



REALITY CHECK APPROACH

REPORT Perspectives and experiences of international migrant workers and their families

Indonesia, June 2015



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Acknowledgements

This Reality Check Approach study has been made possible by the commitment, enthusiasm and teamwork of many. The Reality Check Approach (RCA) was originally an initiative of the Swedish Embassy in Bangladesh where it was first commissioned in 2007 and has since been adopted in other countries and other contexts. This RCA study was commissioned by The World Bank Poverty Team and the Poverty Reduction Support Team/National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction to provide insights into the experience of international migration from people's own perspectives.

Disclaimer:

While the study was commissioned by The World Bank Poverty Team and the Poverty Reduction Support Team/National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction, the report of the study was produced independently and does not necessarily reflect the views of either organisation or those of the Government of Indonesia.

The study was undertaken by a mixed team of Indonesian and international researchers (see Annex 1). The team comprised researchers who are part of the RCA+ project which is designed to build capacity in learning about and applying RCA. Their passion and effort for this kind of work is appreciated and acknowledged.

The RCA study was only possible thanks to the many families who opened their doors to the study team and embraced them as temporary family members. We thank the families in all 18 study sub-villages for contributing their valuable time and allowing the team members to live with them and listen to their perceptions and experiences about migration as past and current migrant workers and as families and relatives of migrant workers. We hope that this report reflects well the views and experiences of these families, their neighbours and others within the community. We also hope that policy makers will listen to these voices and take into account their views in their future policy making.

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Cover photo:

These high heeled shoes are gifts from a daughter who works in Saudi Arabia to her 70 year old mother. They have never been worn and people laugh about '*the silly shoes from Saudi*'.

Identifying features have been removed to protect the identities of individuals photographed.

This report is also available at www.reality-check-approach.com



Glossary, Abbreviations, Acronyms

BPS	<i>Badan Pusat Statistik</i> , Bureau of Statistics
BNP2TKI	<i>Badan Nasional Penempatan dan Perlindungan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia</i> , National Bureau to Place and Protect Indonesian Migrant Workers
Calo	Middlemen or broker
CBO	Community Based Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FHH	Focal Households / neighbours of the HHH
GOI	Government of Indonesia
Haji	(Hajj) the annual pilgrimage of Muslims who make the journey to Mecca, Saudi Arabia
HHH	Host Households; families where members of the study team stay
ID	Identity (card)
IDR	Indonesian Rupiah
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
JPAL	The Abdul Latif Jameel Action Poverty Lab
Kartu keluarga	Family Card
Kecamatan	Sub-district
Kepala desa	Chief of Village
Kepala dusun	Chief of Sub-village
Kepala RT	Chief of <i>Rukun Tetangga</i> (neighbourhood)
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
SD	<i>Sekolah Dasar</i> , Primary School
SMA	<i>Sekolah Menengah Atas</i> , Senior High School
SMP	<i>Sekolah Menengah Pertama</i> , Junior High School
Pemerintah	The Government
PJTKI	<i>Perusahaan Jasa Tenaga Kerja Indonesia</i> , Indonesian Migrant Worker Company
PLB	<i>Pas Lintas Batas</i> . Special passport-like document issued to those near the West Kalimantan borders for easing access in/out of Malaysia
Podes	<i>Pendataan Potensi Desa</i> , Village Potential Survey
PPTKIS	<i>Pelaksana Penempatan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia Swasta</i> , Placement managing company for Indonesia Migrant Worker. Replaces PJTKI
Puskesmas (PK)	<i>Pusat Kesehatan Masyarakat</i> , People's Health Centre
PRSF	Poverty Reduction Support Facility
Pusat	Central, often used to refer to Central Government
RCA	Reality Check Approach
RCA+	RCA+ Project
RT	Rukun tetangga, neighbourhood unit, smallest community
Tekong	Broker or agent (in East Lombok)
TIFA	Indonesia foundation who assist community based organisation for former migrant workers at village level in East Lombok
TNP2K	<i>Tim Nasional Percepatan Penanggulangan Kemiskinan</i> , National Team of Poverty Reduction Acceleration.
Umroh	Known as the "lesser pilgrimage," in comparison to the annual Hajj pilgrimage
Warung	Kiosk

Exchange rate (approximately, May 2015):

100,000 IDR: £ 4.89 UK pounds sterling

100,000 IDR: AUS 9.62 Australian dollars

100,000 IDR: MYR 27.49 Malaysian ringgit

100,000 IDR: SAR 28.5 Saudi riyal

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Executive Summary

الْبَيْتَةُ وَالْجَنَّةُ
RUMAH KU LAKSANA
SORGA



"My house is my heaven" inscribed on this front door in East Lombok demonstrates people's dream for a beautiful house.

This Reality Check Approach Study was jointly commissioned by the World Bank Poverty Team and the Poverty Reduction Support Team/ National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction. The study was conducted during April-May, 2015. It was designed to provide first hand insights into the motivations and experiences of international migrants from Indonesia to help inform policy dialogue, especially in regard to the Government of Indonesia's future 'job strategy'.

The Reality Check Approach is an internationally recognised qualitative research approach that requires the study team to live with people directly experiencing the focus theme of the study, in this case international migration for work. The team stays with families in their own homes for periods of time and uses this opportunity to have many informal conversations

and interactions with all the members of the household, their neighbours and with the service providers with whom they interact.

The emphasis throughout is on informality in people's own space and with the least disruption to their everyday lives. This 'hanging out' without note-taking and formal structure provides the best possible conditions for trust building and openness. Furthermore, it enables the study team members to triangulate the conversations from multiple sources and enrich these with their own observations and experiences *in situ*.

The study was undertaken in two provinces; West Kalimantan (Bengkayang) and Nusa Tenggara Barat (East Lombok). The districts were purposely selected to represent pockets of high incidence of documented international migration for work (East Lombok) and lower incidence of documented migration but potentially high undocumented migration (West Kalimantan), where it was assumed there would likely be less networks and support. Within each district three study locations were selected; one urban, one peri-urban and one rural with each of these relating to the same district town for administrative purposes. Three team members lived in each study location (*desa*- village) but spread out into neighbouring sub-villages. Families with current and recent past international migrant workers were asked if the team member could stay with them, resulting in eighteen 'host households' (nine in West Kalimantan and nine in

Nusa Tenggara Barat). As well as intense interactions with the families of migrant workers (75 people), further conversations were held with more than 1190 people living in the area including some agents who facilitate international migration for work.

The study report presents the findings on people's perspectives of international migration in section 3 and attempts to avoid overlay of the study team's own interpretations. It is important in all RCA studies that people's opinions and perspectives are presented separately from discussion of the findings. It is important that people's views are presented in the way they intended them to be. Discussion on the findings is provided in section 4. This section is written from the perspective of the study team based on their analysis of the findings. Section 5 is also written from the perspective of the study team and provides some study implications intended to be taken forward in policy dialogue. Throughout the report, the study locations are referred to as W. Kalimantan and E. Lombok.

International migration for work has been embedded as a livelihood option in both study locations, E. Lombok and W. Kalimantan, for a minimum of three generations. However, the nature of work, destinations and experience of international migration for work differ significantly between the two. E. Lombok has a long and close relationship with Saudi Arabia and it was purposely targeted for workers decades ago on the assumption that many were landless trans-migrants in need of employment and because they were devout Muslims. Over the years it has become a norm and every household we interacted with had an experience of international migration for work. Mostly these are women who go to Saudi Arabia for domestic work but some also go to Malaysia for both this and to work in the hospitality industry. A few men also go to Saudi Arabia, mostly as drivers or painters but the majority go to Malaysia to work on oil palm plantations. A few had experienced work opportunities in Japan and Korea. The desire to migrate for work is as high as it has ever been.

By contrast, in W. Kalimantan the desire to migrate has waned considerably, particularly as alternative livelihood opportunities, not all of them entirely legal, have emerged in their locality. Equal numbers of men and women have

migrated for work in the past and currently about one in ten/twenty households have an international work migrant member but this is much less than the past when all households would have had one. Those who go to Malaysia for work are often those who have found securing local regular employment difficult whereas '*jobs are plentiful*' and unskilled work pays better in Malaysia. Women mostly work in shops, salons, restaurants and as domestic workers while men work on oil palm plantations, in construction, on ships and in factories. A few women had experienced domestic or care work in Singapore.

The main motivation for migrating for work in E. Lombok is to be able to build a '*beautiful house*', which for them means an ornate plastered and painted house that people show off with pride as visible symbols of status. Here motivation is not because of a paucity of job opportunities but rather a preference for higher paying work and, since this has been operating for generations, results in less effective networks to secure jobs within their own locality. There is little appetite for entrepreneurship or seeking work locally because the migrant work suits them well and is carried forward to successive generations. Similarly, there is little aspiration for higher education with people pointing out that civil service salaries are less than those they can earn without higher education by working abroad.

By contrast, the main motivation in W Kalimantan was, in the past, purely economic as there were very few job opportunities locally. As these opportunities have opened up, there has been a swing to prefer to stay in Indonesia, particularly as the experience for most in Malaysia had been with low paid, unskilled work usually acquired through undocumented channels which were considered '*risky*'. The young generation have very high motivation for education and securing good jobs especially in the civil service. However, those with little education and no skills, especially some young men, still prefer to migrate to Malaysia in search of work and the concomitant adventure they say is lacking in their locality. In both study locations migration for work tends to be something young adults do before marriage or in early marriage and again when their children reach their teens but with a preference to return home and '*settle down*' in their late thirties/forties as grandchildren come along.

Pay is described as consistently better in all the migrant work destinations than equivalent work in Indonesia ranging from 1.5 times higher to 20 times higher. People also talked about unskilled work opportunities outside of Indonesia being better as they were plentiful, paid better and paid more regularly, and involved



longer work contract periods than what they considered the unsatisfactory and unpredictable day work opportunities in similar work in Indonesia (e.g. plantations, construction, loading trucks).

Other motivations to migrate for work include personal circumstances — for example situations people feel they want to escape from (painful divorce, relationship breakdown, bereavement) or which entailed financial crises (illness, debt); as well as purposive aspirations to meet new people (especially potential romance) and an experience of urban life and adventure. For those going to Saudi Arabia an important motivation is to be able to go on Hajj or Umroh.

The risks of migrant work are well known. In E Lombok women consistently played down the issue of sexual harassment often touted in the media and elsewhere as a risk in Saudi Arabia and told us this does not happen often and, in their view, was always related to *'women who flirt'* in order to earn favours, gifts and additional money. They told us that the jealous wives of Saudi employers could be more of a problem but generally were confident in how to deal with the advances of male employers. Sexual harassment for men was also identified as an issue, sometimes perpetrated by employers but more often by fellow workers. People in W. Kalimantan mostly spoke of the risks associated with undocumented migrant work in Malaysia and shared personal stories of arrest, jail and corporal punishment. They talked about *'living in fear of arrest'* especially as the authorities in Malaysia are, they say, less tolerant than in the past.

People shared that the choice to migrate for work was not forced or coerced and parents and young people both indicated that the choice would be that of the individual concerned. These decisions are made with much information from family and neighbours who have done the same thing themselves and are careful decisions based on weighing the pros and cons. In E. Lombok, no matter what the destination or nature of work, most migrant work is facilitated through agents, most of whom are referred to as *'PT Agents'* (meaning company agents). These agents spend considerable time in the community, building trust and reassuring the families of prospective migrant workers. For men, the agents take a lump sum fee to arrange work for them but for women the *PT agent* field officers provide cash incentives from advances they are provided by their employers to the families to encourage them to sign up for domestic work abroad. By contrast, in W. Kalimantan few agents come anymore and most

migrant work is facilitated through personal networks. This is partly because people there prefer using well-tested routes, avoiding agent fees and because many of them only travel with a *Pas Lintas Batas* (Boarder Crossing Pass; often supplemented these days by a full passport for travel within Malaysia) and without work permits. Agents are used for accessing work in Singapore (where visa and work permits are required) or, for other destinations, where they can help sort out irregularities such as inconsistent or incomplete personal documentation.

Financial costs to the migrant worker are clear when using family and brokers to facilitate the process but less so where agents are concerned. Lump-sum payments are negotiated for male migrant workers, but the exact details of what these cover is unclear to the migrant worker. This is regarded as a trusted relationship though and the migrant workers tell us that they simply expect that everything will be taken care of. For women migrant workers using agents, most costs are taken care of and incentives are provided to their families. It is not always clear how these costs are supported but people explain them as a combination of advances paid by the sponsors and deductions from the migrant worker wages for between 3-12 months. Some told us that food and even clothing and toiletries were provided by agents when they stay in Jakarta for pre-departure training and orientation, although others said they had to supplement the food themselves. Normally agents retain the workers' passports, except those sending workers to Singapore.

The pre-departure procedure which involves a stay in a hostel in Jakarta was described most often as *'waiting for documentation'* rather than a period of training or orientation. Arabic language classes are provided for those going to Saudi Arabia but people said they were inadequate. Some told us about working as unpaid domestic workers in houses in Jakarta which was dubbed as *'training'* but they got *'no feedback'*. We heard of a current experience where more practical training caring for children and the elderly is being provided which will provide some kind of certification. This seems to be an effort to circumvent the ban on unskilled domestic workers to the Middle East by certifying them as *'skilled'*.

Domestic workers in Saudi Arabia mostly described their experiences as good and said they were *'very happy'* even though the early months are sometimes difficult periods of adjustment. Saudi Arabia is regarded by people in E. Lombok as safer than some other destinations because the women have to be accompanied when they go out of the house. The preferred arrangement is to work with other

domestic staff rather than alone as it provides companionship and makes *'life easy'*. All said they had their own bedrooms and their own or shared bathrooms. Food is provided by the employer and it is usually what the family eats. They had access to phones and often are provided credit or vouchers to phone home on a regular basis *'so you don't spend all your earnings on phoning home,'* as employers told them. Interaction with other maids is limited usually to meetings during employer family events but some employers are more liberal. Outings to shopping malls and Friday prayers are undertaken with the employers' wives. Domestic work in Singapore is regarded as the best since the pay is good, the worker can keep her passport and gets regular days off and freedom to meet up with friends.

The best migrant work experiences shared by men were from work opportunities in Japan and Korea along with skilled work in Saudi Arabia (e.g. drivers, mural painter). The worst were from unskilled labour in Malaysia especially if working without a work permit and having no recourse with employers if they fail to pay or treat them badly, as well as living in fear of arrest. However, at the other extreme people told us how migrant workers sometimes *'play the system'* by deliberately running away to ensure free and early repatriation from Saudi Arabia and deliberately forcing insurance pay-outs from work *'accidents'* in Japan and Korea.

Although families are mostly supportive of their members going abroad for work, men left behind in particular talked about being lonely without their wives and often prohibit more than one trip away. The divorce rate in E. Lombok study sites is exceedingly high, with many telling us of multiple divorces, affairs and polygamous arrangements. Current migrants are without doubt the subject of much gossip and speculation in the community and this, people tell us, can be very difficult to deal with. Some feel marginalised on return either because of the gossip, jealousy or poorly maintained family relations. Children shared mixed feelings about their parents migrating—some saying they missed them a lot, some forging alternative close relationships with other relatives (older siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles) and others happy that they received many gifts, especially electronic gadgets, from their parents who are away. Grandparents are often burdened with the care of grandchildren as the parents are working abroad and this is variously accepted with indulgence to resentment.

The report concludes with a discussion on some of the research questions raised. The first relates to the reasons why people migrate without documentation.

The study finds that while the fees charged by agents are a factor, the more important issue is the convenience and preference for using trusted routes and networks which may result in good bargaining positions with employers and higher wages. People prefer migrating for work mostly for better pay and better conditions than equivalent work provided in Indonesia but also because available local work opportunities require their own networks, sometimes bribes, and unskilled work is often only irregular day wages. They eschew investment in their own small businesses partly because of perceived competition, small profits and the demands made on them to provide credit to family and neighbours for services and goods provided. They also told us that agricultural investment is risky and unpredictable. As a consequence, people are often willing to take a calculated risk with undocumented migration.

The second question relates to the full cost of migration, although we were only able to explore this with those who travelled through their own networks rather than through official agents as these consisted of single lump sum payments where agents were trusted to provide a full "turn key" service.

Health insurance was rarely mentioned by any current or past work migrants as something they knew about or that had been a requirement, despite trying to probe this issue. Nearly everyone indicated that when they are ill, employers take care of them and usually pay directly to the service provider, rarely deducting these costs from wages.

Regarding the non-monetary benefits of migration, a good migrant experience for some included the acquisition of skills including technical and language skills. For others the experience in itself was important and others forged new relationships. In E. Lombok a very important benefit is the chance to undertake Hajj.

The study provides no evidence to suggest that the motivation to migrate for work amongst people in E. Lombok is to be re-integrated into work on their return. Rather, the inclination to migrate for work is passed from generation to generation. There is little suggestion that this is a need in W. Kalimantan. For both oil palm workers in Malaysia and for those working in factories and in the hospitality industry in Malaysia or elsewhere, people tend to continue until they feel they can retire and/or others can support them.

Introduction

Enjoying a different lifestyle abroad

This Report presents the main findings of the Reality Check Approach (RCA) study which was conducted during April-May, 2015. The study is jointly commissioned by the World Bank Poverty Team and the Poverty Reduction Support Team/National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction, which supported a project of TIFA 'Poverty Reduction Through Safety in Migration'.

