakers also received 4.71, while the relevance of presentation content scored 4.57. Communication by government officials and speakers received 4.29.

6.3 Stakeholder Participation and World Café Discussion

The opportunity for stakeholder discussion and engagement received a mean score of 4.57. The World Café activity also received positive evaluations, with 4.57 for improving participants' understanding of the research framework and 4.57 for overall satisfaction. Respondents valued the opportunity to exchange perspectives, while some suggested clarifying discussion questions and allowing participants to present specific points from their discussions.

6.4 Research Priorities and Framework Development

Open-ended responses identified several areas that respondents considered important for the research framework, including data on migrant workers' health risks, occupational health conditions, workplace welfare, and health surveillance. Respondents also highlighted the importance of ensuring that the research considers the different working conditions and health risks experienced by migrant workers across occupational sectors.

6.5 Application of Research Findings and Policy Implications

Respondents identified potential applications of the research findings in national policy development, labour protection, workplace management, occupational health programmes, climate adaptation planning, public health, risk communication, and academic research.

These responses indicate that stakeholders saw potential for the research to support practical measures, including improving access to healthcare, strengthening occupational health and safety systems, and informing workplace regulations in response to changing climatic conditions.

6.6 Recommendations for Future Research and Stakeholder Engagement

Respondents recommended involving a broader range of stakeholders in subsequent research, including migrant worker representatives, labour unions, community leaders, employers, business operators, and relevant government agencies.

Additional suggestions included engaging the Thailand Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (Public Organization) (T-OSH) and strengthening collaboration among organisations working on occupational health, public health, and labour protection.

7. Conclusion

The stakeholder consultation meeting provided a platform for presenting the integrated research framework and gathering feedback from stakeholders working on migrant workers, occupational health, climate change, and air pollution.

Evaluation results from seven respondents indicated a high overall level of satisfaction, with a mean score of 4.57 out of 5. The findings also highlighted the value of expert presentations and the World Café activity in supporting knowledge exchange and stakeholder engagement.

Stakeholder feedback identified several priorities for further research, particularly baseline data on environmental and occupational health risks, health surveillance, workers' welfare, and the inclusion of migrant workers across a wider range of occupations. Respondents also emphasised the importance of translating research findings into practical policy measures and involving additional stakeholders, including employers, labour representatives, and occupational health institutions.

Overall, the consultation provided important input for refining the research framework and strengthening its relevance to the Thai context. The next step is to incorporate stakeholder recommendations into the framework and develop research approaches that can generate practical evidence to support policies protecting migrant workers' health, well-being, and productivity amid increasing heat and air pollution risks.

The evaluation findings are based on seven respondents and should be interpreted as feedback from those who completed the questionnaire, rather than as representative of all meeting participants.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1: Agenda

Meeting schedule

Time	Lecture topics / activities	Speaker / Moderator
09.00 - 09.15	Opening remarks	Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University
09.15 - 09.45	Policy framework and strategic implementation for protecting migrant and informal workers from heat and air pollution in Thailand.	Occupational and Environmental Diseases Division, Department of Disease Control.
09.45 - 10.15	Climate Vulnerability of Migrant Workers in SE Asia: The Lethal Intersection of Extreme Heat, Air Pollution, and Long Work Hours Accelerates Health Risks	Dr. Tinh Doan, University of Adelaide, Australia
10.15 - 10.30	Break for a snack.	-
10:30 - 11:00	Presenting the research framework : Reducing health risks and productivity loss from heat exposure and air pollution among migrant workers in Thailand.	Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University
11.00 - 12.00	Consultative meeting to gather feedback from stakeholders.	Moderated by: Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR)
12.00 - 12.15	Summarize and close the meeting.	-

8.2 Appendix 2: Photographs of the Policy Dialogue



Figure 1. Participants



Figure 2. Speaker Delivering a Presentation



Figure 3. World café Station 1



Figure 4. World café Station 2



Figure 5. World café Station 3