

# COVID-19 Crisis and the Informal Economy: Informal Workers in Bangkok, Thailand



Mr. Preecha Thaisongkroh is a food vendor in Bangkhuntien, Soi 69, in a suburban district of Bangkok. He was removed from his previous vending space in 2016, as part of the government campaign to evict street vendors. Although as an essential worker he was permitted to sell during COVID-19 restrictions, his sales ultimately dropped to 50% of pre-COVID rates, only a small fraction of what he could sell in his previous location before eviction. Photo credit: Pattarapon Virat

## Key Findings

- 1 Almost half of respondents were unable to work for even one day during April 2020. 100% of massage therapists, 73% of home-based workers, and 55% of street vendors reported having zero earnings during this period.
- 2 Recovery appears to be slow. By June/July, daily average earnings for most worker groups were still only a portion of December 2019 levels: 46% for home-based workers, 49% for massage therapists, 57% for waste pickers, 58% for motorcycle taxi drivers, and 64% for street vendors.
- 3 25% of home-based workers, 19% of massage therapists, 18% of motorcycle taxi drivers, and 14% of waste pickers reported hunger among adults in their households.
- 4 82% of respondents reported a reduction in household income compared to December 2019. 35% reported an increase in household responsibilities like cooking, cleaning, or care.
- 5 Most respondents received government cash relief assistance, thanks in part to application support from affiliates of the Federation of Informal Workers of Thailand (FIT). The 22% that did not receive this assistance reported issues with their home registration, difficulty with digital application, or ineligibility due to migration status.
- 6 84% of workers borrowed money, drew down savings, sought financial help from friends or family, sold or pawned assets, or had family members migrate as

a result of the crisis. 19% of workers started a new type of work, though many simply swapped one type of vulnerable, informal work for another.

- 7 Workers expressed ongoing anxiety about exposure to COVID-19 infection, a fear that is particularly acute for massage therapists, motorcycle taxi drivers, and waste pickers due to the nature of their work.

FIT is calling on the Thai Government to support a four-pillar recovery agenda for Informal Workers.

- **Work and Employment Recovery**, through grants and zero-interest loans; the right to work in public space; 10-day per month jobs guarantee; employment protection payments for formal workers; government procurement quotas for Informal Worker goods and services; and support for worker business platforms
- **Training and Certification** for Informal Workers, including for care-giving, technology, and marketing
- **Equity in Social Security** across Articles 33, 39, and 40; unemployment insurance for all; and participation by Informal Workers in overseeing an independent Social Security Office
- **Participation by Informal Workers** in the implementation and monitoring of economic recovery policies

## Background

**COVID-19 Crisis and the Informal Economy** is a WIEGO-led 12-city longitudinal study that assesses the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on specific groups of Informal Workers and their households. Using a survey questionnaire and in-depth interviews, Round 1 assessed the impact of the crisis in April 2020 (the period of peak restrictions in most cities) and in June/July 2020 (when restrictions had eased in most cities) in comparison to December 2019 (pre-COVID-19). Round 2 will assess continuing impacts versus signs of recovery in the first half of 2021, compared to the pre-COVID-19 period and Round 1. This report presents the summary findings of Round 1 of the study in Bangkok, Thailand. Researchers in Bangkok surveyed and interviewed home-based workers, domestic workers, street vendors, and motorcycle taxi drivers whose organizations are affiliates of the Federation of Informal Workers of Thailand (FIT)<sup>1</sup>, as well as massage therapists from Jaravee Association for the Conservation of Thai Massage, and waste pickers from Poonsap Community in Sai Mai District and Soi Sua Yai Uthit in Chatuchak District.



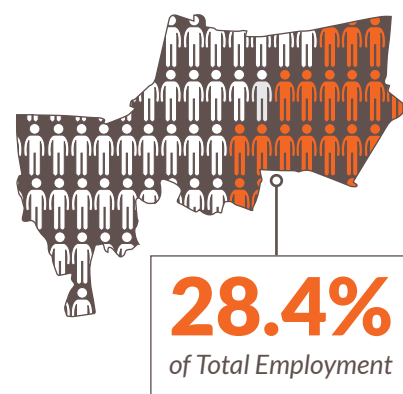
Ms. Orapin Sukwichit, a self-employed home-based worker in Bangkok. Photo credit: Pattarapon Virat

1 FIT is composed of HomeNet Thailand Association, the Association of Motorcycle Taxi Drivers of Thailand, Network of Domestic Workers in Thailand, Muubaan Nakila Service Cooperative, and the Network of Thai Street Vendors for Sustainable Development.