In Indonesia, international migrant work represents nearly 4% (Indonesian National Labor Force Survey) of the workforce and more than half of documented migrant workers are women (BNP2TKI). The World Bank has been supporting a project to provide relevant evidence on international migration and remittances with the intention of formulating policy recommendations to maximise the benefits of migration and remittances for economic growth, poverty reduction and job creation and to facilitate the la-

bour market integration of returning migrants. As part of this initiative, The World Bank Poverty Team developed a migration survey which was included as a module of the last SUSENAS survey conducted in 2013/2014. It was administered in two rounds (December 2013 and March 2014) and covered 102 districts in 15 provinces regarded as pocket areas of relatively high incidence of international migration¹. It included 4,662 former and current migrants. The survey was designed to provide information on the whole cycle of migration from access to pre-immigration information, recruitment and placement, work conditions, remittance channels and labour market participation of returning migrants.

The TIFA project (2012-15) involved a number of initiatives at the national, provincial, district and village level. It worked with fifty villages in six districts of NTT and NTB (selected on the basis that these were areas of high international migration and high vulnerability). At the village level, community based groups of mostly former migrant workers were established to support other migrant workers with information, paralegal services and access to additional services such as communication tools. The intention currently is to assist these CBOs to become registered organisations so that they can receive local Government funds and continue their work in the future. The project has actively supported local governments

to recognise the need for local regulations for migrant workers and, in particular, for easing administrative processes at lower costs, including for registration of recruiting agencies.

The Southeast Asia regional office of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL SEA) is supporting a research team currently undertaking a randomized evaluation (RCT) to assess whether potential international migrants can benefit from an information-sharing service that aggregates ratings given by former migrants regarding the placement agencies that facilitate their placement and work abroad. More specifically, the research aims to understand whether with this tool migrant workers would be empowered to choose high-quality placement agencies over low-quality ones, and whether this would improve outcomes in their respective destination countries.

Between January and June 2014, the research team conducted a pilot study consisting of qualitative and quantitative research to inform the development of the RCT. The research team visited 12 villages in 9 sub-districts in Lombok Barat, Lombok Tengah, Ponorogo, and Cirebon to conduct focus group discussions with various actors in the migration process, including former and potential migrants, sponsors, placement agency representatives. The research team also fielded a quantitative survey in two villages: Cirebon, Pegagan Kidul and Pegagan Lor. Respondents consisted of former female migrants who returned to Indonesia within the last three years and who went through a placement agency during their last migration. The findings of the pilot reflected that there is a correlation between the rated quality of the placement agencies and migrants' experience abroad.

Based on these findings, the research team formulated a rating intervention that they will test using an RCT in 400 villages in 8 districts from 3 provinces: West Java, Central Java and East Java. The research team conducted a baseline survey between April and June 2015, gathering information from previous migrant workers about their experiences abroad and to gather their subjective and objective evaluation about the quality of the placement agency that they used. Based on these results, J-PAL will conduct the information sharing intervention in September – December 2015. An endline survey will be conducted in 2018 after the initial cohort of migrant workers return home. Additionally, the research team is working closely with the National Agency for the Place-

ment and Protection of International Migrants (BNP2TKI) to investigate the impact of the intervention on the matching of migrants and agencies in and beyond study villages.

Studies on migration in Indonesia have been predominantly quantitative surveys which have provided important information on trends but have not been able to provide rich detail on aspects of the migration experience from the migrant and migrant families perspective. The JPAL qualitative study will use interviews and FGDs and is focussed primarily on domestic migration. This RCA study enabled informal interaction with families of migrant workers and migrant workers to provide insights into their day to day realities which might not be shared in more public forums such as FGDs.

Preliminary findings from the World Bank study on international migration noted the following areas which would benefit from being explored further by the RCA study:

- Among migrants, many of them still do not yet comply with the full documentation required to work overseas². Why do people migrate without documentation? Is it cost (legal, transport to Jakarta), insufficient information about the risks and the jobs available, reliance on networks and historical connections with destination locations, the inability to explore local options (market failure)?
- The World Bank survey was able to gather aggregate information on costs faced by individuals to migrate but this would benefit from being broken down into constituent parts and to understand better the mix of legitimate, opportunity, transport and unofficial costs.
- While health insurance is mandatory for migrants data indicates that migrants cannot claim while in employment abroad and rarely make claims on return either because they do not know how to do so or have not kept the appropriate documentation to support a claim.
- While the data is rich for the direct economic benefits of migration, more understanding of the non-monetary benefits is needed.
- There is an implicit assumption that people want to be re-integrated in work on return from migration but there is evidence to sug-

¹ These were identified from the 2007 Susenas data and defined as areas with reported incidence of more than 4% households with a current and former migrant worker

² World Bank International Migration Study, forthcoming

gest that some regard this as a ‘one-off’ in order to make enough money for a particular reason, e.g. children’s education, marriage, health. This needs further understanding within the scope of understanding the multiple motivations of people migrating.

PRSF is interested to understand more about how the local community based organisations supported by TIFA will continue to be able to support migrant workers in the future now that TIFA has ended. Insights into the uptake and effectiveness of other initiatives introduced by TIFA such as local level communication hubs (enabling families to use skype, for example, to contact their relatives which make the migration experience more acceptable). The issues faced by the families ‘left behind’, especially issues with a cultural dimension (e.g. social exclusion resulting from unclear marital status or parental/child status which, in turn, has ramifications for administrative documentation) also need further review and the findings should contribute to the policy dialogue.

The RCA study was undertaken by a team of thirteen researchers under the leadership of Dee Jupp. The study was undertaken under the auspices of the RCA+ project, which is designed to build the capacity of Indonesian researchers to undertake high quality RCA studies (see Annex 1). Overall management of the team and logistic arrangements were undertaken by the RCA+ project.

Eighteen study families participated as host households in the three night immersion study from eighteen sub-villages in two provinces. Conversations were held with over 1,268 people including local leaders, agents for migrant work, transport providers and health workers.

The areas of conversation are provided in Annex 2.

The Reality Check Approach Methodology

The Reality Check Approach extends the tradition of listening studies (see Salmen 1998 and Anderson, Brown and Jean 2012) and beneficiary assessments (see SDC 2013) by combining elements of these approaches with researchers actually living with people whose views are being sought, usually those who are directly experiencing the issue under study.

RCA is sometimes likened to a “light touch” partici-

pant observation. Participant observation involves entering the lives of the subjects of research and both participating in and observing their normal everyday activities and interactions. It usually entails extensive and detailed research into behaviour with a view to understanding peoples’ perceptions and their actions over long periods of time. The Reality Check Approach is similar in that it requires participation in everyday life within people’s own environments but differs by being comparatively quick and placing more emphasis on informal, relaxed and insightful conversations than on observing behaviour and the complexities of relationships.

Important characteristics of the Reality Check Approach are:

- **Living with** rather than visiting (thereby meeting the family in their own environment, understanding family dynamics and how days and nights are spent);
- **Having conversations** rather than conducting interviews (there is no note taking thereby putting people at ease and on an equal footing with the outsider);
- **Learning** rather than finding out (suspending judgement, letting people who experience poverty take the lead in defining the agenda and what is important);
- **Centring on the household** and interacting with families rather than users, communities or groups;
- **Being experiential** in that researchers themselves take part in daily activities (collecting water, cooking, cultivation) and accompany household members (to school, to market, to health clinic);
- **Including** all members of households;
- **Using private space** rather than public space for disclosure (an emphasis on normal, ordinary lives);
- **Accepting multiple realities** rather than public consensus (gathering diversity of opinion, including “smaller voices”)
- **Interacting in ordinary daily life** with front-line service providers (accompanying host household members in their interactions with

³ Assuming the study becomes a longitudinal one

local service providers, meeting service providers, e.g. teachers as they go about their usual routines);

- **Taking a cross-sectoral view**, although each study has a special focus, the enquiry is situated within the context of everyday life rather than simply (and arguably artificially) looking at one aspect of people's lives;
- **Understanding longitudinal change** and how change happens over time³.

Families were mostly very open to the approach and welcomed researchers into their homes and soon understood the purpose of the study and the need for the researchers not to be afforded guest status. Through easy conversations and accompaniment with chores, the study team members were able to engage all members of the family as well as neighbours (focal households) in conversations. The team members also interacted informally with local power holders (village leaders and administrators) as well as local service providers (health workers, agents for

migrant work, shop and kiosk owners) through informal conversations (see annex 5 for the list of people met).

Each team member discreetly left a "gift" for each family on leaving, comprising food items and stationery to the value of IDR 200,000–300,000, to compensate for any costs incurred in hosting the researcher. As researchers insist that no special arrangements are made for them, they help in domestic activities and do not disturb income-earning activities, the actual costs to a family are negligible. The timing of the gift was important so families did not feel they were expected to provide better food for the researchers or get the impression that they were being paid for their participation.

Each team member kept their own field notes but they never wrote these in front of the people they were conversing with. To illustrate the context of the village and the households, photos were taken with the consent of community and



Researchers and host household chatting informally while doing daily chores together

family members concerned. These narrative and visual records formed the basis of detailed one day debriefing sessions held with *each* sub-team as soon as possible after each round of the study was completed.

Selection of locations for the study

Careful consideration was given to the selection of locations in close consultation with PRSF and with some inputs from the World Bank Poverty Team. It was decided that the two study sites needed to be either:

- pockets of high incidence of documented migration (following the rationale adopted by the World Bank Poverty Team for their migration study where it can be assumed there is higher likelihood of networks, information and support services for migrant workers and where TIFA is active (e.g. NTT, NTB)) or
- an area with low documented migration but possibly a high incidence of undocumented migration (where it can be assumed there is a lower likelihood of networks, information and support services e.g. W Kalimantan).

West Kalimantan (province) and East Lombok (district) were selected based on the following rationale

- having migration to the two largest destinations: Malaysia and Middle East.
- the nature of migrant work; at national level, most Indonesian international migrants work in 3 main sectors: agriculture and forestry sector, industry and manufacturing sector, and social and community service sectors. According to BNP2TKI, most migrants from West Kalimantan work in the industry and manufacturing sector, while migrants from West Nusa Tenggara work in agriculture and forestry as well as the social and community service sector.
- Geography: accessibility for international migration led to a

choice of a border area, West Kalimantan.

- Gender: both study locations have both male and female international migrants.
- Extent of support to international migrants and likelihood of documentation: comparing data from PODES survey (BPS) and BNP2TKI, we found that there is a gap in migrant number in each province. Assuming this might represent the number of undocumented migrants, we selected West Kalimantan that has one of highest data disparities. The selection of East Lombok was made to include villages supported by the TIFA project.
- West Kalimantan has the second highest level of trafficking in Indonesia⁴ (IOM Report , 2010).

Within each province an urban, peri-urban and rural location was selected, all three of which related to the same provincial or district capital for Government administrative purposes i.e. the urban site situated within capital, the peri-urban just outside the capital and the rural location 10-20 km away. The idea of this purposive selection of locations is to gain an understanding of the push-pull factors in different socio-economic contexts and the influence this has on motivations for and experience of migration, the access to information, networks and support.

Selection of households

Eighteen host households participated in the study and researchers lived with them for three nights and four days. All households were identified by the research team members themselves



Graphic 1: study locations

⁴ 722/3696 (19.5%) for the entire country between March '05 and December '09

through observation, discussion with other villagers for several hours and the host households themselves.

Team members entered different sub villages by foot in order to keep their presence 'low key' and different members of the team made their own contacts within their sub village.

As well as intense interaction with the host households (75 people), extensive conversations with a further 1,193 people living in the areas were also carried out (see annex 6). The total number of hours of conversation exchanged in amounted to over 1,008 hours.

Areas for conversation

RCA is not a theory based research method although it often generates people's theories of change and contributes well to grounded theory approaches. It does not have a pre-determined set of research questions relying as it does on iterations from information gathered *in situ* and building on a progressive series of conversations. However, as part of the briefing process for the researchers *areas of conversation* were developed to act as a guide to ensuring that conversations are purposive (see Annex 2; Areas of Conversation).

Study limitations

- The study purposively selected one study location where it was anticipated there would be relatively high numbers of undocumented migrant workers. Inevitably, engaging around these issues was sensitive and challenging.
- As this RCA study required staying with families with international migrant workers and yet the team did not want to enter the village and build rapport based on this focus, the team agreed to stay near the village for the first night and use this opportunity to gain understanding of the village context before finding host household families.
- Regardless of the special sensitivities around undocumented migration, the topic in general can be sensitive partly because migrants do not necessarily want to disclose their experiences even to their own families. Motivations to migrate for work are sometimes quite personal and we felt people sometimes put a 'spin' on the experience, either negative or positive, depending whether they wanted to return or not as a migrant worker. Longer time was needed for conversations than the team has found necessary with previous study topics.

- Although people in both locations are familiar with Bahasa Indonesia, the study team nevertheless experienced language issues especially where people switched to their local language (Dayak in W. Kalimantan and Sasak in E. Lombok) when talking about sensitive matters. At times it was therefore hard to follow group chat between villagers.
- In West Kalimantan, the nature of illegal activities (illegal migration, smuggling goods, gold and timber work) presented special challenges during informal conversations especially with the men around livelihoods and the nature of work in Malaysia or even daily activities.
- It was important to be aware of the local contexts, especially around sensitive issues. This included for W. Kalimantan a recent riot triggered by religious and ethnic tensions around Chinese New Year in 2015 in the provincial town and the police crackdown on illegal logging; and for E. Lombok concerns around the recently imposed moratorium on domestic work migration to the Middle East.
- The team felt they needed more knowledge on the exact timing of the Gawai event (Dayak New Year) which varies in actual time from April-June when work migrants would return to visit their families.
- This is the first RCA study in Indonesia which has specifically included urban locations. This posed another challenge as people tend to be more individualistic and rarely gather in one place. They also seem to be more suspicious which required careful and sensitive rapport building.
- One village study location in E. Lombok comprised an extremely strict Muslim sect who are not allowed to welcome people of a different religion or ethnicity. One woman researcher here had special difficulties as she is Christian. A male researcher in another village felt inhibited that he could not gather with men at the mosque.
- RCA, like other research methods is only as good as the recognition and mitigation of bias. Annex 6 provides information on how the RCA research consistently try to offset bias.

Study findings

POSKO PUSAT INFORMASI LOWONGAN KERJA

DALAM NEGERI

- TUJUAN
- KALIMANTAN
 - SUMATERA
 - BATAM
 - JAKARTA

JENIS PEKERJAAN :

- KELAPA SAWIT
- BANGUNAN
- RUMAH TANGGA
- DLL

GRATIS

LUAR NEGERI

- TUJUAN
- MALAYSIA
 - BRUNAI
 - SINGAPURA
 - TAIWAN
 - HONGKONG

JENIS PEKERJAAN :

- KELAPA SAWIT
- RUMAH TANGGA
- BANGUNAN
- DLL

3.1.1 East Lombok

We were told that there is a long and close association between this area of E. Lombok and Saudi Arabia stretching back to the early eighties (more than thirty years). In the study villages there was much evidence of Saudi investment in schools, health facilities and mosques. The first migrant workers to Saudi returned in the early eighties and constructed new houses as others in their communities were experiencing the beginning of the major economic crisis. Sponsors for migrant work came in person with attractive incentives, especially for women workers even before the official Government endorsed agreement was made in 1987. Some of the people living here were originally trans-migrants from Kalimantan and Sulawesi with no land and others were subsistence farmers. The area was purposely targeted by sponsors both from the perspective that the inhabitants would be looking for alternative employment and also because they were seen as devout Muslims. Over the following three decades, international migration has become a norm. Every household we interacted with during the study had at some time members working as international migrants. These are mostly women who typically have been to Saudi Arabia as domestic workers, sometimes returning several times. But some men had also gone to Saudi, often with specialist skills such as driving or painting. Other women have been to Malaysia as

Local agent advertising his services for prospective work abroad

The findings are presented from the position of study participants. We intend to convey their experiences and views without overlaying our interpretation or judgment. For the ease of the reader the two study locations are referred to throughout and as W. Kalimantan and E. Lombok⁵.

3.1. Overview of international migration

International migration for work has been embedded in both the study provinces, E. Lombok and W. Kalimantan, for many years and has been a livelihood option for at least three generations. However, the nature of work, destinations and experience of international migration for work differs considerably.

waitresses, domestic workers and factory workers. Men have been to Malaysia primarily to work in the oil palm plantations or in construction. Both are low

'Our rice fields are away in Malaysia and Saudi'

(woman in rural E. Lombok)

paid work. A few men have been recently or are currently working in factories in Korea or Japan and a few women had been to Singapore, generally to care for the elderly. The desire to migrate for work continues to be as high as ever in these communities and people are concerned about the impact of the recent moratorium on domestic workers to the Middle East.

3.1.2. West Kalimantan

The West Kalimantan situation provides several stark contrasts with the situation in East Lombok. Firstly, migrants comprise more equal numbers of men and women (with possibly more men according to our study findings) and almost entirely work in Malaysia. Secondly, the desire to migrate is declining mostly due to new opportunities to earn money locally and because the youth here tell us they aspire to higher education. Lastly, much of the migration is undocumented or semi-documented.

In the past, people felt that their land was contiguous with Malaysia and the Dayak peoples in particular felt affiliation with the entire area of Dayak Iban. Working on plantations in Malaysia was not even really thought of as international migration. Families were spread over the area and free movement was simply assumed irrespective of borders. The fact that they use Malaysian time is a testament to this closeness. *'Only if you go to school or work for an Indonesian company do you use Indonesian time here'*, explained one HHH mother in the border area. And up until a decade ago before the main road was constructed, the currency was Malaysian ringgit. Even now, people use both this and the Indonesia rupiah interchangeably.



Good houses in West Kalimantan built through profits from timber some time ago. Since logging in the area was made illegal the families living here are now poorer.

There used to be lucrative ironwood forests in W. Kalimantan and Dayak people were able to build good houses from the logging profits. But the wood is now rare and a moratorium on its logging has been imposed. Rubber and some paddy became alternative income earners but with the fall in rubber prices, this too declined and is being replaced by palm oil. Since this new sub district was created some 15 years ago development has followed with concomitant improved roads and access. This, in turn, has led to significant changes in livelihood options and aspirations for the people of the area. New resources have been discovered such as gold (about 12 years now) and local gem stones and oil palm production has been actively promoted.

Although migration has been a norm over generations it was at its height in the early 00's with many agents actively trying to recruit workers and offering cash incentives to families. The whole area was badly affected by the 90s economic crisis and together with the banning of logging activities with the declaration of vast swathes of national forest, there were limited jobs locally. With the exception of the peri-urban area study location where the trend might be increasing again, few migrate for work now.

Migration for work in agriculture (palm oil mainly but also rubber or even casual farm labour) is mostly by men, though some women also travel to work in palm oil plantations in Malaysia. There are also male construction workers who *'follow their boss'* and consequently seem to work in Malaysia, and there is work on boats (boat building, fishing and loading). These and the plantation workers are generally 'illegal' or semi-

⁵ West Kalimantan is a province but the district selected here can be considered as more or less representative of West Kalimantan whereas East Lombok is a district but is widely recognised as different from the rest of NTB.

Table 1. Type of migration work in study locations

Study location	ethnicity	religion	Types of migration for work for men	Types of migration for work for women
W. Kalimantan	Dayak	Predominantly Christian, one sub village Muslim, urban area mixed.	1.Malaysia Oil palm plantation Construction Boats Factory	1.Malaysia Domestic work Catering Factory 2.Singapore Domestic worker/care worker
E Lombok	Sasak	Muslim including strict sect in one location	1.Malaysia Oil palm plantation Construction 2.Saudi Driving Painting	1. Saudi Domestic work 2. Malaysia Domestic work

documented migrants, although people’s understanding of the legality of different forms of migration are sketchy. Some men find work through agents but very few. They work in factories, slaughter houses, bakeries and as carpenters. Some women go to Kuching (the capital of Sarawak) to work as waitresses, domestic workers or in small shops or salons, some through informal networks and some through agencies or more official channels. Sometimes work as a *waitress* or ‘*in a coffee shop*’ is a euphemism for hostess/prostitution work and is regarded as a lucrative way to earn money. There generally seems to be a higher likelihood that the women migrant workers are placed through agents. Those women who travel to Singapore for work are all through agents and people view this as *fully legal*.

People indicated that probably between 2-10% of households currently have members working abroad in contrast to much higher numbers in E. Lombok which are as high as 100% in some locations and averaged at 70-80% of households.

3.2. Why do we want to migrate?

While conventional surveys provide broad brush insights into the motivations of workers to migrate for work, the RCA researchers were able to have long and detailed conversations with former and current migrant workers and their families. The following sections are presented in order of the frequency of reasons given, although people in E. Lombok and W. Kalimantan had different perspectives on the first two priorities.

3.2.1. The beautiful house

‘Mine is the house with the Saudi money’

(woman, E. Lombok, pointing out where she lives)

This quote is typical of how people define each other both within the village and for the benefit of outsiders in all the villages we stayed in East Lombok. The house and the source of the finances for the house are not only the most important determinants of identity but are in constant use in conversations to refer to different families. As noted above, in the early eighties, the first woman migrant from urban E. Lombok returned and built ‘*a beautiful house*’; and this, we were told, was the start of the trend as others wanted this too. People consistently told us that the drive to have a ‘*beautiful house*’ is the overriding motivation for international migration. We were told in rural E. Lombok that ‘*the big houses are all from Malaysian money not Saudi money*’ and, in urban E. Lombok that ‘*with Korean money, you can build a shop as well as the house*’ and, even ‘*buy land*’.

The ‘*beautiful house*’ is generally for the family itself but sometimes people said that it was for their parents or their children. These houses are also the focus for family celebrations such as weddings and circumcisions. Guests stay there rather than being accommodated in tents like in other parts of Indonesia. Often these houses are just ‘*beautiful houses*’; some are façades which relapse into half brick, wood and thatch at the back; others are empty shells with very little



“The beautiful house”; an example of house construction from money raised by working in Saudi Arabia. We were told it cost IDR 250 million



they explain is used to describe themselves because those who are not poor have ‘big, two storey houses, kiosks and land’ (E. Lombok rural).

Throughout the urban study area houses were not only ‘beautiful’ on the outside but they also had good furniture, fridges, TVs and other gadgets. These families reiterated that the money they earned abroad was not for education of their children but for the house and its contents.

furniture and, on probing, no aspiration to furnish in the future. These houses generally represent an investment of around IDR 50-100 million⁶. Many told us that they only go abroad long enough to make sufficient money to ‘build the beautiful house’. Talking with young men in rural East Lombok who had just returned from their first trip to Malaysia they said that before they had only had wood and thatch houses and now they have new brick houses but they need to return to Malaysia as ‘the new house walls are not cemented or painted yet’. Another young family with four children under 6 years old explained that the ‘house is our dream’ and the father does not even send money home to the family for living expenses so fixated is he on saving for their dream.

These houses stand as a symbol of achievement and one’s capital wealth and seem to be especially important for families who have no land wealth. Despite this highly visible symbol of status, people often refer to themselves as ‘miskin’ (poor), a term which the RCA team rarely hears in other places in Indonesia where people refer instead to their ‘lives led simply’⁷. They frequently apologized for the state of the house (e.g. ‘in a mess’, ‘not so comfortable’, ‘like a goat shed’) when, in fact, these houses are indeed relatively ‘beautiful’ as they say. ‘Miskin’



Saving to build a new house is harder for many in West Kalimantan than East Lombok. After 2 years, only the foundation and base are complete on this one

Along with beautiful houses, there is also conspicuous new construction of beautiful and large mosques, which are pointed out to us with pride. These, like the houses are relatively ornate and people admit are often much bigger than required by the size of the population. People say they want E. Lombok to be known as the home of ‘a thousand mosques’ and being able to contribute and be seen to contribute to the cost of the mosque is an important aspect of the motivation to work abroad.

Building a good house is also a motivation for migrant workers in W. Kalimantan but the interpretation is very different.

Here, people mean a durable, functional and modest rather than a showy house or ‘beautiful house’. These may be constructed of brick/

⁶ One was said to have cost IDR 500 million

⁷ See the RCA + Project team (2015) “Understanding Poverty from the Perspectives of People Living in Poverty: Indonesia (sub report 1)” Jakarta: EDG & TNP2K

cement but may also be wood. There is no obvious competition in the way the houses are built. In fact, a large and ornate (for this area) house built recently was pointed out with derision and some laughter as *'too much'*. House construction is not the dream that those in E. Lombok talk about but simply a pragmatic use of income. In the urban area, people said you can tell who has been to Malaysia *'because their house looks better'* often referring more to extensions and repair than new build. Similarly, the churches in the area are modest and functional.

A stronger drive than building a house in W. Kalimantan study locations is simply economic necessity — a means to pay for daily needs as there were no jobs in the village (see 3.2.2). Saving enough from typical migrant work in Malaysia to build a house is harder than it is for the E. Lombok migrant workers and people talked about needing several trips as they could save only IDR 10-20 million per year.

A few migrant workers, both women and men, in both study locations indicated that all they wanted from migration was to be able to buy a new motorbike for themselves.

3.2.2. No work here?

The situation in the two locations differs. In E. Lombok especially in the urban area, there is less basis for the argument that there are few job opportunities. In fact, in the urban area people rarely used this to explain their reason for migrating for work. The urban area offers a range of income earning opportunities in service provision,

transportation and small trades. In conversations with us, people often compared the Indonesian civil service salaries with those they can earn by working abroad. The former are 50-75% less than working abroad, *'a degree is required'* and *'living costs are not covered'*. In the peri-urban and rural areas people say there are few local employment opportunities, but yet there is widespread house and mosque construction work and service industries such as auto-repairs. These are often staffed by people from outside (e.g. *'the mechanics come from Medan'*, *'the construction workers from the sub district'*), even though many of the villagers have construction skills they claim they are proud of from Malaysia. In the peri-urban and rural areas there is more reliance on cash crops than in the urban area, particularly tobacco and chillis. Tobacco is regarded as a very demanding and high risk crop. In a good year, with irrigation, a good profit can be gained but with less predictable climate and increasing demand for inputs, the profits these days, people say, are both low and risky. Chilli peppers, tomatoes and onions are also grown as cash crops but price fluctuations, people say, are stressful and unpredictable. The issue seems less to be about lack of work opportunities but more to do with pay and risk differentials (see 3.2.3).

However, people also suggested that there was a problem with local employment if you did not have high school graduation while it was much easier in Malaysia where jobs are regarded as *'plentiful'*. There are other problems with getting local employment including long waiting times for

Table 2. Work opportunities in E. Lombok study locations

location	Range of local work opportunities	Range of migrant work opportunities
Rural E Lombok	Cash crops (risky & low profit). Construction/mechanics (all filled by outsiders), civil service (from outside)	Domestic: shop-keeping, spa, other services (ojek/motorbike taxi driver, cleaner), domestic work International: domestic work, construction, plantation, service provision (driver, cleaner)
Peri urban E Lombok	Cash crops (risky & low profit) Garment factory, petty trade, kiosks, tool-making, farming (cucumber, corn, tobacco, chili), construction. Many agents/sponsors for migration	Domestic: mines (in Sumbawa/Kalimantan) International: domestic work (cooking, cleaning, child care), driver, factory (Saudi) construction (Malaysia)
Urban E Lombok	Many; civil service, transport, employment in shops, trading, farming , petty trade (e.g. snacks)	Domestic: civil service, retail/trade (e.g. food), domestic work, mechanics International: domestic work, plantation, driver, factory



acceptance into civil service training, long placement times for civil service graduates and the bribes⁸ and networks needed to facilitate or speed up the process. In the meantime, people need work and the easiest work opportunities are abroad.

‘Kalimantan is rich but everything is made illegal. If we plant a durian tree and then cut it down we might be arrested’

(HHH father, peri urban W Kalimantan)

By contrast the main motivation for migration for work in West Kalimantan in the past had clearly been because there were limited (or as people told us ‘no’) local income earning opportunities. Those migrating for work through the early 00s shared that there were ‘no other choices’. The key factor in the

current decline in migration for work is that there are now alternative local ways to earn an income, especially since the new roads have been constructed and opened access., ‘now we have other opportunities of job in the village. Before we go because everyone go’ (W. Kalimantan urban). People explained that now ‘there are so many jobs available’ and ‘here people are not looking for jobs. Jobs are looking for people’ (man W. Kalimantan urban). In one of the urban study villages there are many boarding houses which provide evidence of the new wave of jobs and the influx of people from outside the district. These changes and consideration of the costs and risks associated with migrant work, the preferred option, especially for those living near the sub-district town, is now to work at home. There is also ‘cross border trade’ especially in the border area and this provides a lucrative alternative to

Table 3. Work opportunities in W. Kalimantan study locations

location	Range of local work opportunities	Range of migrant work opportunities
Rural W. Kalimantan	Coffee shop, palm oil and rubber plantations, service provision (driver, porter, administrator, ojek/motorbike taxi driver, cleaner), retail, mechanics, farming (subsistence), cross border trade	Domestic: service provision (petrol station attendant, clerk, cashier, driver), retail/trade (e.g. used clothes), construction International: palm oil plantation, domestic work, service provision (butcher, driver, porter), karaoke, restaurant/coffee shop, construction
Peri urban W. Kalimantan	Farming (rice), mechanics, construction, kiosks, gold mining, cattle fattening, service (ojek, civil service, midwife, teacher), timber logging, palm oil and rubber plantations	Domestic: civil service, unskilled labour (to nearby cities), trade/ retail International: domestic work, palm oil and rubber plantation, coffee shop/restaurant, service provision (driver, cleaner), construc-
Urban W. Kalimantan	Many as relatively new sub district, trade/retails (close to the market), service provision (shop keeper, porter, renting out rooms for incomers), construction, civil service, kiosks, precious stone collecting and/or trade Gold mining (many ex-migrants returned due to gold rush), rubber sapping (price is low), farming (chili, rice, cassava, vegetables -limited mostly for own consumption), stone crushing for construction, cattle	People are currently not migrating due to jobs available locally (migration 10-15 years ago) International: (agents are not actively looking for recruits, information through relatives) Types of work in Malaysia: palm oil plantation, farming, restaurant (waitress, chef), domestic work (maid, elderly care), cleaning service, fishing boat crew, factory, construction Trading (clothing and kitchen equipment) in the “free trade zone” during weekends

⁸Civil service bribes are said to range from IDR 60-80 million

The construction of a new mosque is preferred to be done by outsiders despite construction skills in the village in E. Lombok



week'. One HHH older man told us he retains a house in Malaysia which acts as a lodge for new workers looking for work. 'You can tell they are newcomers as they are like dogs sniffing around for work'. He says they all get work quickly and repay the cost of the accommodation in kind. 'They know they will get a job and they know there's someone there to help'.

working in Malaysia. The nature of the informal interaction used in RCA enabled the team to have quite open conversations about this alternative and the people with big houses are more likely to be involved with this than having been past migrant workers, in contrast to the situation in E. Lombok.

The declining price for rubber and its high demand for inputs has severely affected people's view of farming in W. Kalimantan. Furthermore, young people told us everywhere that they do not want to be farmers like their parents. Instead they aspire to higher education or to learn trades such as auto-mechanic or driver. Women marry in their late teens and prefer to marry those in such trades rather than farmers. Young people said that only those with no education and no skills still want to migrate. But there is also a frustration among others that the job opportunities near their homes are problematic since they are either illegal (gold mining) or 'over-regulated' (timber and oil palm) which results in exploitive price negotiations and underhand deals. The general consensus is that getting a job in Malaysia is 'very easy' and 'work in Malaysia is available everyday' (son of RT, West Kalimantan peri urban). This does not compare favourably to the construction work, farm labour and truck loading/unloading work available at home which is irregular, pays less well or where payments are often delayed. The opportunities in Malaysia for this kind of unskilled labour is partly, people tell us, because 'Malay people don't like working hard'. Vacancies are posted in shop windows and several told us that you will get a job 'easily within a

'If you want to find Malay people go to an office, if you want to find Chinese people go to the mall but if you want to find Indonesian people go to the restaurants. They will be working there'

(HHH mother, peri urban W. Kalimantan about migrants)

However, like E. Lombok, people spoke about the frustrations from needing to have a network and contacts to get work in Indonesia and if you don't have these contacts and one is unskilled then it is easier to get work in Malaysia.

3.2.3. Better pay

Work in Korea or Japan for those in E. Lombok who know about this easily emerges as the preferred destination. Not only is pay considered very good but the working conditions and work ethic of Korean and Japanese workers are regarded as 'examples for us'. People say the work is only available for men and only for maximum three year contracts. They cited



Hauling timber in W. Kalimantan is very strenuous, poorly paid and not a good alternative for migrant work

Table 4. Comparison of wages for equivalent work

Job	Destination Country	Wage/month (Original Currency)	Wage (IDR/ month)	Typical wage in Jakarta (IDR/month)	Average % more by working abroad
Domestic Worker	Saudi Arabia	SAR 800-1000	2.9–3.6 million	900,000- 1.5 million (domestic worker) 1.2 -2 mill (Child Care giver)	300%
	Singapore	SGD 806	8 million		600%
	Malaysia	RM 400-500	1.8 million		150%
Shop/ Restaurant Keeper/ waitress	Malaysia	RM 500–900	1.8- 3.3 million	1-2.4 million	150%
Driver	Malaysia	RM 2,000	7.2 million	1.2- 3.5 million (personal) 2.4-5 million (company)	300%
	Saudi Arabia (Private)	SAR 1,000	3.4 million		144%
	Saudi Arabia (Company)	SAR 2,000	6.8 million		200%
Palm Oil Plantation Worker	Malaysia	RM 900 (undocumented migrant)	3.3 million	40-60,000,-/day	275%
		RM 1630 – 1902 (work at company)	6-7 million	1.2 million/month	540%
		RM 3000-4000 (private owner)	11-14 million		1000%
Rubber Sapping	Malaysia (on commission basis based on kg rubber gained)	RM 1,000-2,800	3 -10 mill	1.2 million (when rubber price is good) 500,000 (when rubber price is down)	250-2000%
Construction Worker	Malaysia	RM 60-100/day	216-360,000/day	60- 100,000/day	360%
Factory Worker	South Korea	KRW 2.067.863 – 3.308.562 Won	25 million (without overtime) 40 million (with overtime)	2-2.4 million	1135%-1800%
Mural Painting	Saudi	SAR 1000 –SAR 1,500	3.6 -4.9 million	100,000/day 2 million/ month	200%

examples of those returning who are *'well off, open businesses because of their big salaries'* (urban E. Lombok). They told us that factory wages can be IDR 40-70 million/month in Korea especially if one is prepared to work overtime.

Table 4 provides examples of pay differentials and one thing people are very knowledgeable about is

the wages they expect to get in their destination countries. Living expenses are often covered by foreign employers and this enables people to make savings.

The wages in Malaysia are considered by those migrating for work in W. Kalimantan as better than in Indonesia for equivalent work, even though it may not always look like that on paper. When asked why they

do not go to Jakarta instead, they were clear that the wages would be less and the travel expenses more. *'When I worked in Malaysia I always had cash in my pocket, but not here in Indonesia,'* shared an older HHH man in W.

Kalimantan who went on to say that if he could sell his land he would go back to Malaysia with his family in a shot. People explained the difference between working in an oil palm plantation in Malaysia compared to one in Indonesia as, *'There you get daily payments whereas here it is monthly. There you work from 7am until 11 am but here it is all day. In Malaysia there is time to do another job in the afternoon.'* (men, W. Kalimantan, urban) and they are assured regular pay and full time work in Malaysia which could not be assumed in Indonesia.