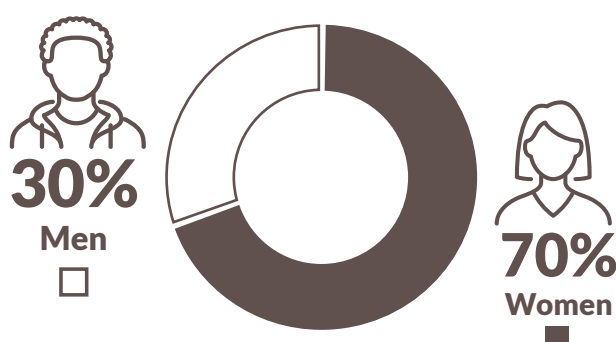
## Informal Economy in Bangkok

More than half (55.8%) of Thailand's workforce is informally employed. In Bangkok, informal employment represents 28.4% of total employment. Home-based workers alone constitute 10.7% of total employment in Bangkok, while street vendors represent 5.9%, motorcycle taxi drivers represent 3%, and domestic workers represent 1.9% of total employment.<sup>2</sup>

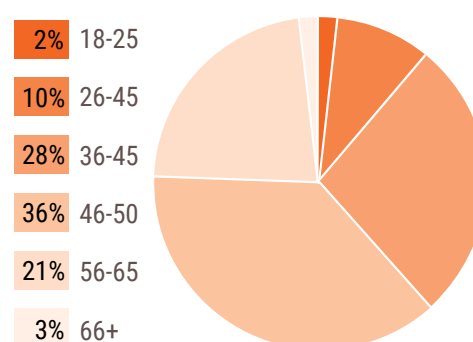
Massage therapists are typically informal as well. Many work for informal businesses, on commission or by quota. Even large, formal spas typically do not register their employees with Thailand's social security system.



### Gender of respondents



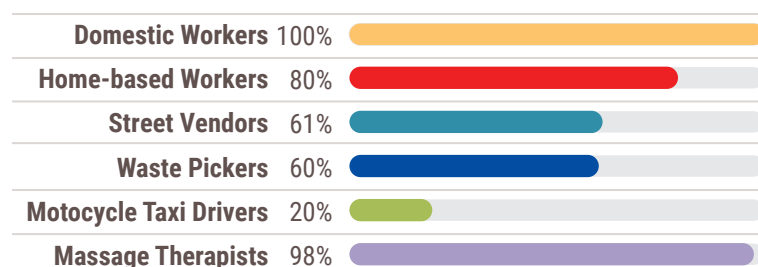
### Age range of respondents



### Number of respondents by sector

Domestic Workers	51
Home-based Workers	49
Street Vendors	51
Waste Pickers	50
Motorcycle Taxi Drivers	49
Massage Therapists	52
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>302</b>

### % of respondents who were women



### Daily average earnings of respondents in December 2019 (pre-COVID-19)<sup>3</sup>

Domestic Workers	THB 851
Home-based Workers	THB 425 (Gross) <sup>4</sup>
Street Vendors	THB 1462 (Gross)*
Waste Pickers	THB 434
Motorcycle Taxi Drivers	THB 720
Massage Therapists	THB 554

The survey sample is intended to reflect the composition of FIT affiliates' membership and is not representative of Informal Worker groups in Bangkok more broadly.

\*Women street vendors' average daily earnings in December 2019 were only 36% of men's daily average earnings (THB 882 as compared to THB 2489).

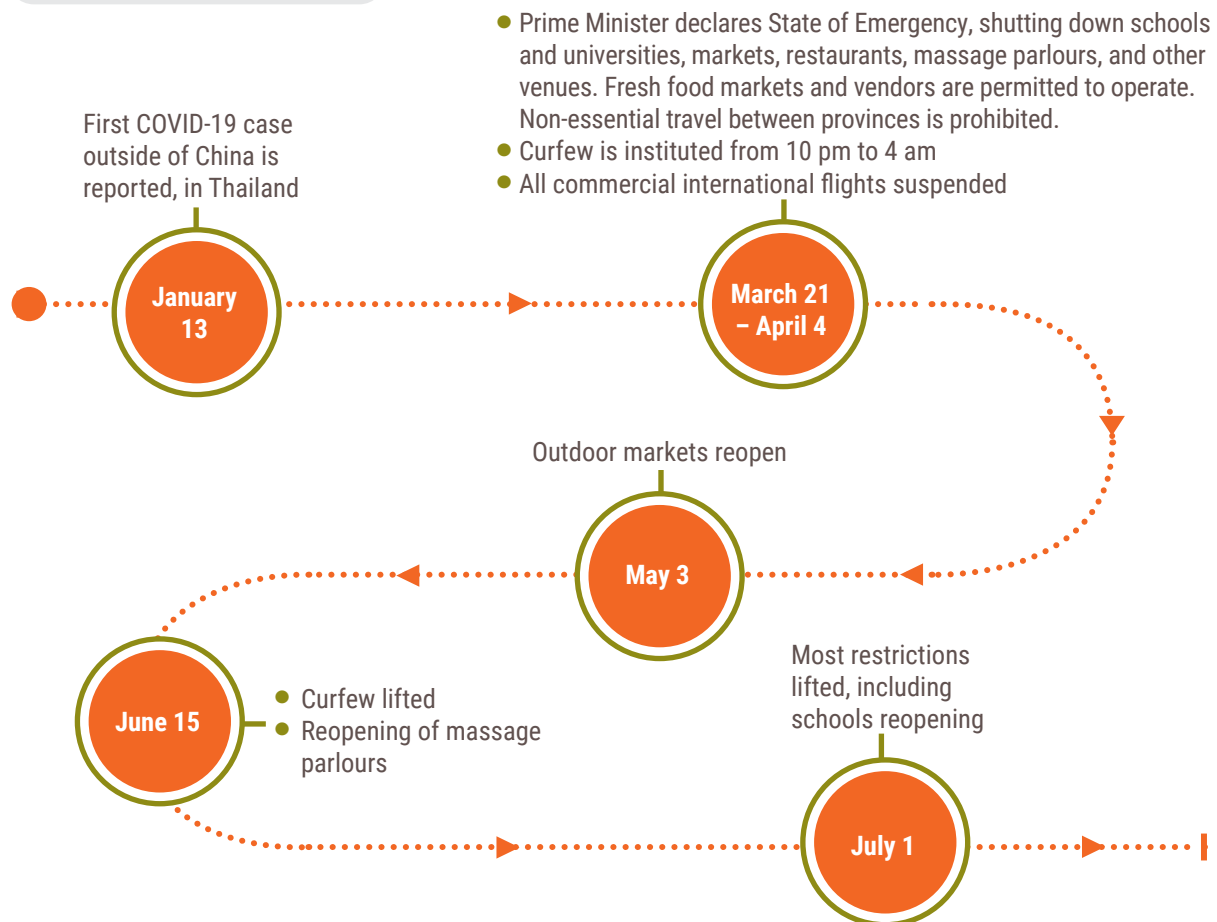
<sup>2</sup> Poonsab, Wissanee, Joann Vanek and Françoise Carré. 2019. Informal Workers in Urban Thailand: A Statistical Snapshot. WIEGO Statistical Brief No. 20. WIEGO. [https://www.wiego.org/sites/default/files/publications/file/Informal%20Workers%20in%20Urban%20Thailand%20WIEGO%20SB%2020\\_1.pdf](https://www.wiego.org/sites/default/files/publications/file/Informal%20Workers%20in%20Urban%20Thailand%20WIEGO%20SB%2020_1.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> In December 2019, 1 Thai baht was equal to 0.03 USD.

<sup>4</sup> A minority (29%) of home-based worker respondents reported net rather than gross income. Figures in this report combine both the net and gross reporting for home-based workers.



## Timeline



The Thai Government's relief measures included cash transfers of THB 5,000 per month for workers not covered by Social Security, for a period of three months starting in April. Thai Banks announced that individuals could be eligible for a one-year suspension of loans, including mortgages and credit card debt.



*"I think getting infected with COVID is not as serious as starvation. If people get infected, so be it. Starvation is more terrifying than having COVID."*

**- Woman Domestic Worker**



Mr. Suthon and Mrs. Dongduen Muangneng, waste pickers from Soi Sua Yai Uthit Community in Bangkok's Chatuchak District, separating copper from collected materials. Photo credit: Bovorn Subsing



Mrs. Panisara Adiraklarnukul, a massage therapist. Like other workers in her sector, Panisara was unable to work due to COVID-19 restrictions, and has struggled to recover her livelihood even after restrictions were lifted due to reduced client demand and the absence of tourism in Thailand. Photo credit: Pattarapon Virat