Different work in Saudi; this host household father paints sought after murals and earns good money

3.2.4. Running away

This motivation to migrate for work covers a number of different circumstances. *'Broken hearted'* is used to describe some people's motivation to get away — having been cheated or abandoned or had an unhappy relationship. For example, one young woman (E. Lombok peri urban) said she would have probably committed suicide if she had not found this way to support her children after her acrimonious divorce following a very short marriage. Another (E. Lombok urban) said her husband was forcing her to accept a second wife and so she *'wanted to escape'* and chose to go to Saudi. In rural E. Lombok we heard that only divorced women were *'allowed to go to Saudi'* and this was couched in terms of a recognition that they had to earn for their children.

A different kind of running away was highlighted in several conversations in W. Kalimantan with or about uneducated young men who migrate to Malaysia to work currently. A *ketua rukun tetangga* (head of the neighbourhood) implied that some of these youth were the ones giving Indonesia a bad name because *'they make problems, killing, stealing, deceit, counterfeiting... that's why Malay people think bad of us'* (W. Kalimantan peri urban). As it is still considered easy, albeit risky, to work without papers and without education, this becomes an option for some who might otherwise struggle to find employment in W. Kalimantan. In the urban study location these boys were referred to by people

as *'nakal'* (naughty) because they had skipped school, drank alcohol and smoked. Although they could take up day-waged work on farms or load/unload trucks crossing the border, *'if you work here and don't have education then you will just be cheap labour. If you try to work in palm oil here they still need documentation even if just a CV. But in Malaysia they don't really care about it'*. As others put it, *'The Malaysian boss says: 'you need work, I need men'* (man W. Kalimantan urban). Often people talked about some young men simply *'not wanting work in the village'* associating them with the same profile of uneducated and reckless boys.

3.2.5. Experience

Chatting with women migrant workers in urban E. Lombok many said they went when they were in their teens/early twenties mainly for *'the experience'* and some young women teachers said that all their peers went so they did too before admission to teacher training college. They described it as *'fun'*. Others said that they went (about 7 years ago), some without parental permission *'with friends, we all went on a bus together... so many went'* as they wanted the experience. Some young women said they just *'wanted the experience'* even though they were married and their husbands, they said, could provide for them.

A strong motivation for E. Lombok migrants to Saudi Arabia is a chance to experience *Haji* or *Umroh*. One HHH mother said she liked being able to go to pray each Friday with the boss's wife and had been on *Umroh* many times. The costs of going for *Haji* or *Umroh* are usually paid by the employer either as an official 'bonus' or as a gift.

Box 1: Travelling experience

Young men felt that going to Malaysia was a kind of experience that they wanted to get while they were young. A young man in his twenties often told stories to his friends that he has been to Singapore and Thailand and were compared how clean those cities compared to the Indonesian cities he had visited. His parents had worked in Saudi. He left school when he was in the 5th grade without his parents knowing and went to Malaysia for the first time illegally with his uncles. After several years working in palm oil plantations, he went to Malaysia for a second time. This time he got a passport after he was eligible to apply. He wanted to have a passport not only because he felt more secure, but also for the opportunities to travel to other nearby countries.

Field Notes, E .Lombok rural

The event is often celebrated by posting on Facebook or, on return, hanging a banner outside the home (see photo).

Several in W. Kalimantan told us that their motivation was to go to meet new people, possibly with a view to finding romance and have ended up marrying and remaining in Malaysia.

Sometimes when young people don't want to go to school anymore, they go to Malaysia for experience'

(Coffee shop owner W, Kalimantan border)

Some young 'cool' boys in W. Kalimantan used much hyperbole to share their reasons for going to work in Malaysia, *'It is bright there. There are many lights. Not like here where it is dark. There is like heaven on earth'*. They drink alcohol freely, enjoy the night life, including, they said, the prostitutes. One said he had been put into juvenile jail once but it did not dampen his enthusiasm for the *'experience'*.

3.2.6. Tertiary education costs

As pointed out above (3.2.1) there is not a strong aspiration for tertiary education in E. Lombok and

few said that saving for education was a motivation for migrating for work, but we did come across some rare cases. This could be students themselves migrating for work or their parents migrating for work in order to raise the capital to cover tertiary education costs. We met young men who knew of friends in Malaysia saving for university costs and women who had gone to Saudi for one contract period in order to raise the required finances. One young woman told us she had *'run away to raise this money for herself'* because her father refused to pay for college. One family said they had got their *'beautiful house and motorbike'* already and so now they *'want to make money for their daughter's education as she starts high school soon'*. The father of one E. Lombok urban family had worked in Malaysia for more than ten years and had bought both a house and car with the savings. However, with looming higher education costs, they have sold both.

Migrating for work as a means to raise money for tertiary education in W. Kalimantan was not identified by people as a strong motivation despite very high aspirations for children to continue into tertiary education (by contrast to E. Lombok). These costs were generally addressed through selling land, *'cross border trade'* activities or timber (despite the moratorium) as incomes for the majority of those in working in Malaysia did not support savings accumulation. Only one father talked about possibly returning to Malaysia to raise money for his son's education.

3.2.7. Other crises

Although people in both study locations said in the past economic crises, especially in the 90s, had been the key reason for migrating for work, this was rarely a motivation for migration

The importance of Haji demonstrated by returnees posting banners on their houses (East Lombok)



not support savings accumulation. Only one father talked about possibly returning to Malaysia to raise money for his son's education.

for work now. Very few shared with us that family financial crises had prompted the decision. We heard one woman who had to leave Junior High School because her father was ill and, as eldest child, she was obliged to help the family. Another woman told us she needed to service a large debt her husband had incurred through a failed attempt to get to Malaysia for work, as she was being harassed by the debt collector while he was away.

As mentioned above in rural E. Lombok we heard that only divorced women were *'allowed to go to Saudi'* and this was couched in terms of recognition that they had to earn for their children. In W. Kalimantan we stayed with a widow who went to Malaysia in the 90s to work in the catering sector because she had no other way to support her children.

In W. Kalimantan people talked about divorce being a motivator for men and women to leave to work abroad, sometimes to provide an opportunity to *'forget about it'* or because they were *'broken hearted'*, perhaps in hope they would meet someone there and sometimes because of economic necessity.

3.2.8. Love marriages and 'other marriages'

In W. Kalimantan, especially with the fluid border, many told us that members of their family had gone to Malaysia a decade or so ago, married, and remained there. While most are mixed Malaysian-Indonesian marriages, some met their Indonesian partners while working in Malaysia and have decided to stay because of the better earning opportunities. For example, one couple with a small baby now living in Malaysia earn between them IDR 10.5 million per month in a furniture factory *'that is not possible staying in our village'* commented the sister. Another HHH mother talked about her two nieces who married Malaysian men and now live there where it is *'better to live because the food is cheap and the wages are higher'*. People shared that it is safer to be settled and married there than to be working illegally, but were adamant that these were not marriages of convenience.

Nevertheless a few others talked about a lucrative alternative livelihood option through *kawin kontrak* 'contract marriage' to Malaysians. They were told by a

friend (no middlemen are involved) that a Malaysian man is willing to marry them and the deal is that they remain married for 6-12 months. One of the most beautiful houses in the urban location In W. Kalimantan was pointed out as resulting from just such an arrangement.

3.2.9. Setting up a business

The desire to establish some kind of enterprise on return from migrant work is quite low in both study locations and we rarely found it to be a motivating factor. In W. Kalimantan some had set up small kiosks and sold gas, or established mechanic shops but *'the problem is people don't pay their debts. People want everything on credit. So we cannot make a business.'* There is also the problem of competition with too many kiosks operating in a small area. There were some small businesses (tailoring, snack production) set up by returning woman migrants in E. Lombok with some project support but these were lackluster and making very little profit. Other work and services were provided by outsiders and generally there was very little appetite for entrepreneurship where low profits and high demands for credit from family and neighbours is the norm.

3.3. Why we do not want to migrate?

3.3.1. Risks

'I would allow her to go to Saudi (and not Malaysia) because she is not allowed out there' (husband of prospective migrant worker, E. Lombok)



Stark contrast in houses. The owner of the one in the background never worked abroad. The one in the foreground did. However the small kiosk they have opened does not make a profit.

'Saudi is more secure for women because we have to be accompanied outside' (woman migrant, 30, E. Lombok)

In E. Lombok, many families of women migrant workers and migrant workers themselves spoke about how they preferred Saudi Arabia as a destination country to others because they would rather stay under strict Islamic rules. Both the families and the women themselves appreciated the concept that they were not allowed to go out of the house alone and saw this as wise protection rather than restriction.

Some shared that there was no risk *'if you are a good person'*, implying this also meant being a good Muslim. Women and their families frequently and openly talked about the sexual harassment stories they had heard and were familiar with the media coverage of these and the high profile cases where Indonesian maids have been beheaded for murdering their employers⁹. But they dismissed the risk, saying that this was a risk for "other women" not them. They explained that these women were not *'good people'* and they deliberately flirted and had affairs with their employers, to earn favours, gifts or money. In one conversation we were shown a YouTube film of *'such women'* wearing only their underwear leaving the bathroom, in support of the (widely held) idea that these women *'ask for it'* through their behaviour and that *'these kind of women'* were damaging the reputation of Indonesian domestic workers. *'We never flirt like these women'* asserted women in peri urban E. Lombok and in urban E. Lombok. They said, *'I am not going there to do that sort of thing. Bad women always want to earn more money by 'dating' the employer's sons or the employer'* and *'you have to behave properly to avoid being harassed'*. It is clear, they said, *'don't flirt with the boss'*. Other women told us that sexual relations with the boss can lead to the worker running away because she is frightened of or threatened by the employer's wife rather than the man himself. They said that Arab men can be very flirtatious (*'they see so few women without burkha'*) but it is up to the woman to respond appropriately. They said that it is possible to complain and threaten to tell the wife and this works.

One woman told us, *'when he flirted I told him not to dare to touch me or I will report you to your wife'* and reiterated that *'this is what you have to do'* in

Box 2: Parents concern

'We are very afraid for our daughter in Kuching. She has been there three months as a waitress. She has no papers and we worry that she will get caught. Her uncle got picked up when he was just visiting and not working and was jailed for 3 months. So what might happen to her?'

(HHH parents, W Kalimantan border)

these circumstances. Another punched back and ended up with a three week jail sentence (something she said was actually rather pleasant as *'they give you very good food like apples and grapes and it is comfortable'*) and then resumed her job. Nevertheless, the urban health clinic worker we chatted to indicated that some women migrant workers do get pregnant in Saudi (and we met children with Arab heritage) but both she and the women we spoke with indicated that the sex had been consensual. One said *'she was in love'*. Whenever the subject of harassment was broached, this was quickly denied as a problem for them as they believed they knew how to avoid and deal with it.

'You have to be careful. Not all bosses are good bosses'

(Man who works in slaughterhouse in Malaysia with a good boss. W.Kalimantan)

The bigger risk women told us was not of actual sexual harassment but suspicions from jealous wives. These wives can become extremely vengeful and we heard stories of verbal abuse, being hit and one personal experience of having hot water thrown over her. A young woman migrant told us how she ran away from the house because the wife was treating her badly and she thought this better than trying to fight back. An upset wife could even report them to the police on false charges.

Sexual abuse and harassment is not only a risk for women — men too shared stories of sexual abuse by employers and fellow workers.

In W. Kalimantan the risks most often talked about were associated with working illegally in Malaysia. *'It is hard, expensive and dangerous to go to Malaysia. You are gambling with your life'* (HHH brother in law, W. Kalimantan urban)

⁹ Discussing this in W. Kalimantan, women were of the opinion that the maids were at fault since murder is a crime and were helped because the Government wants to retain migrant workers remittance flows

and others in the neighbouring sub village used the same expression. People spoke of the different situation years ago *'when the Malaysian police would be nice and they gave you a small amount of money and drove you back to the border...but now they hit you'* (Father HHH W. Kalimantan border).

'Working in Malaysia is not a flashy thing'

(HHH mother, peri urban W Kalimantan)

There were many stories shared of police raids and harassment, and even police killing illegal migrants. The undocumented workers for plantations told us about using the risky forest paths (*jalan tikus*; rat path) where, these days, there are lasers to avoid. *'If these strike you then you are immediately caught by the Malaysia Police, sometimes beaten and always deported'* and you are never allowed back. Money is now being offered to locals by the Malaysian police for any information or any suspicions about illegal migrant workers, making the migrant workers feel much more nervous than in the past. People spoke of being arrested because of their lack of documentation (they had used the *jalan tikus*). One said, *'I will never go back. I spent two months in jail where I was forced to bathe in filthy water'*. Another told us his money was taken by the Malaysian police while he was jailed for two months and never returned to him. Others explained that currently some oil palm plantation workers sleep in the forest in temporary mosquito-ridden wooden huts, often with the collusion of the Malaysian employer who fears being fined. *'I was afraid every single night,'* shared one man explaining that they are not provided accommodation on site and prefer not to use boarding houses because these are regularly checked by the police. *'Police never come during the day, always at night, at 1am because it easier to catch you when you are sleeping'*, shared another man. Although the stories of undocumented male migrant workers in Malaysia were extremely common in W. Kalimantan, there were similar stories shared in E Lombok, although regulated migration to Malaysia seemed more common. One man shared his experience of having been jailed twice in Malaysia. The first was when he worked for an oil palm plantation when the usual tip-off for a raid allowing them to flee to the forest failed to happen. The second time he was actually picked up when he was employed as a driver during a massive raid involving over sixty police. During his five months of jail time he was whipped, wearing only loincloth,

along with sixty others with rattan impregnated with poison. The resulting wounds took over two months to heal and left permanent scars. The jail had no light and he was not allowed to attend the mosque.

People told us of Malay bosses who do not pay on time or withhold wages especially when they know the worker does not have the right documentation. They can be in collusion with the police and complaints workers make about salary and conditions are dealt with *'swift justice'* by the boss calling the police. But all of these problems are related to informal employment. *'I am afraid of being there without documents because the police will chase and catch me'* (woman, W. Kalimantan border) and *'I don't want to go to Malaysia again ever, I thought I will get money but I actually get suffering'* (woman, W. Kalimantan urban). The constant fear of being reported to the police puts people into vulnerable positions. One woman coffee shop owner told us, *'as a housemaid I was bored and could not go anywhere. All the time I was afraid of the police because if my bosses did not like me they could just call the police'*. Another man said that if *'you work for a Malay boss without documents, they will cheat you and report you to the police so they don't have to pay your salary'* (W. Kalimantan border). Others shared that bosses purposely tipped off the police as *'pay day'* loomed. People also shared how some had been cheated with counterfeit money. Some men from E. Lombok also work in the oil palm plantations in Malaysia and shared that wages are low but those who are legal can work in state owned plantations for nearly double daily wages (1,000 RM cf 5-600 RM/month).

But many conversations we had suggested that bad news travels fast as people often knew few details beyond that there was a *'person who had been whipped and could not walk for 4 months'*, or *'the one who had died as a result of police beatings'* and whilst living in fear was genuine enough, actual experiences were rare. Others in W. Kalimantan who went un-documented said they had good bosses who looked after them and with whom they still keep contact. One said that he was trusted even with large sums of money and another was impressed that her boss would not even let her make him coffee. So the stories and experiences differ widely.

People said they were very well aware of the risks they take going illegally but if the pay is good or

they have few other options they are willing to take these risks. As well as taking the *jalan tikus*, others hide themselves in trucks which cross the border and involve bribes¹⁰ being paid by the truck drivers to avoid searches for not only their human contraband but other smuggled goods.

3.3.2. Life cycle

There is a strong sense in both study locations that migration is really for the young. In W Kalimantan people indicated that one would not want to go abroad to work once you have grandchildren (in your 40s). This was both because they feel they had less energy at that age but more because they want to be close to family. These people often talked about bad experiences they had had and the difficult living conditions endured while working in Malaysia and felt they no longer wanted to face these as they got older. Those in their 20s and 30s with no other skills, no house or assets were the most likely to be attracted by the prospect of work in Malaysia. But many said they missed the family when they were away and do not return to work abroad irrespective of age. Family ties in the Dayak community are very strong and families often live under the same roof. Newly married children live with parents and when they move out it is usually nearby. Since local jobs are most often secured through family connections, it is important to make sure these remain strong and this too becomes an important consideration in determining how long to stay away in migrant work.

Many explained that they would go before marriage and then come back to the village to marry and start a family. Young mothers and their families in W. Kalimantan do not want to go to away to work. But some with older children around 9-10 years said they now wanted to return to migrant work. The need to care for elderly parents is an important reason for choosing not to migrate for work.

In E. Lombok, most of the migrant workers were young (late teens to early 30s) and either unmarried or newly married, although in rural E. Lombok the only women



“easy to come easy to go” alcohol, smoking and gambling in West Kalimantan

‘Even if there is someone who takes care of all the documentation and I am promised a good salary, I still would not go back to Malaysia to work. I want to settle down with my family and watch my children grow up’

Father, HHH, W Kalimantan border

sanctioned to go to Saudi for work were said to be divorcees, but many of these had experienced only very brief marriages. The older generation largely depends on the next generation to continue the migrant work tradition and rarely resumes work.

3.3.3. ‘Easy to earn, easy to lose’

‘Stone rain in our own country is better than star rain in some one else’s country’ (HHH father, W. Kalimantan border)

In W Kalimantan the general feeling was that incomes earned in Malaysia were not sufficient to make any significant difference to people’s lives. Many men drink alcohol every day, often starting from early morning, and smoke and gamble. Whilst these pastimes may be regarded as being rooted in culture men shared with us that going away to work in Malaysia reinforced this drinking/gambling culture. This costs them a minimum of 25% of their cash incomes and contributes to the idea that money comes and money goes.