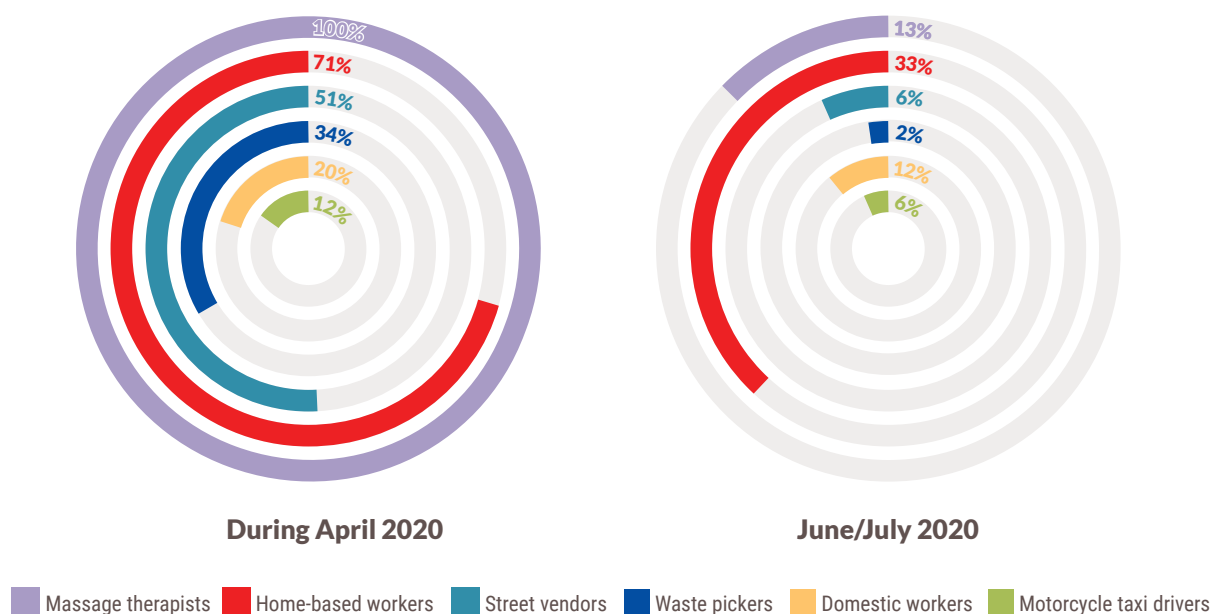
## Impacts of and Responses to the Crisis

### Work, Income, and Food

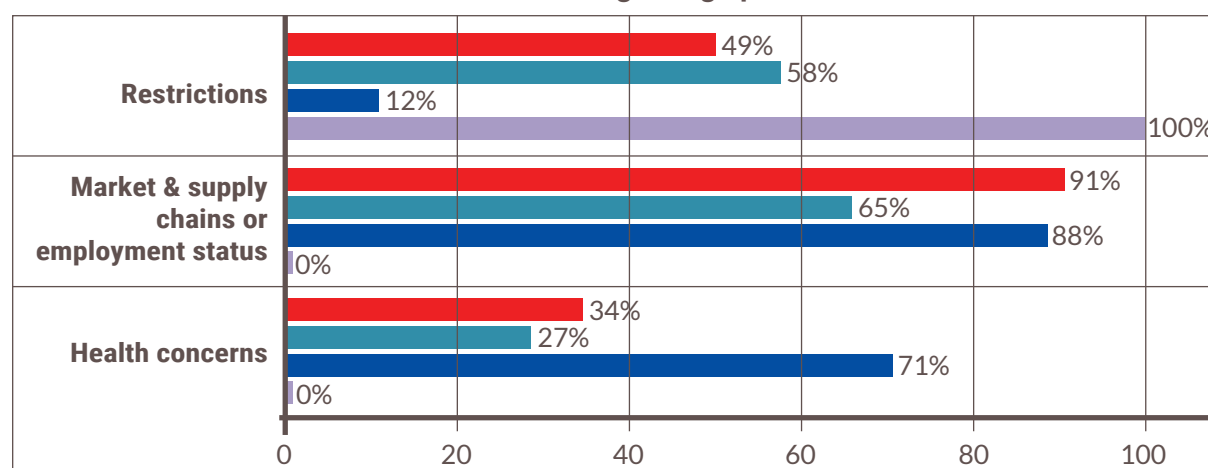
#### Impact on Work

The COVID-19 crisis has dramatically impacted Informal Workers' ability to work and earn. This was particularly true from March to April, during the time of Thailand's government-imposed restrictions on work, movement, and education. In April, almost half of survey respondents (48%) were unable to work for even one day. The impact was particularly serious for certain occupations: 100% of massage therapists, 71% of home-based workers, 51% of street vendors, 34% of waste pickers, 20% of domestic workers, and 12% of motorcycle taxi drivers were not able to work during April.

% of respondents who were unable to work:



Reasons for not working during April 2020:\*



Note: Respondents could select more than one reason for not working

\*Massage therapists, home-based workers, street vendors and waste pickers only

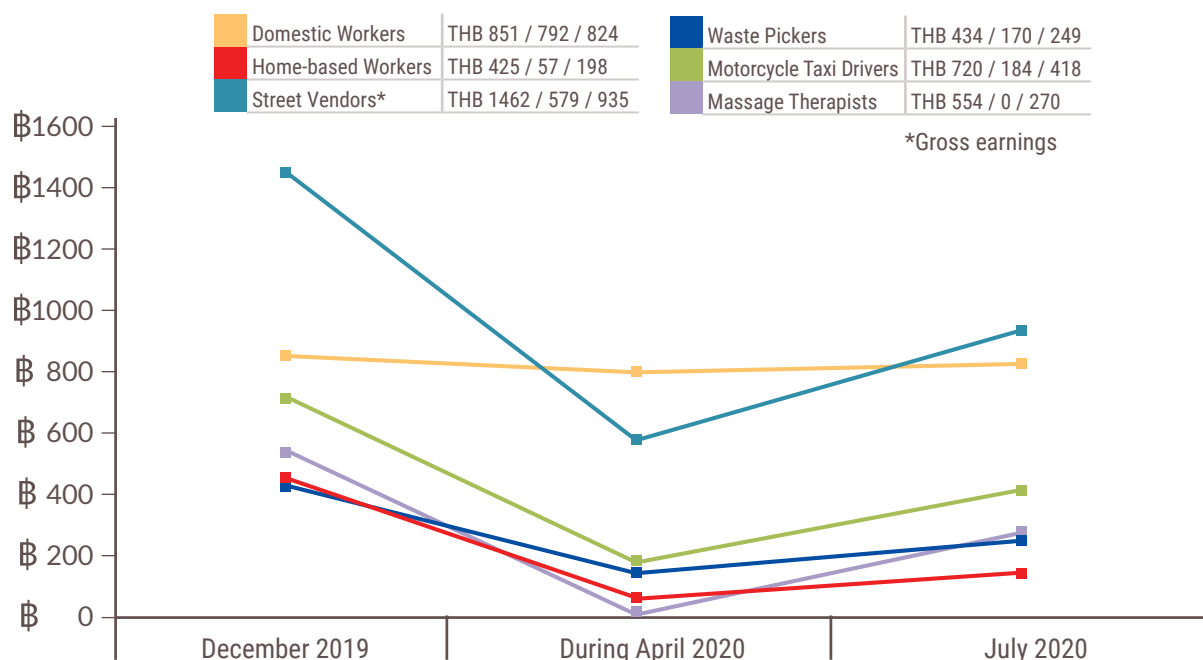
By June/July, most respondents had returned to work at least part time. Notably however, 31% of home-based workers, 13% of massage therapists, and 12% of domestic workers were still not back at work.



## Impact on Earnings

Average daily earnings plunged between April 2020 compared to December 2019, and had not recovered by June/July 2020.

**Average daily earnings by sector**



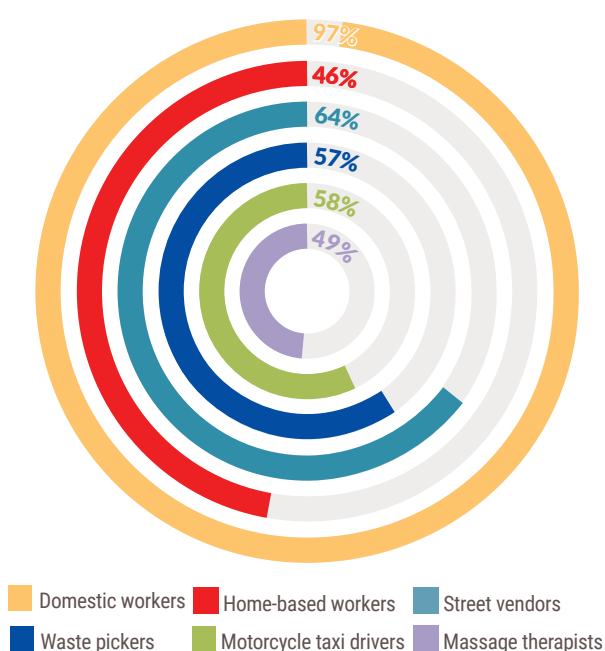
In April 2020, almost half (47%) of all respondents reported average daily earnings of zero; this included 100% of massage therapists, 73% of home-based workers, 55% of street vendors, 34% of waste pickers, 18% of motorcycle taxi drivers and 5% of domestic workers.

Home-based workers have struggled more than any other group to recover their earnings, as demand for subcontracted production and goods made by self-employed workers plummeted.

Among street vendors, those selling merchandise struggled more than those selling food. Whereas by June/July, food vendors' average earnings had returned to 81% of their December average earnings, non-food vendors' earnings had reached only 39% of December average earnings.

Women waste pickers and street vendors, whose average earnings were lower than their male counterparts even before the crisis, were less likely to work in April and thus experienced a deeper plunge in earnings during that period compared to men. They continued to earn less than men in June/July.

**Average daily earnings in June/July as percentage of earnings in December 2019**



## Impediments to Work and Income

### Domestic Workers



- Loss of clients
- Reduced work hours
- Increased competition for jobs

*"Employers want to reduce expenses. In the past, they may have 2 workers, but during COVID-19, they do not want to hire too many and cut down to 1 worker. Those originally with 1 worker have cut down the working time. It is extremely difficult to find any jobs now."*

**-Woman Domestic Worker**

### Home-based Workers



- Closure of wholesale markets (e.g. garment markets)
- Reduction in order volume and product demand, from domestic and international buyers
- Price cutting by buyers

*"My sales volume is lower than usual because people do not have money to spend. My husband also has fewer job orders."*

**- Woman Home-based Worker**

### Street Vendors



- Restrictions prohibiting some vendors from working in April and May
- Reduced sales among those continuing to work
- Pandemic and economic downturn compounding the loss of income from vendor displacement over the past five years

*"Normally I would sell around 50 hocks – whereas in my previous area, I could sell around 100 hocks a day – but these days I could hardly sell 25 hocks."*

**- Man Street Vendor**

### Waste Pickers



- Reduction in available waste and high price of purchase
- Low sales price and closure of recycling shops; inability to store waste to await higher prices
- Curfew interference with working hours
- Prohibitions on entering communities where waste is normally collected

*"One of the problems for waste pickers is the uncertainty in waste price – it is not as high as before. The change and uncertainty in price makes it hard for waste pickers to estimate their daily income. Some wastes almost had no value, if sold on daily basis. However compiling them in one chunk before selling is difficult if their accommodation does not allow them to collect these wastes."*

**- Woman Waste Picker**



### Motorcycle Taxi Drivers



- Fear of infection reduces demand
- Reduced transport needs due to closure of business and schools
- Competition for delivery services on platforms (e.g. GrabBike)

*“People who are concerned with COVID stopped using motorcycle taxis, and use personal cars and walk instead, leading to a substantial shortage of income among us during COVID.”*  
– **Man Motorcycle Taxi Driver**

### Massage Therapists



- Restrictions: Place of work closed April to June 15
- Fear of infection and reduced disposable income lowers demand
- Absence of tourists

*“When tourists could not come, many massage therapists lost their jobs. Those giving massages to Thai customers earn minimal income because everyone is worried about the economy. The customers are worried about their own income, and are careful with their expenditures, so they opt for the massage service less.”*  
– **Woman Massage Therapist**



Mr. Wichit Chomphalung, Street vendor. Photo credit: Pattarapon Virat

### Impact on Food



**13%** reported hunger among adults

25% of home-based workers, 19% of massage therapists, 18% of motorcycle taxi drivers, and 14% of waste pickers reported hunger among adults in their households.

## Increased Health and Safety Concerns



**99%** of respondents working in June/July **used personal protective equipment (PPE)**



**87%** of respondents **purchased PPE** themselves

Respondents were not impacted by COVID-19 symptoms due to the low rate of infection in Thailand; many were nevertheless anxious about COVID-19 health risks.

98% of massage therapists who had returned to work by June/July felt that they were at risk of COVID-19 infection due to exposure to customers. 71% of waste pickers reported that they faced more occupational risks compared to pre-COVID-19 times, including exposure to medical waste (49%), hazardous materials (69%), and COVID-19 at their worksites (37%). They also experienced heightened discrimination for work that was already stigmatized.



*“People in my community think that I have germs, since my work is exposed to germs. They do not want me to live in the community”*

**– Man Waste Picker**

Domestic workers feared COVID-19 infection from employers, while their employers’ own fears led to heightened workplace demands. Many employers imposed severe restrictions on domestic workers’ movements, prohibiting them from visiting their families or requiring “live-out” workers to start “living-in.” Employers demanded additional cleaning tasks and other precautions. One described that her employer required her to shower each time she entered. Others skipped medical appointments, for fear their employers would bar them from working after a hospital visit.

Worker leaders described rigorous safety precautions implemented by workers themselves in each sector to protect themselves, the public, or their clients, at their own expense.



*“When junk shops closed, we could not sell the wastes we picked. We could not keep the wastes in the community as well as it put the community at risk of getting infected. As we live in the community, we wanted to ensure that the community is safe.”*

**– Woman Waste Picker**



*“The government agencies, such as the Ministry of Transport, did not help at all....We, the motorcycle taxi drivers and taxi drivers, are registered in the system that they regulate, but were not provided even a slightest bit of support, not even a single piece of face mask, not even a tube of alcohol gel was given to us.”*