But a similar sentiment was expressed in E. Lombok where habits picked up or observed in the country of work such as buying make-up,

¹⁰ In the region of IDR 700,000 each way

disposable nappies, and snack foods can make a significant dent into income. Large amounts that are sent home to Indonesia are spent on children's pocket money and snack food eating. One HHH mother sends home the equivalent of IDR 3-4 million every month from Saudi to her husband and it simply gets spent with no assets accumulated.

3.3.4. Youth aspirations

In W. Kalimantan the youth who chatted with us were clear that not only did they not want to be farmers like their parents but that migrating for work was also not an option. *'Going to Malaysia is a choice only for those with no education. But we want to go to school so we would never go to Malaysia'* (group of SMP students, peri-urban W. Kalimantan) and *'why would you want to go to Malaysia because you are only going to be a janitor there?'* (students urban W Kalimantan). This sentiment was typical of most conversations we had with youth. Those near the border said that there was work in the oil palm plantations in W. Kalimantan now for those with education as a supervisor or clerk. Others talked about working in transportation such as truck driving or ojek driving (motor taxi), or portering as being better options for the less educated rather than migrating. Mothers in the border area said that when they were as young as twelve they went to Malaysia for work because they had no education but *'now our children go to school and after graduating they don't even think about migrating for work as they can go to the Police Academy, university, computer school'*. Young people endorsed this in separate conversations and added that the main sub district town was close and had many educational institutions where they could study. They said they did not want to marry young as their parents had done.

'When you drink alcohol it's good for your body and you sleep well'

HHH father W Kalimantan border

By contrast, in E. Lombok there was much less emphasis given to higher education. Those who had achieved academic certificates were often frustrated by the lack of jobs in their locality (which were filled by outsiders) and the time taken to secure placements. The salary for civil service work compares unfavourably with wages for available

work in Saudi Arabia and provides little incentive for higher education. Youth shared with us a desire to earn good money immediately.

3.4. How we experience the process to get to the migrant work destination?

'Going to Malaysia is only for those who are not so educated'

Father HHH, W Kalimantan

3.4.1. Making the decision

People in W. Kalimantan said that when there were few economic opportunities in the area, parents *'could not really say no to their children who wanted to migrate for work'*. Now they can have more influence but children themselves say they have little desire to leave (see 3.3.4). Some parents and older siblings shared that their bad experiences, mostly as undocumented workers, in Malaysia had led them to encourage children not to go. People are now well informed about the risks and the kind of jobs available. Though some earlier migrants said *'If I heard about it (risks) maybe I would think about it before I went to Malaysia'* (woman W. Kalimantan urban). There was no official information about migrating only what people told them and, for example, evidence of a good house owned by a returned migrant worker. As noted above, those choosing to leave are only those who are unskilled and uneducated and cannot get work locally, or those who are well connected through relatives or current or former bosses in Malaysia. Choices are made by the individuals concerned.

People are generally well-informed in E. Lombok because so many people follow the route to migrating for work and have been doing so for more than thirty years. The information is mostly circulated between friends and family who have been before but the agents are also proactive in sharing information. All the prospective migrant workers are literate. They are clear about the wages they can expect and the contract conditions. Mostly parents told us that their children made their own decisions about migrating for work although a few were hesitant about their daughters migrating for work. But agents are well known and trusted and incentives are often provided to families.

Box 3: With or Without Agent

One twin went to Malaysia through an agent in 2005 with an official work permit. He worked in a bread factory and became skilled and well paid and returned several times. He said it was an important way to find independence. His twin brother, on the other hand, went to work on a Malaysian fishing boat using only a PLB as he has no skills. He knew the risks and had heard the stories that Malaysian bosses can call the police at any time and refuse to pay wages owed. He met a network of 'fixers' once there and 'paid off' the security police (he spoke of how sometimes the police go undercover and pose as street people and how even a 'paid off' police might still beat you). He was arrested and locked up after only one week and was told if he got arrested a second time he would be jailed for one year. He was not deported on release and then got the work on the fishing boat earning 200 RM/day, although work is not regular. So he supplements this with farm work. He says he lives in fear of being caught and beaten up.

Field notes, West Kalimantan

3.4.2. Agent or no agent?

The experience of using agents in the two study locations is very different. In W. Kalimantan we understood that agents are often less well regulated, less well known and less trusted than those being used currently in E. Lombok. In W. Kalimantan there is a distinction made between agents and what people refer to as *calo* 'brokers'¹¹. This latter group are people they know and often members of the extended family or ethnic group. In W. Kalimantan the preference is not to use an agent, although occasionally people indicated that in the past this might have been good the first time you went but now the system perpetuates itself with returnees recommending others to take over from them. The fact that you are bound into a minimum two year contract, have your passport taken by the agent (except for Singapore) and a reduction in salary because of the agent's cut are all seen as important reasons to avoid them if possible. 'Brokers', on the other hand, will facilitate employment and may only expect some incidental contribution or recognition of their support. Once networks have been established in-country, including with employers, then these networks are called on for subsequent work contracts and are considered safer and more profitable. By contrast, there are a great number of active agents operating in E. Lombok and many are well known to the communities. Many are referred to as *PT-agents* (meaning company agents) and their PL (*Petugas Lapangan* or field officers) work hard to build trust in the community and are also well known.

The few current work migrants in the W. Kalimantan study location chose to go without agents. Some of these are construction workers who accompany their boss 'wherever he goes' and are in 'his care'.

Others prefer to use their own networks of relatives and cite bad past experiences with agents as one of the reasons. One HHH mother told how she had worked through an agent in Malaysia for two years and wanted to come home but was told she would only get half her wages so her sister replaced her for the completion of the contract. Another living near the border spoke of how her salary for work at a noodle restaurant arranged by an agent was cut the first time she worked in Malaysia and so for her second visit she used people she had met before to secure work. This is a common practice to use an agent for the first visit and contacts used for subsequent visits.

People in W. Kalimantan often first hear about a job opportunity through friends or relatives. They feel they can trust their relatives better and they can help them sufficiently navigate the need for Pas Lintas Batas (always referred locally as 'PLB' and passports). Most people recognize that the PLB is meant for visits only and is not a right to work. The following is the process they describe to go to Malaysia;

- Get PLB (and RI passport)
- Use PLB to cross the border
- Get an entry stamp on the PLB at the nearest immigration office to the check point in Malaysia if intending to stay, which costs 24 RM for a month. However, people talked about getting this with a payment of 60 RM which may include the cost of their 'facilitator' getting the stamp on their behalf
- Use only the RI passport once in Malaysia and travelling beyond the border area (if there is a raid then punishment is said to be less severe if

¹¹ Often referred to as 'uncle', 'auntie', or 'brother' even if not actual blood relatives

you have a passport). A passport is also required if you need to go to the hospital or if you want to send children to school in Malaysia.

For many, especially in some pockets in the W Kalimantan study area, the understanding is that the *'PLB gets you across the border and the passport allows you to stay'*. But elsewhere, most people recognize that the PLB is meant for visits only and is not a right to work. Some suggested that either looking *'somewhat Chinese'* or learning to speak Malay with a Malaysian accent will enable you to slip in without the full documentation and you will not be challenged. One of our HHH mothers was actively coaching her son to do this. Young people (under 17 years old) using only a PLB often pass the border with little scrutiny as they are assumed to be only family members.

People in W. Kalimantan, often did not mention the need for a work permit in conversations. Some said it was not necessary (*'you need in Kuala Lumpur but not in Kuching'* (W. Kalimantan peri urban)) and implied that having a passport made your stay *'legal'*. But some were very open that they knew this was *'illegal'* and knew that work permits are in fact required. Some get round this by stating that they are visiting relatives in Malaysia if caught, while others get the PLB on the basis that they have relatives who are resident in Malaysia and claim they are not working if challenged. A current PLB can be extended by being taken either by the person themselves or their resident relative to be re-stamped at the border and people say this is very straight forward (the stamps indicated that *'you go out one day and come back in the next but no one actually crosses the border'*). Some Malaysian bosses are complicit with illegality when it suits them. For

example, they do not feel they need to provide undocumented (i.e. those with only PLB) workers accommodation but will do so if the worker has a passport. People told us that the work permit has to be obtained by the employer *'who has to go to Entikong'*. Some were told that if the boss does this for them he will deduct the cost of the work permit and the transportation from their salary, so they choose to do without it.

Using family networks, people say, often improves bargaining power with the Malay boss and they are less likely to report you to the police in attempts to avoid paying salaries. These *'brokers'* will *'protect you'* since they have family and ethnic ties. They also only expect contributions not specific fees. This system is particularly strong among the Javanese former trans-migrants living in the peri urban study location in W. Kalimantan.

For many in W. Kalimantan, the distinction between legal and illegal migration is made purely on whether an agent is used or not. Outside agents, we were told, come to the villages and visit house to house and, unlike E. Lombok, few have connections with the village although some are invited by relatives to connect with those wanting to go abroad to work. However, there are less agents coming these days. The agents provide cash to a family referred to as *'taking care money'* or *'promised money'* and this signifies that the agent feels some responsibility for the migrant worker and his/her family. However, the first year salary often goes only to the agent to cover the other costs. Others indicated that *'you make your own way to Malaysia and then connect with an agent who will*

Box 4: what is PLB?

Often referred to as the *'red passport'*, these documents are issued as a special provision for Indonesians living near borders areas to facilitate movement across the border for social and weekly market trading purposes. It can be manually issued at special satellite immigration offices in villages, currently charged at IDR 150,000 (although officially it should be free) and is valid for three years. Applications need to be supported by an identity card and letter from the Village Head as well as two passport photos.



PLB known as *"red passport"* issued to those living near borders in West Kalimantan

get you a job' (HHH mother W Kalimantan urban). Those in W. Kalimantan who said they went through agents for work in Malaysia or Singapore needed only passport, visa and work permits. There was no mention of any other documentation or medical certificates.

People told us that when using an agent you can pick the country you want to go to but not the type of work (one woman explained that she wanted domestic work but ended up washing dishes in a cafe and found this hard). But the choice of country is limited to Singapore or Malaysia and the requirement for English language skills for Singapore can be a deterrent. The system to get work in Singapore is seen to be better and agents do not keep your passport. The process is regarded as more rigorous — they vet for skills, language proficiency, age (required to be over 24 years old) and will provide training if needed. The agent for Singapore gets paid directly by the employer through deductions from the migrant workers' wages for a specified period of time (e.g. 8.5 months). People shared that a key advantage of agents is that they will take care of any difficulties one might face such as being underage or having inconsistent or inaccurate documentation. The agent is said to have special relationships with the passport office and can facilitate any documentation that is needed. Other problems are said to be corrected *'through their networks and relationships'*. But for the agents we spoke with, this is an incursion into their profits and they prefer straight forward cases.

In E Lombok, agents are extremely active in all the communities and often very well known by the community. They are regarded with trust and are referred to as PT agents or simply agents (*tekong*) where they are not connected to companies (less often).

The E. Lombok agent's role was described as involving the following stages:

- Getting a letter of consent from parents or husband of the migrant worker as well as from the Village Head (involving check on *Kartu Keluarga* (Family Card) and ID card)
- Verifying the Indonesian Identity card and facilitating acquisition if there isn't one
- Organizing a medical check-up and certification of fitness (necessary blood tests)

- Organizing the passport and visa
- On hearing a call from the sponsor, arranging transport to Jakarta and accommodation there (often this involves accompanying the workers to the local airport and arranging someone to meet them in Jakarta to take them to the residential hostels there¹²)
- Arranging the meet-up process in the destination country (either through mutual provision of photos between the employer and employee or through a contact in country who meets all the workers together)

Talking with agents in E. Lombok, it is clear that the two systems alluded to by people themselves still operate: the official system ('PT agents') and one where agents have built up their own direct/personal connections in Saudi Arabia. This latter system is often preferred by women as they may be accompanied all the way to Saudi by the agent and it is faster than the official placement system. One such agent has built up a reputation over thirty years and works directly with Saudi connections in what he describes as a *'fully trusted'* arrangement.

Drivers sometimes make their own arrangements for employment in Saudi through their contacts or friends and family and avoid leaving through the Jakarta airport. The advantage here is that they can negotiate their own salaries and fulfil their preference to work in places such as hotels, where they work shifts rather than for private families (where they may have constant demands especially if the family is large).

Although there was never any mention of pre-departure medical checks in W. Kalimantan, these were part of the requirements mentioned by all migrant workers in E. Lombok even for plantation workers going to Malaysia. In E. Lombok peri urban, people said the medical certificate was very easy to obtain from the local *puskesmas* (health centre) and said it involved blood tests. But women in E. Lombok (rural) said they had to go to the district capital for medical check-ups and were confused that they still needed further medical check-up in Jakarta. Some spoke about delays caused by waiting for *'negative blood tests'*¹³ before being allowed to pursue their migration plans.

¹² In the past when more migrant workers were being sent, agents often accompanied them by bus to Jakarta but with fewer numbers currently, they more often are sent by plane

Graphic 2: Migration Cost to Malaysia (breakdown)

With Agent



Without Agent



Graphic 3: Migration Cost to Saudi Arabia (breakdown)

With Agent



Without Agent



3.4.3. Costs

Our conversations with people around the financial costs of migration were affected by people's perception of benefits and whether they actually wanted to go or not. For someone who wanted to go abroad to work the costs were dismissed as manageable but for someone who did not really want to go the costs were a hindrance. However, costs where there were perceived low benefits were of much concern and this surfaced more often in conversations in W. Kalimantan where people were talking about migration for work in Malaysia often for unskilled and relatively low paid work. These costs consisted of organizing someone to get their passport (usually quoted at IDR 400,000¹⁴), PLB (IDR 150,000¹⁵), photo costs (IDR 25,000) and transport (often minimal as the study villages are between 1-4 hours from the border and were estimated at about IDR 185,000) amounting to IDR 760,000 the first time and minimal costs going back and forth after that.

The 'PT agents' in E. Lombok generally operate on a 'turn key' cost system. The contrasting experiences are shown in graphic 2.

There is a high willingness to provide loans to prospective migrant workers in E. Lombok mostly by family members or well-off people in the village rather than going through official sources. Interest rates are negotiated but generally not called on until the end of the contract, working out to between 20-30%. These informal loan providers are only willing to provide loans for migration and not education as they feel that they are more secure. Some raise the costs of migration through selling land or are

Box 5: Jakarta training experience

We spoke on the phone to a sister of one of our HHH who is currently in Jakarta waiting, with two hundred others, to go to Dubai as domestic workers. They do not know why the process is taking so long and have been there two months now. She complained that she does not sleep well and often phones her sister back in E. Lombok in the night. They finished the training some time ago and were given certificates. They had been provided some information on how to look after the elderly and babies. They watched videos showing good and bad stories and what can happen if the employer is not good. She was scared by this and almost decided not to go.

Field Notes E. Lombok urban

assisted by the informal 'arisan' (rotating saving and credit groups) that they have been members of through their plantation work groups.

3.4.4 Training and pre-departure information

'We are cows waiting to be sold' (woman in holding centre in Jakarta)

'We're like goods being transferred from one place to the next' (woman migrant workers, W. Kalimantan)

There was almost no mention of any pre-departure training requirements in our conversations in W. Kalimantan. Skills are acquired 'on the job', the only pre-departure training mentioned was language training where agents with responsibility for those going to Singapore provide two weeks English language training in Jakarta at the expense of the agent. The only formal training mentioned in E. Lombok was required for migrant work to Japan and Korea and this comprised up to four months residential training in Jakarta including language and technical skills.

By contrast all the migrant workers from E. Lombok placed through agents talked about a period spent in Jakarta before departure. They knew that training was supposed to be part of this but often dismissed this as 'not really training' (women E. Lombok urban) or 'we did not learn anything...we learned all the Arabic we know at home', (woman E. Lombok peri urban). This period was described as being as short as one week but was more often two weeks and some spoke of being in hostels for many weeks waiting for the final departure. While most did not receive what they considered was training apart from rudimentary Arabic language classes, experiences ranged from 'we basically slept only, we had nothing to do –for 3 months just waiting for our visas', whereas some shared that they had had lessons on how to serve and clean properly and had seen videos (see Box 5). One HHH mother said 'the training was really all about waiting for the documentation to come through and for our future employers to review our

¹³One man is currently in Jakarta awaiting improvement in his blood test and has been waiting 7 months at considerable cost (IDR 6.5 million), money which his wife in E Lombok has sent him

¹⁴ Official costs IDR 300,000

¹⁵ Officially free (according to Immigration Department website)

photos. But others were expected to work daily in people's homes without pay. This was purported to be training but *'the supervisor never gave us any feedback'*.

Conditions in the hostels differ. One was described as a four storey building with a large hall on each floor where about 15 women were expected to sleep using rolled up mattresses and pillows provided for them. Here they had a rota for cooking and cleaning. Some said they slept *'with hundreds'* while others were small hostels. For example, one was described as comprising of bedrooms shared by three women who cooked for each other using a portable stove. All had relatively good toilets but some complained the overcrowding made them unhygienic. In another there were no cooking facilities and women had to buy food from vendors amounting to about IDR 2 million/month whereas in others, they were not allowed to go out. Some moved from venue to venue in different parts of Jakarta during this period. Some were allowed visitors and some were not. Restrictions, women said, were imposed to ensure you did not run away. Some agents paid for everything including clothing such as new hijabs and extra food but strictly on an understanding that they would deduct this from the first salary payments. At least three months salary automatically gets sent to the agents anyway, we were told.