**– Woman Motorcycle Taxi Driver**

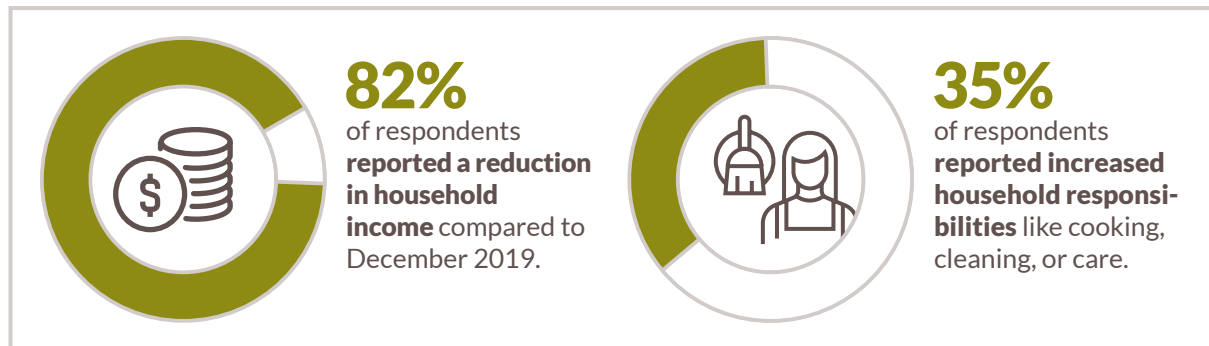




Ms. Watthanan Pimwan, Motorcycle Taxi Driver. Photo credit: Pattarapon Virat



## Household Stress



While household incomes have shrunk, respondents noted that with family members at home, expenses such as utilities had increased. Workers also experienced increases in unpaid household labour, like cooking and cleaning, or caring for children, or elderly or sick household members. One street vendor with preexisting health conditions described a cleaning regimen that included spraying the door with disinfectant, undressing outside, boiling coins and steaming bills from customers, and mopping the floor twice with different cleaning products. Domestic workers likewise experienced a greater demand from employers to clean and sanitize in the homes where they work. They reported that with more family members at home, both workloads and tensions increased.



*"If [my employers] went out to talk to friends or went shopping for at least 2 hours, I could work conveniently and finish many things within 2 hours. If they are home, the work which I would finish in 2 hours is not finished in 4 hours because I cannot work continuously. I just thought that I would be dead if it continued like this."*

**– Woman Domestic Worker**

Many respondents described struggles to support family or friends with financial or health problems resulting from the crisis, including among workers whose families live in another province or country and depend on earnings sent from Bangkok. This was particularly the case for motorcycle taxi drivers, domestic workers, and massage therapists. Other workers discussed frustration at being unable to visit family members, especially elderly family members suffering from health problems, due to travel restrictions or fear of infecting them. Utilities, rent, and/or mortgage payments caused significant household financial strain.



*"When we have no income or become unemployed, it becomes a problem for others in the family. Every person who works will have another four family members for them to take care of, so these members will not have any money too. If no money is being sent, the receivers will have problems, right?"*

**– Man Motorcycle Taxi Driver**



*"Some with recently graduated children hope to receive some income from them. Now they worry about whether they would even get a job or be laid off from work. Those with children that are still in school had to stop sending them to school, since they do not have money."*

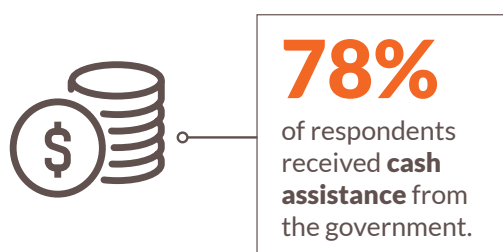
**– Woman Street Vendor**



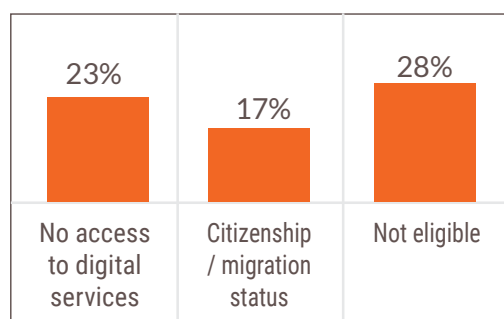
Ms. Kanyarat Panya, domestic worker. Photo credit: Pattarapon Virat

## Relief Measures

### Relief by Government

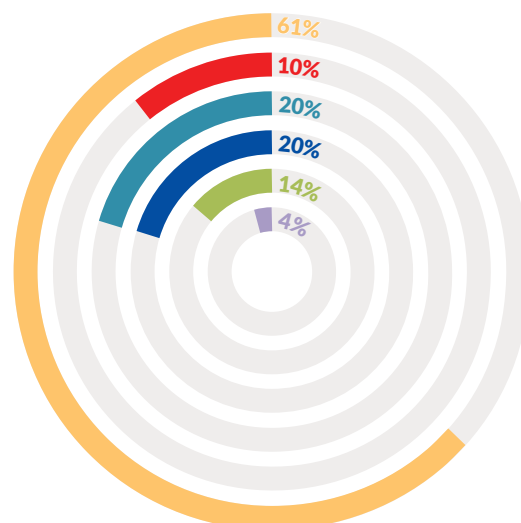


#### Main reasons why respondents did not receive cash grants



#### Respondents who did not receive cash grants from government

Domestic workers Home-based workers Street vendors  
Waste pickers Motorcycle taxi drivers Massage therapists



Most survey respondents were able to access the government cash relief grants of THB 5,000 for three months. This reflects in part the support provided by FIT-affiliated worker organizations for members to apply for relief.