People queried the necessity of going *on training* if this was not their first work experience abroad and found the enforced stay in the hostels boring and tiresome. However, there is a rumour that, despite the newly enforced moratorium on domestic workers, women will be allowed to enter Saudi Arabia and other Middle East countries if they can be classified as *'skilled'* so the acquisition of skills and

Box 6: Smart Agents

I met an active agent in E. Lombok who explained that in the past he could send up to 60 new recruits at a time. He would contact his company boss in Jakarta who would send him money to process these prospective workers. After counting all the costs to settle all paperwork (including *sogokan* (sweetener or bribe to iron out irregularities) and travel expenses, he would anticipate a IDR 1-1.5 million profit from each person he managed to sign up. However, following the moratorium on sending female domestic workers to the Middle East, he can only send a few people abroad. He said that although it prevented *'free'* sending of unskilled and semi-skilled women, *'PTs are very smart at bending rules, the bosses in Jakarta will put these unskilled women into the pool of skilled migrants so that they could be sent abroad'*.

Field Notes, E. Lombok rural

certification has now become more important. The kind of skills training provision and certification process described over the phone (Box 5) by the women awaiting clearance to go to Dubai may be the beginning of this new trend. An agent confirmed that *'we are smart to play with the regulations'* and said that women will be re-classified as skilled workers (box 6).

3.4.5. How people see the moratorium on domestic work to the Middle East

Women told us that there are good and bad aspects to the moratorium. They said that it was important that employers *'learn how to treat us better'* but the work represents the most important source of income in this area and cutting this will have serious consequences. Others said that there was no justification for the moratorium introduced by the Government as *'the women did the crime'* (referring to the published basis for the moratorium being the beheading of Indonesian maids for murdering their employers). However, people are confident that there are ways around the legislation. As noted in 3.4.4. agents seem to be adapting to the new regulation by ensuring women migrant workers are classified as *'skilled'*. Another way is to use a different route and some agents are flying migrant workers out of the country to Kuching, then to Brunei and then to Saudi, using contacts in immigration, police and local companies in Malaysia and Brunei to *'smooth'* this journey.

3.5. Life as an international migrant

3.5.1. Everyday

'Everything is provided' (domestic worker in Saudi Arabia)

Most of the women who talked to us about their experiences in Saudi Arabia said they were *'very happy'*. They talked about the first month as a difficult period where they felt lonely especially as they did not know the language and had to adapt to the family. *'I felt afraid, the boss was very big and he shouted when I did not understand things. Sometimes I think he has called me but his wife's name is similar and he has not called me. He shouts and tells me I should not come to him without hijab'* (woman, E. Lombok rural) but she said it soon got better. All the women indicated that they had their own bedrooms and often their

own bathrooms too. They said these were comfortable. Their work days are often long in that they are expected to be 'on call' from breakfast until the boss has gone to bed but they did not think this was arduous, especially if they work alongside other staff.

One said *'life is very easy, there are three maids from Indonesia, two from Java and me, the family is really nice'*. Some shared that they could get up late (10/11 am) and had lots of freedom in how they managed the day. Some literally only clean and refuse to do any cooking even when asked and singly employed. One told us her employer family always bought food from outside for both the family and the employees. One domestic worker purposely put extra salt in the cooking when asked to cook and was soon relieved of that responsibility. Most eat the same food as their employers. They generally go to pray with the employer's wife on a Friday and others accompany the wife on shopping trips to malls. There is no official 'day off' for most of them but they did not seem to mind. They would meet other Indonesians during their employer's family events such as birthdays and weddings and use this time to *'catch up'* and exchange telephone numbers. Some domestic workers are taken by the family driver to meet their Indonesian friends for a couple of hours a week while he waits for them. Provision of phones and phone credit or vouchers was standard and some bosses indicated they did not want the maids to be spending all their earnings on phoning home and readily provided access to phones.

There is a concern among many that their Saudi bosses are suspicious of them. We heard from different sources that *'the boss purposely leaves*

expensive jewelry or money out to test our honesty', that *'we don't talk to other maids we meet in the supermarket in case the boss thinks we are sharing their secrets'* and some indicated that they are not allowed to have camera phones in case *'they share pictures that the boss does not want shared'*. Some employers are very concerned about anything which might be regarded as a *'magic charm'* and some women said you could be jailed for *'having charms'*.

'Happiness depends on the boss. If you have got a good boss, he will trust you well and nothing will go wrong. With the wrong boss, there is where your problems are going to be'

HHH father, W. Kalimantan border

The norm, when agents are used in both Saudi Arabia and Malaysia seems to be that the workers passports are held by the agent or the employer and the explanation provided is to ensure the worker fulfills their two year contract and does not run away. People said this was not the case in Singapore.

Those women in W. Kalimantan who worked as domestic workers in Malaysia shared mixed stories of their experience typical of any domestic work situation. For one woman, who had had a previously good experience, on the second time around she had to care for an elderly couple whom she described as *'nagging'* and with whom she could not communicate because she could

Box 7: Employers in Saudi Arabia

'A lot depends on the type of employer you get' explain several women about their experience in Saudi Arabia. *'You first know what it might be like when you are met at the airport. If they come in a sedan car they are a small, wealthy family. If they come in a van then they are middle class and will almost certainly have lots of children'*.

'It is hard if there are lots of children. The work is non-stop as they all make demands. You cannot say no to the small children. If you make an ugly face to them they will increase their demands'

(E. Lombok urban woman)

'I was there in 2010 and had a really nice boss. I was allowed to talk to the men in the house and did not wear burkha. But other friends were not allowed to look at a male members of the family and never left the house except after dark. They were very strict'

(E. Lombok rural woman)

'I live with the fourth wife of the man and so he rarely visits. I am allowed to go to the bank, supermarket and all around with the driver because there is no man in the house. I only wear hijab and I am allowed to cook whatever I like.'

(E. Lombok peri urban woman)

Box 8: Mixed Experiences

One of our HHH mothers had worked for nearly 7 years as a domestic worker in Malaysia and had had mixed experiences, though on balance she feels they were *'mostly bad'*. She could not come home to Indonesia the entire time because the agent held her passport. She got a lump sum payment from the agent only at the end of her time. She was not allowed to communicate with her family of five children ages 2-19 the entire time. She was given food by employers and a *'little soap money'*. Her first boss, a woman, slapped her on the head because she was not adequately looking after her mother *'I cook, I washed the clothes, I helped granny, bath her, feed her, clean the garden and the daughter still said I didn't work well...as soon as grandma died I went to work in a noodle factory.'* She was beaten and dragged by the hair by the factory owner one time. *'I cried a lot there and felt isolated'*, she shared *'I thought 'I am a good person, why am I treated like this?''*. As a result of her experiences she is not permitting any of her five children to go to Malaysia

But another friend using the same agent shared a very different experience. She was allowed to travel after two years and was paid a lump sum at this point. She was very happy with the experience.

Field Notes, W. Kalimantan urban

not understand their language. So, despite the employer's family pleas, she quit. One was placed with a family with *'very naughty boys'* who teased and physically tormented her. Another worked for eight years with an employer who allowed her freedom to travel and *'bought me jewelry'*. She only gave up this work because she wanted to spend more time with her own children. Those with experience of working in Singapore said they felt the law was more favourable than in Malaysia and, as well as keeping their own passports, they got time off (one day per week), better pay, freedom to communicate with family and meet up with friends. They purposely selected Singapore because of the more favourable work regulations even though contracts often stipulate that the employee cannot return to Indonesia for two years. This and the long distance from home when they are free to travel often leads to feelings of *'homesickness'*, we were told.

No matter which country they are working the domestic workers from both E. Lombok and W. Kalimantan said that it was better to work in a situation with other domestic workers rather than alone. Men, even in illegal situations in Malaysia, at least have support from each other, they said.

There were personal stories shared of women who work in the so-called *'coffee shops'* or *'pubs'* and had to work long hours. Some had experienced sexual abuse and a few had become pregnant, sometimes with compensation and sometimes without¹⁶. In one case the baby was left with one of our HHH mothers while her daughter has returned to Malaysia and now is married there with additional children.

The W. Kalimantan men's experience of work in

Malaysia is often poor but this is largely due to the undocumented nature of the work they do. Much has been covered in the section on *'risk'* above and the current experience is dominated by *'living in fear of arrest'*. Having said that single men still brag about the experience and describe how they enjoy spending their earnings on alcohol, entertainment (karaoke, nightclubs and *'escort'* services¹⁷). Others said that working in the plantation was not bad and with a good boss things are good. They described how a good boss feeds them well, sometimes provides special food at weekends and buys them cigarettes. E. Lombok men also shared stories of living in fear if undocumented but as noted in Box 9 the fear goes away when they have work permits.

'There are kind bosses and very kind bosses. Although 'on call' 24hours, the very kind bosses will give you a bonus. The kind ones pay for everything too including phone calls home, but they don't give you a bonus'

Ex domestic worker in Saudi, E. Lombok

Men and women shared about the harsh conditions in some factories or on fishing boats in Malaysia where bosses and supervisors are strict. But the most prevalent concern was being cheated in their wage payments with promises often vastly different from actual wages received. For example a young man was promised 3000 RM per month but got only 1700 RM and he had not realized that this was due to the agent.

¹⁶ One woman was given IDR 30 million

¹⁷ Said to be 1,000 MYR per session

Box 9: Everyday as Plantation Worker

A group of seven men described their recent experiences of working illegally on the rubber plantation in Malaysia. They worked with about 50 other Indonesians but were provided no accommodation so had to build their own hut. They had to buy boots, knives and the chemicals needed to encourage the sap to run, out of their own pockets. They said they could make IDR 6-7 million per month which they felt was good but it is seasonal work and during the rains mosquitos are really bad and they feared malaria living as they did in the swampy land. It was a quiet area and lonely. They only ate noodles. Most stayed less than one year but the boss is still phoning them to invite them back. This time they want to go legal, and asked for an advance to get the paperwork done. But the boss does not trust them *'after I send the money you will cheat me and not come'*

Field Notes, W. Kalimantan border

Palm oil plantation workers described living in a hut in the mountain with about 20 others. It was cold and there were many mosquitos. They had to cook their own food. As you are paid by weight of palm oil fruit, they say you can work hard or less hard as you want at least but it is tiring and they work 11 hours a day. They all have one year work permits and the boss keeps their passports. It costs 1,000 MYR to get a work permit extension. They have insurance but are not optimistic about claims as others they know of have failed.

Field Notes, E. Lombok rural

Box 10: Result from Japan

Originally, his family would not let him go to Japan but he told them that he had to have a future. Since he got back he has constructed a house opened a store, bought land for rice cultivation and runs a transport business.

E. Lombok

The best experience shared of working abroad were those of men working in Japan or Korea. They talked about living in small apartments with *'nice furniture, TV, heating and wifi...all we have to provide is food'*. Contracts are never for more than three years but starting salaries were said to be IDR 8 million/month rising with substantial increments each year to IDR 20 million/month in year 3. People shared that working conditions and worker's rights were respected in both countries. Some shared that the host companies expect that the Indonesian workers will return to Indonesia as entrepreneurs and regard this as an indicator of success of the programme.

3.5.2. Medical support

The experience for official migrant workers from both E. Lombok and W. Kalimantan is similar in that people tell us that the employers generally take care of medical expenses, usually directly. One of our HHH mothers in W. Kalimantan who worked as a domestic worker in Malaysia through an agent said she had insurance for the two years of her contract and she was taken care of by the employer but others said they had to pay for their own medicines. When attending a hospital in Malaysia it is necessary to show a passport, *'for a while I did not have a passport so I tried to make very sure I did not fall ill. If I did I had to buy medicines from the pharmacy only'* (HHH Mother, W. Kalimantan, peri-urban). A HHH father said it was actually better to use Kuching medical services than ones in Indonesia as, *'It is cheaper, they serve you better and you don't have to pay up front for surgery like you do in Indonesia'*. Even in illegal situations such as described in Box 9, the boss took workers to the hospital and paid all the medical expenses.

3.5.3. Family contact

Mothers in W. Kalimantan shared how they missed their children when they worked away and were not able to communicate for two years because they did not have phones. Nowadays, however, regular family contact is possible between migrant workers in Malaysia and their families in Indonesia using their own phones and own phone credit. The rates are cheaper from Malaysia so usually the family in Indonesia text first when they want the migrant worker to phone them.

We heard that domestic workers in Saudi Arabia are often provided with phone access and vouchers to use the home phone. Some employers make gifts of mobile phones and are relaxed about the use of these.

3.5.3. Wages and remittance

Table 4 (page 14) provides information on the wages people indicated they expect in different countries but the way this is received differs. In Saudi Arabia, the agents fees are generally paid directly for the first agreed period which may be

Box 11: Carry Money Back Themselves

The daughter worked until 6 months ago in a clothing store in Malaysia. She went without a work permit and was paid 500 RM/month. She lived with the employer. She returned home each month with sugar, cooking oil, 'Milo' and biscuits for the family. All her earnings are used for this, her make-up and phone credit.

Field Notes W. Kalimantan border

between 3-8 months. After this monthly salaries are paid into an account, often the husband's, in Indonesia on a regular basis. In many cases in Malaysia payments are only made as lump sum 'end of contract' payments.

In W. Kalimantan people told us they mostly carry money back to their villages themselves or get friends to do this for them. Some use the Post Office to transmit money but few use the bank partly because of bank charges and partly because it is less convenient or they are working illegally and this is problematic. Amounts, if not paid by lump sum, sent back are very low and usually in the range of IDR1-1.5 million every month or every quarter.

Many of the young W. Kalimantan men told us they spend their money in Malaysia mostly on entertainment but a few are determined to save towards the construction of a new house. Discussing the amounts sent back and the amounts earned, these men clearly spend much on themselves. By contrast most of the young women are trying to save towards constructing a new house and, on the whole, seem to come home with larger amounts. Some women send regular amounts home through the Post Office but most bring cash when they come on leave or have finished their contracts. For example, one HHH mother brought IDR 100 million in cash with her having made a self-imposed target which determined when she would return.

3.5.4 Playing the system

There were several personal experiences shared in E. Lombok from Saudi Arabia where women had purposely mis-used the repatriation system. One story is described in Box 12 but hers was not unique. We heard others who said, 'If I want to run away I want to get caught by the police so I can go home for free'. They told us that sometimes it is necessary to pay the police to catch you so that they take you to jail and we were told that under a bridge in Mecca there are many 'run away' Indonesians purposely hoping to be picked up by the police. But some have insufficient money to bribe the police to catch them

and others have arrangements with the police to get the unpaid wages first and share these before deportation.

Running away from the original employer also enables the migrant worker to earn higher wages with a new employer, they told us. This is because the agent negotiates lower rates with the employer but it is possible to make 50% more if

Box 12: Repatriated for Free

One woman in her early twenties shared that she had run away from her first employer because the employer's wife was extremely jealous and began to treat her badly. She said she 'fortunately met a man from Madura who accepted IDR 5 million to place her in another house. He did this for others too'. She knew she was working illegally but she was not ready to come home yet. 'I felt ashamed that I had not earned enough money'. When she had made enough money, she gave herself up to the police telling them she had runaway 'because my employer treats me badly' even though her new employer was really nice. This meant she was repatriated for free. She wants to rejoin this employer and his family as soon as her children are a little older, is in touch with him and hopes he will organize a work permit directly.

the job is negotiated directly. They use their network of Indonesian contacts in country to arrange this with drivers being particularly helpful. So for example, a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia might get 800-1000 SAR per month working through an agent but can earn 1200-1500 SAR if she 'runs away' and gets a new employer.

The medical insurance offered to those working in Japan and Korea is considered generous. Apparently genuine stories of personally known workers were shared, including a worker who had sliced off his finger on purpose on the job to get an insurance pay out of IDR 700 million and repatriation. Others talked about a pay out of 1,400 million for a deliberate injury to the head.

3.6. Families left behind

'I don't even remember my mother's face anymore and I don't care' shared a boy in W. Kalimantan (urban) who was left behind by his mother who went to work in Malaysia when he was 6 years old. She never returned and she rarely sends money. Another HHH family told us it was really hard when their mother left twelve years ago when the youngest daughter was only two years old and

there was no contact. This daughter still feels affected by this and says she will not migrate herself but her elder sister who was only nine years old at the time and had to look after her younger siblings is still keen. The grown-up children of another woman who worked as a cook in Kuala Lumpur never visit her since she returned and settled back in Indonesia. This mother says *'this is because they don't feel close to me now'*. In E. Lombok people recalled how their child *'became naughty while I was not there'* and a young man shared how he had dropped out of school because his father was not there and how his baby brother is closer to him than his own father. Another boy said, *'I cried a lot when my mother left and I can only speak with her once every three months'*.

Other children said they like the fact that they get given gifts such as electronic gadgets. One eight year old HHH boy spent his early years playing with gadgets to keep him occupied while his mother worked in a restaurant in Malaysia. Children in E. Lombok tell us their father is *'nice because he always brings presents back such as toys and clothes'* and other girls say they got *'a phone, pencils and a tablet from mother'* and so are happy.

One HHH mother in W. Kalimantan (urban) shared how she felt lonely while her husband was working in Malaysia but also overwhelmed by having to look after young children on her own. Another told us how difficult it was to take care of her three children by herself while her husband was working in Malaysia for twelve years, especially as he did not send remittances and she depended her own income from rubber plantation and farm work for day to day family's expenses and on her own extended family to help out with school costs. The quite common practice of giving workers lump sum payments at the end of their contracts has consequences for families left behind trying to manage daily needs. People in E. Lombok shared that men often prevent their wives from returning to Saudi primarily because they would be lonely.

In the Dayak community in W. Kalimantan, families tend to live in large extended family units so we heard less about the problems of children being left behind or young mothers with small babies as a burden as there is family to help out. Frequently grandparents are left the responsibility of raising the children of migrant workers. Day care in Malaysia is considered expensive and so the easier option is to leave the children with grandparents in Indonesia. Sometimes this responsibility is embraced but sometimes the grandparents feel it is a burden. One

grandma shared how she has been looking after her grandchild since she was six months old and resists suggestions from an aunt that she should now go to Malaysia to join her mother as *'the child is six years old and is attached to me now'*. But another said, *'it is a dream that parents benefit from their children going abroad to work. I am burdened with the child my daughter had out of marriage there and I have to continue to work selling snacks and household appliances in the market. I have three daughters in Malaysia'*. Although while we stayed with her the daughters called on the phone regularly, there is no financial support from them unless she specifically asks.

In E. Lombok there is less of the extended family tradition and either grandparents, aunts or elder siblings were expected to look after younger children. Grandparents told us that they sometimes developed stronger bonds with these children than their own parents. A grandma in her 70s shared that *'it is very tiring to look after the three boys (left by two different sons) and I only get support from one of my sons. Occasionally he sends IDR 500,000'*. One HHH mother shared how much of a burden she found looking after her nieces. She is sent the equivalent of IDR 400,000/month but this is not enough to cover the expenses and pocket money for these girls *'I am tired and want to spend my old age focusing on me not on these kids'*. Some grandparents shared that they feel that the children left behind may become rude because their fathers are away.

Those living away are without doubt the subject of gossip especially around suspected affairs conducted by either the one who is away or his/her partner left behind and, in W. Kalimantan a pregnancy too soon after returning home from abroad is often a subject of gossip. Others in W. Kalimantan in particular spoke about feeling marginalized or excluded by their community on their return, being pointed out as the ones having weaker relationships with family and neighbours. There is sometimes an assumption that the migrant worker is better off and they often receive many demands for loans or are excluded from lists entitled to Government social assistance or local savings programmes. Some talked about feeling they had to keep up with the lifestyle they had acquired in Malaysia (fashion, clothes, entertainment) and found this difficult or another route to exclusion from the rest of the community. Some said that they had become fluent in Malay while they were away and found it

difficult to resume speaking the local language Dayak Bedayu. Some said that the isolation they felt on return led to boredom which they had not felt in Malaysia.

In E. Lombok the gossip associated with those away and those staying behind is rampant. Women whose husbands are abroad said that they retreat into their homes around 8 pm to avoid any gossip that they might be having an affair, for which a local euphemism *'ngaji malam'* (literally 'night prayer' but meaning an assignation) has been coined. Others talked about the problem of re-integrating, especially when they have no skills to farm and *'have got used to wearing clean clothes'*. Without active networks locally in Indonesia the potential for work on return, even if they want it (which most don't), is restricted.

3.7. Impact of migration

The impact of migrating for work is very different in the two study locations mainly because of the difference in motivation. For many in W. Kalimantan study locations, migration for work has simply been an economic necessity in the past and as job opportunities have become available in their locality this is no longer the case. Many said there was no lasting benefit from migrating for work and pointed out houses of those who had gone and those who had stayed as examples; both houses were still predominantly wood and had the same assets (TVs and satellite dishes and motorbikes being universal). One said it is *'better to suffer in Indonesia than*



Son of a migrant worker happy with the gifts of electronic gadgets

Malaysia' and another, *'going to Malaysia for work is like going to another city but there are more risks, why would I go there?'*. However, for those migrating in E. Lombok, there were conspicuous benefits. Migration for work has become the norm to be followed and a way to make money quickly for investment usually in a *'beautiful house'*.

Some shared that they acquired new skills abroad; a woman from W. Kalimantan was proud of the English language skills she honed in Singapore and felt this gave her status in the village. A returning son of a migrant worker has been able to teach his cousins how to use computers. Others gained construction and electrician skills. But in E. Lombok even those with construction skills acquired in Malaysia preferred outsiders to undertake the house and mosque construction in their village. Arabic language skills acquired in Saudi were much flaunted and acknowledged in E. Lombok.

The incidence of divorce in the E. Lombok study area is very high and talked about openly. Young children candidly shared that their parents were divorced. Young people condoned their own behaviour by saying *'parents have affairs so they won't mind about me'*. An example of the prevalence of divorce was gathered by the E. Lombok urban team who found that even among the relatively few families they interacted with ten migrant worker women had divorced, one as many as five times. Among the men migrants ten had divorced, one three times



Electrician skills acquired from 10 years in Malaysia are applied locally

and half had married more than one wife. Those left behind had been 'cheated on' in six cases for wives left behind and a further six cases for men who were left behind. Of husbands left behind nine had taken a second wife.

3.8 Future view of international migration

'There was nothing to do back then (in parents time) but now there is lots of work here'

HHH son, W. Kalimantan border

'University is the answer to not going to Malaysia'

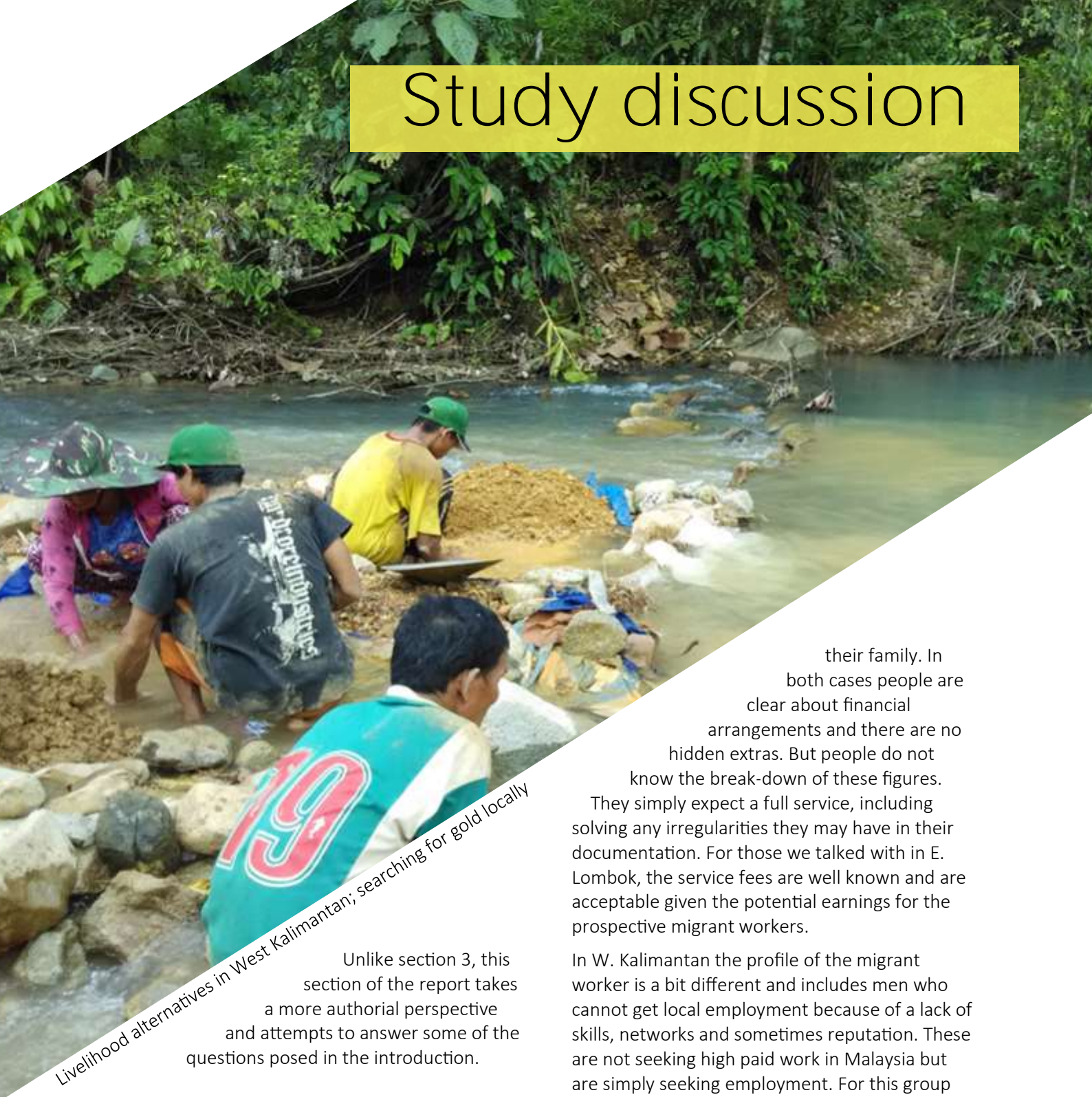
FHH woman, W Kalimantan peri urban

On the whole parents and children in W. Kalimantan indicated that they would neither encourage nor seek opportunities for migration for work. Those with bad experiences are generally those who have gone undocumented and they mostly are particularly negative about their children following their example. Only those in the peri urban location who were seeking livelihoods in what are regarded as highly regulated sectors (timber, gold and rubber) were still contemplating migration for work. But even here as in the other locations in W. Kalimantan, the aspirations of most of the young people lie in education and well paid employment in Indonesia. Most shared they want to *'go as high as they can'* in school and without doubt beyond high school. Several shared plans to go to University or nursing college while those with less academic bent shared they want to learn trades or clerical work. Many want to be civil servants.

This is in direct contrast to E. Lombok where young people often derided the costs, effort and time required to become a civil servant in Indonesia and *'still earn less than half what we can earn in Saudi'*. There was no ambition of this kind shared in any conversations we had. The money is good abroad and, despite the fact that there are other options for work in the area, the norm continues to be to migrate for work. People point to the houses — *'we would not have beautiful houses like this without migration'*.



Study discussion



Livelihood alternatives in West Kalimantan, searching for gold locally

Unlike section 3, this section of the report takes a more authorial perspective and attempts to answer some of the questions posed in the introduction.

4.1. Why do people migrate without documentation?

The data reviewed prior to conducting this study indicated that many migrants for work still do not yet comply with full documentation required to work abroad.

4.1.1. Is it cost?

Those who use agents generally expect a 'turn key' service which men have to pay for. Women, on the other hand, generally have no up-front costs or even are provided with an incentive payment made to

their family. In both cases people are clear about financial arrangements and there are no hidden extras. But people do not know the break-down of these figures. They simply expect a full service, including solving any irregularities they may have in their documentation. For those we talked with in E. Lombok, the service fees are well known and are acceptable given the potential earnings for the prospective migrant workers.

In W. Kalimantan the profile of the migrant worker is a bit different and includes men who cannot get local employment because of a lack of skills, networks and sometimes reputation. These are not seeking high paid work in Malaysia but are simply seeking employment. For this group any additional costs for documentation are a burden. The system of using PLB to cross the border and getting repeat extensions has worked well for them in the past and although there is more nervousness about police checks nowadays, the risk is known and considered. As described above, a passport is regarded as additional security and experience has shown that they get less harsh treatment if they have a passport than if they have only a PLB and get picked up outside the immediate border area. Still, people felt that the border area is the place they are most likely to be challenged. A passport also enables them to seek medical assistance. For those who probably

could afford to get the proper documentation the issue is one of convenience as it takes time and effort to get full documentation.

4.1.2. Insufficient information about the risks and the jobs available?

The study indicates that people are very well aware of the risks of working without documentation (usually conflated to mean a valid passport and work permit/visa) as well as the nature of the work they will undertake abroad. In both study locations international migration has been a long tradition and stories and experiences are shared readily among family and networks who have been before.

Full trust is placed in 'PT agents' and other agents regarding the documentation. With the payment or agreements entered into, the prospective migrants assume that all the necessary documentation will be taken care of. The study suggests that those using agents who might still fall short of the full requirements are not aware of this or are convinced it is not a problem. No questions are asked of the agent. This means the worker is not able to judge whether he/she is being reasonably treated or cheated.

In W. Kalimantan where the number of people working without documentation is high, the risks are readily shared including personal stories of arrest and jail. There is a clear knowledge that the security forces are getting tougher and risks have increased. However young men who are unskilled, 'looking for experience' and who do not seem to have the opportunities for alternative employment in Indonesia, court this risk.

Furthermore, those near the Malaysian border often cross in search of casual work, sometimes for only a few months. These jobs, while reportedly plentiful, are not supported by official work permits.

4.1.3. Inability to explore local options (market failure)?

The study found that migration for work is not an issue of an inability to explore local options. In the W. Kalimantan study site the creation/opening up of the sub district has created jobs which even attract people from outside the sub district. In the E. Lombok study locations outsiders occupy work niches such as construction and services not because the local inhabitants are not aware but because they

do not want these jobs, especially after their experience(s) as international migrant workers.

The study found similar reasons in both study locations for not availing work locally;

- Need for networks to secure any kind of job for local work in Indonesia (this is both a cause and effect of migration; people leave because of weak networks and people working abroad tend to have less well developed networks).
- Need for bribes for many forms of local employment, especially in the civil service.
- The pay for equivalent work e.g. farm work, plantation work is lower in Indonesia and often involves longer hours. Unskilled work opportunities in Indonesia are often very labour intensive (e.g. hauling logs in W Kalimantan). Unskilled local labour opportunities are often irregular and contracted as day wage work whereas work in Malaysia, albeit low paid, is long term.
- Small self-run enterprises (e.g. snack making, running kiosks, mechanic services) fail because of competition but also because of the expectation to provide goods and services on credit to family, neighbours and others in the community.
- Investment in farming is considered risky because of high input costs, price fluctuations and climate unpredictability. In W. Kalimantan people also spoke often of the time taken until there was a return on investment (e.g. 3-4 years for oil palm) and the difficulties of working in what they considered over-regulated industries. In E. Lombok, they said that even if they wanted to resume farming they simply do not have the skills and, anyway, they do not wish to return to farming .
- Skilled and graduate persons (e.g. nurses, teachers) feel an entitlement to work locally and tell us they are unwilling to travel far for work and remain unemployed. In E. Lombok, in particular, civil service salaries were considered very low in comparison to earnings from domestic work in Saudi Arabia.

4.2. What are the full financial costs of migration for the migrant worker?

The survey question in the national Economic Social Survey simply asks, 'How much was the

total costs for working abroad? (International Migration and remittance section question 42) and it was hoped that the RCA study would be able to shed light on the breakdown of this. However, those using agents do not have any idea of the breakdown of costs. They rely on the integrity of the agent, knowing only that they pay them a lump sum or get deductions from their salaries over a known period of time. Some agents we met openly explained that they made large profits *'but only if everything is straight forward'*. They shared openly that there is sometimes a need for various speed money and smoothing payments and that irregularities that they had to sort out for the clients *'cut into our profits'*. The only additional and unexpected cost people said they faced was during extended stays in the hostels in Jakarta prior to departure. Although most indicated they had their accommodation and food paid for by the agents, extended periods could see mounting costs with needs such as phone credit and supplementary food.

The study found that men requiring loans to pay for the costs of migration in E. Lombok could secure this relatively easily from family or community members and this kind of loan was preferred over loans for education because loaners regarded them as less risky.

4.3. Experiences with health insurance

Health insurance is mandatory for migrants but data indicates that migrants cannot claim while in employment abroad and rarely make claims on return either because they do not know how to or have not kept the appropriate documentation to support their claim. The RCA study found that people rarely talked about insurance but indicated that *'the boss will take care'*. Many shared personal experiences of an employer taking them to hospital and paying all the bills without hesitation and usually *'kindly'*. Only rare cases indicated that the cost of medication was then deducted from wages. There were stories about deliberate manipulation of the insurance system by migrant workers in Japan and Korea to get payoffs and repatriation but no direct experience. Overall the issue of medical insurance was not one

people were either familiar with or concerned them.

4.4. Understanding on the non-monetary benefits of migration

The study shows that acquisition of skills can be an important element of a *'good migrant experience'* including construction skills, food manufacture, mechanic skills. The programmes in Korea and Japan were specially noted as providing sufficient skills and post-work support to enable the establishment of an enterprise, although we met no one who had actually done this.

Being able to speak fluent Arabic carried considerable cachet in the E Lombok study locations and, to a less extent, Malay and English language skills in W. Kalimantan.

Other benefits of migration included being able to *'run away'* especially from difficult relationships, forge new relationships, especially romantic ones, and very importantly for those in E. Lombok to participate in *Haji* or *Umroh*.

4.5. Re-integration in work on return from migration

The study provides no evidence to suggest that the motivation for migration in E. Lombok is to be re-integrated into work on return to Indonesia. Rather, working in Saudi Arabia is seen as a means to construct *'the beautiful house'* and once this is achieved the next generation continues the cycle which includes saving for *'their beautiful house'* and sending remittance back for parents and younger siblings. As



A lady is using facebook to chat with her husband who works in Saudi Arabia. She asked us to help her use social media having *'no one here to ask'*.

discussed above (4.1.4) there is no appetite to invest in enterprise. Those households with men in oil palm plantations in Malaysia continue this pattern until retirement or until others can support them.

4.6. Impact of support organisations

Despite purposely selecting two sub villages where we knew TIFA had a presence, very little was mentioned or was known about the programme in conversations except from an actual local contact person for the programme who was resident in one of the villages. Business skills training for women had been offered but as, explained above there is no appetite for enterprise among the returning migrant workers either for the reasons given in 4.1.4. or because they wanted to concentrate on caring for their families. The vestiges of a snack business and tailoring development which had received outside support were observed to be quiescent and assets had been sequestered by the elite interconnected families of the area. There were no programmes to enhance communication between migrant workers and their families and people in the area rather asked us to help them use social media having '*no one here to ask*'.

Study implications



Six siblings aged 25-40 years show us who is current and past migrants to Saudi Arabia (indicated by the papers). East Lombok

5.1. Migration for work is an extremely important livelihood option for many families and has been embedded in families for generations. The study shows that in some places, for example E. Lombok, it can be the key economic activity and is a preferred option over alternatives.

5.2. The study shows that the motivations and type of migration for work varies considerably depending on location. This would suggest that policy and programmes for migrant workers need to take careful consideration of context. For example, the destination for those migrating for work from W. Kalimantan is mostly Malaysia. They choose to migrate largely because the equivalent jobs for their level of education and skills are paid better in

Malaysia and are easier to get than in Indonesia, and the conditions of work are generally considered to be better. However, many of the study participants indicated they would choose to stay in Indonesia if there was parity in wages and opportunities for more permanent employment. Much of the migration for work is relatively undocumented and easily availed across a land border. By contrast, the destination for those migrating for work from E. Lombok is mostly Saudi Arabia where jobs command salaries well in excess of work opportunities available for them in Indonesia, including opportunities to work locally in the civil service. This migrant work is mostly availed through official agencies and is mostly relatively well documented.

5.3. All the migrant workers we met had made the decision to migrate themselves and without force or coercion. They were aware of the risks and conditions and made their own free decisions based on this. Usually the economic benefits were the most important motivation and were compared by the workers to the alternatives available in country. Wage and work conditions parity are likely to be the only means to reverse this motivation.

5.4. There are specific groups of workers who may be regarded as having less choice about whether they migrate or not for work because of economic necessity or the special difficulties they face in securing work locally. Included in this are divorced and widowed women, especially those with young families and disaffected, uneducated, and/or unskilled young men. As special groups, special provisions for employment locally may be considered.

5.5. The idea of re-integration into employment on return pre-supposes that there are suitable work options available. Credit and support for establishment of small scale self-run enterprises or investment in farming is not something people want. They either want work which can command incomes commensurate with the work abroad and with similar conditions of work or choose to remain unemployed.

5.6. The operation of agents remain a “black box” for their migrant clients mainly because they charge lump sums for “turn key” services. They work hard to forge trusted relationships. Plans to get migrants to rate them using variations of citizen scorecards or Trip Advisor-type ratings may be problematic because of the turn key nature of the service they provide and the trusted relations built. In order to establish the true costs and profits made by agents more accountability should be demanded not by clients (migrant workers) but by regulating bodies.

5.7. There are clear distinctions made between the labour laws in the different destination countries. Rather than imposing a moratorium which potentially affects millions of workers and their families and which will spawn the establishment of possibly less well regulated, alternative routes, destination countries need to demonstrate certain minimum standards for employment. More evidence is required to support the widely held view among migrant workers themselves that in fact only few people experience sexual harassment or encounter difficulties they cannot manage while employed abroad.

5.8. The fact that work is attractive in countries other than Indonesia not only from the perspective of wages but also the modus operandi and conditions

of work suggest that these need review in Indonesia. For example, those who had experienced work in Japan or Korea described better labour regulations and worker conditions, including comfortable housing. Those comparing official plantation work in Malaysia and Indonesia noted shorter working hours and the possibility to have long term contracts with assurance of regular pay in Malaysia whereas work is often only on a day labour basis in Indonesia.

5.9. Trusted networks are preferred to agents (unless well known to them) by workers and employers alike and this trumps whether workers are fully documented or not. Rather than penalizing workers for going abroad for work without full documentation, more emphasis needs to be given on penalizing employers for employing undocumented workers. Consideration should also be given to providing employers with information and access to sponsorship and obtaining necessary work permits.

5.10 The need for context specific policies comes through clearly from this study. Migration for work had very different motivations and impacts in different locations. The following illustrates the need for considering context in policy making; policy for border areas similar to W. Kalimantan could involve enforcing the Indonesian minimum wage and incentivizing local employers to provide full-time rather than part-time employment. But this would have little or no positive impact in E. Lombok. The importance and embeddedness of migration for work to Saudi Arabia as a key and preferred livelihood strategy for people in E. Lombok and the potential revenue for the Government suggests that policy should focus on bilateral improvements to the legal framework and assurance of worker rights to continue to support this.

The RCA+ Team hopes to continue to explore the effect of location and different contexts on migrating for work in subsequent studies.

CATATAN LINTAS BATAS
BORDER CROSSING MOVEMENTS

2
13 JUN 2014
INDONESIA
MAYANG-ANIVAN
JUL 2014

MALAYSIA
SERIKAL SARAWAK
11 JUL 2014
KELDAH

819
5
MALAYSIA IMMIGRATION
SERIKAL
VISIT PASS

Permitted to enter Malaysia for a visit to the
Administrative District of BAU ONLY
in the State of Sarawak, for a period NOT
EXCEEDING ONE MONTH
UNTIL: 12 JUL 2014
Not valid for employment

BORDER AGREEMENT WITH THE
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

NOT PERMITTED TO ENGAGE IN
EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS OR
PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATION

13 JUN 2014

Annexes

Annex 1: RCA Study Team Member

Study Advisor and lead researcher: Dee Jupp

Team	Location	Coding	Name	Role
Team 1	West Kalimantan	4A WK SA	Sherria Ayuandini	Sub-team leader
		4A WK AA	Siti Alifah Ahyar	Team member
		4A WK MB/YR	Martin Bjorkhagen	Team member
			Yarra Regita	Interpreter
		4B WK FD	Fajar Djati	Sub-team leader
		4B WK RR	Rida Ratnasari	Team member
		4B WK RA	Rizqan Adhima	Team member
		4C WK DF	Denny Firmanto	Sub-team leader
		4C WK DT	Debora Tobing	Team member
		4C WK IA	Iqbal Abisaputra	Team member
Team 2	West Nusa Tenggara	4D WNT RS	Revyani Sjahrial	Sub-team leader
		4D WNT YR	Yarra Regita	Team member
		4D WNT YT	Yuneti Tarigan	Team member
		4E WNT FD	Fajar Djati	Sub-team leader
		4E WNT RA	Rizqan Adhima	Team member
		4E WNT UH	Umi Hanik	Team member
		4F WNT RR	Rida Ratnasari	Sub-team leader
		4F WNT IA	Iqbal Abisaputra	Team member
		4F WNT AA	Siti Alifah Ahyar	Team member

Annex 2: Areas of conversation



Annex 3: Host households



West
Kalimantan

Host households (continue)



East
Lombok

Annex 4: Host households' information

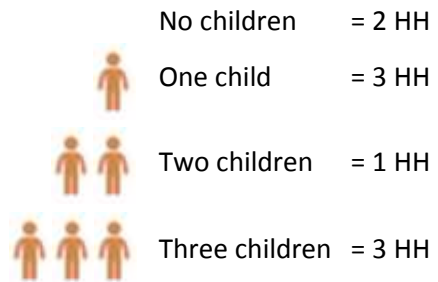
West Kalimantan

No. of Host Family: 9	
Nuclear	Extended
7	2

Head of household
1 Women, 8 men

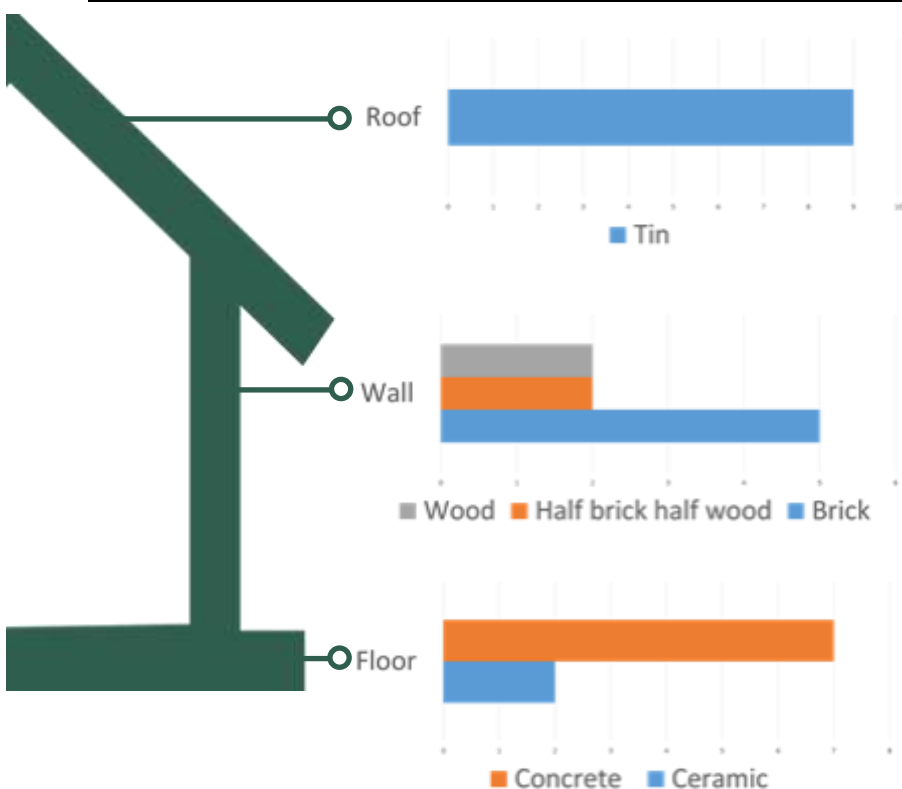


No. of children currently living in house



Migrant workers (former, returning, current) in host household

No of Migrant Workers	Type of Jobs	Alternative jobs in the village
1	Plantation worker	Gold mining, plantation worker, farming
1	Plantation worker	Plantation worker, farming
1	Construction worker	Construction worker, small business (kiosk)
1	Shopkeeper	Small business (kiosk), logging, plantation, farming
0	None	Ex-broker, farming
2	Driver, plantation worker	Driver, plantation worker, farming
1	Driver	Driver, farming
1	Driver	Tailor, small business (kiosk)
1	Plantation worker	Plantation worker, construction



Assets

Television = 5 HH	Motorbike = 8 HH
Livestock = 3 HH	Mobiles = 7 HH

% with Toilet

Toilet inside	78%
No toilet	11%
Toilet outside	11%

% with Electricity

Metered electricity	89%
generator	11%

East Lombok

No. of Host Family: 9	
Nuclear	Extended
6	3

Head of household
3 Women, 6 men

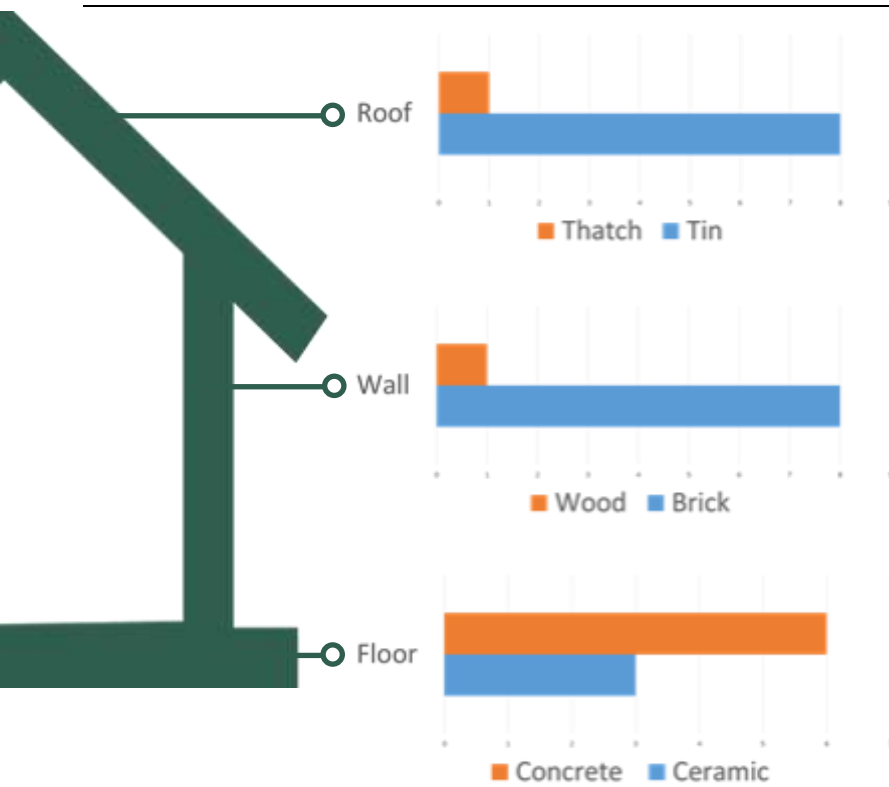


No. of children currently living in house

- No children = 1 HH
- One child = 1 HH
- Two children = 3 HH
- Three children = 3 HH

No. of migrant workers (former, returning, current) in host household

No of Migrant Workers	Type of Jobs	Alternative jobs in the village
2	Construction, domestic worker	None (waiting to go as migrant workers again)
1	Domestic worker	Selling cloth
3	Domestic worker x2, driver	Daily labour farming
2	Plantation worker x2	Ojek (motor taxi) driver
1	Plantation worker	Daily labour farming
3	Domestic worker x2, painting	Small business (kiosk), daily labour farming
0	None	Civil servant, teacher
1	Domestic worker	Small business (kiosk)
2	Domestic worker, plantation worker	Ojek (motor taxi) driver



Assets

- Television = 4 HH
- Motorbike = 6 HH
- Livestock = none
- Mobiles = 9 HH

% with Toilet	
Toilet inside	78%
No toilet	11%
Toilet outside	11%

% with Electricity	
Metered electricity	89%
Electricity from neighbour	11%

Annex 5: Number of People Met

Category	Total	
	F	M
HHH adults	20	24
HHH children	17	14
FHH adults	101	108
FHH children	26	29
Former migrants	53	87
Returning migrants	5	21
Current migrants*	14	16
Migrant's parent	24	12
Migrant's children	28	36
Migrant's relatives	54	38
Brokers	6	6
Agent reps	3	4
Out of school (SD age)	10	13
Out of school (secondary age)	18	34
SD students	32	32
SMP/SMK(A) students	41	29
University students	10	12
Teachers	14	27
Guru honor	5	6
Farmers	29	39
Transport operators	0	15
Shopkeepers / kiosk	35	22
Traders	15	13
(Artisanal) gold miners	0	1
Kepala desa	0	2
Kepala dusun/RT	4	12
NGO	1	2
Health workers	10	2
Local government staff	1	15
researcher/lecturer	0	6
Policeman/Army	0	15
	576	692
Total		1268

Annex 6: RCA methodological consideration: offsetting bias

Like all research methods, the Reality Check Approach takes note of and attempts to offset potential bias. The following is an analysis of the potential for bias and the way the researchers in this study and through the approach itself sought to minimise these biases.

Bias from being researched

The approach benefits from being low key and unobtrusive. It seeks to provide the best possible conditions to listen, experience and observe ordinary daily lives and deliberately seeks to reduce the biases created by an external research presence. The team members take time to get to know the families they stay with, work alongside them and adapt to their pace and way of life. Ideally they seek to listen to family conversations and interactions rather than engage in lengthy question and answer sessions. Considerable effort is made to ensure the host families feel comfortable and at ease so they tell their own stories and explain their realities in their terms and in their own way. This goes some way to ensuring that the families do not feel their answers should be filtered, measured or in any way influenced by the presence of the outsiders. The team members actively suspend judgment. Considerable effort is made in pre-field team training to make the researchers aware of their own attitudes and behaviour which may be conducive or obstructive to openness and trust among those they interact with.

Bias from location

At least three team members stayed in each village (*desa*), each living with a different poor family. All homes were at least 10 minutes walking distance from one another (and most were considerably more than this) so that each team member could maximise the number of unique interactions with people and service providers in the community and avoid duplication with other team members.

Researcher bias

A minimum of three researchers were allocated to each village but they worked independently of each other thus allowing for more confidence in corroborating data. Each village team underwent a day-long debriefing to review information and findings emerging from each location immediately after completing the immersion.

This enabled a high level of interrogation of the observations, experiences and responses and reduced the possibility of individual researcher bias. Furthermore, following completion of the entire baseline study, a validation workshop was held with the entire research team to analyse and confirm the main findings and ensure that both specificity and diversity in the findings were captured, along with more generalisable findings.

Evaluation framework bias

Rather than using research questions which can suffer from normative bias, the team used a broad thematic checklist of areas of enquiry. These themes, summarised in annex 2, provided the basis for conversation topics rather than prescribed questions. The team members engaged with family members and others at appropriate times on these issues. For example, while cooking the meal, opportunities might arise to discuss what the family usually eats, when they eat and who eats what and while accompanying children to school, field opportunities arise to discuss access to, cost and experience of schooling.

Triangulation

An integral part of the Reality Check Approach methodology is the continuous triangulation that ensues. Conversations take place at different times of the day and night allowing unfinished conversations or ambiguous findings to be explored further. Conversations are held with different generations separately and together in order to gather a complete picture of an issue. Conversations are complemented by direct experience (for example, visits to health clinics, accompanying children to school, working with families on their farms) and observation (family interaction/dynamics). Cross checking for understanding is also carried out with neighbours, service providers (for example, traditional birth attendants, community health workers, school teachers and teashop owners) and power holders (informal and elected authorities). Conversations are at times complemented with visual evidence or illustrations, for example by jointly reviewing baby record books or school books as well as through various activities, such as drawing maps of the village, ranking household assets, scoring income and expenditure proportionally, and so on. In the course of four intensive days and nights of interaction on all these different levels, some measure of confidence can be afforded to the findings.

Confidentiality, anonymity and continuing non-bias in project activities

The study locations are referred to by code only and the team is at pains to ensure that neither the report nor other documentary evidence, such as photos, reveal the locations or details of the host households. Faces of householders and images which reveal the location are either not retained in the photo archive or identities are digitally removed. This is partly to respect good research practice with regard to confidentiality but also has the benefit of ensuring that no special measures or consideration are given to these locations or households in the course of the programme. All families are asked to give their consent for their stories and photos to be recorded and shared.

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