Of the 22% of respondents who were excluded from the cash relief, many were ineligible because they were registered as farmers in their hometowns, rather than in Bangkok where they actually work and reside. Others, particularly older workers, struggled to access the digital application system. Nearly 30% of domestic worker respondents are international migrants, and were therefore ineligible for the grant.



*"Not everyone got [the cash relief]. Some did not register properly. Some did not have a device or a phone that they could use to register. It was tough for them. Some people can register for you if you hire them, but at the time no one had money to hire them to help with the registration."*

**– Woman Massage Therapist**

Respondents expressed appreciation for the THB 5,000 cash grants as a helpful form of relief, even though they were inadequate in terms of size and duration. For street vendors, the city's revocation of vending areas over the last several years strongly outweighed the benefits of the short-term relief payment.





*"For vendors, we would rather have our occupation back than to receive financial support...The THB 5,000 handout helped us survive for the time being. But being able to work and get a good location to sell, vendors will have income to buy food, to pay for rent, to make car installments, and to spend. If we cannot sell goods, we will continue to suffer for a long time."*

**- Woman Street Vendor**

### Relief by FIT affiliates

FIT and its affiliates played a crucial role in providing relief to their members and communities by:

- Distributing 2,543 packages of dry food, cloth masks, and sanitizer to members in Bangkok, with funds from a successful crowd-funding campaign
- Providing support for the application process for THB 5,000 cash relief, with a high success rate
- Training workers on livelihood skills, such as craft production and online sales
- Facilitating dialogues between the Bangkok Metropolitan Authority and street vendor leaders about restoring access to vending areas and markets through the National Health Security Office platform
- Advocating for government to implement procurement quotas for home-based worker produced goods



Mr. Nikom Saengchan, a home-based worker and bronze artisan. Photo credit: Pattarapon Virat

## Coping and Adaptation Strategies



**84%** of all respondents borrowed money, drew down savings, sought financial help from family, friends or neighbors, sold or pawned assets, or had family members migrate.

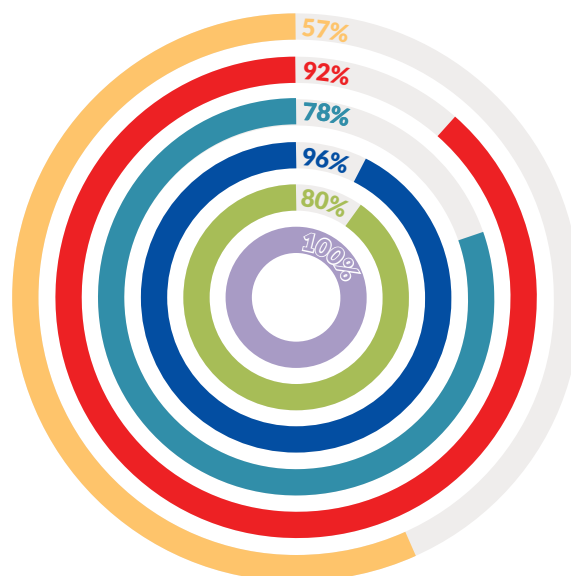
In addition to reducing food in some cases (as discussed below), respondents utilized a range of coping strategies to manage the loss of income, ranging from trying a new job, to taking out expensive, informal loans. Though Thai Banks agreed to suspend payments for one year (mortgage, credit card payments, vehicle payments), the suspensions did not include an interest freeze, and some workers did not qualify for suspensions because of other outstanding loans. This latter group included street vendors who had received loans through pre-COVID government-supported programs.

*"I negotiated for a delayed payment, but it only prolongs the term of payment. All these debts and installments will be loaded when the situation becomes normal"*

**– Woman Home-based Worker**

### Respondents who have drawn down savings, borrowed money, sought financial assistance from friends and family, sold or pawned assets, or had family members migrate

Domestic workers Home-based workers Street vendors  
Waste pickers Motorcycle taxi drivers Massage therapists



Worker leaders reported a heavy dependence among their members on high-interest, informal loans, because of their inability to qualify for bank loans. This trend is alarming, because of the likelihood that such debt will erode workers' fragile financial positions.



*"In a situation like this, drivers had to take more informal loans because government funds require certain conditions, details on documents, and a long time to process. Some people are blacklisted. However, informal loans will pile up; for instance: One takes a loan from Creditor A, but if they are unable to pay up as agreed, they will go and take a loan from Creditor B to pay to Creditor A....When they can not pay up, they would go to Creditor C, and the vicious cycle goes on and on."*

**– Woman Motorcycle Taxi Driver**



*“Money-lender agents visited the informal garment community and offered informal loans, such that informal garment workers ‘pawned’ their sewing machine as collateral. Borrowers pay 100-200 THB a day in interest. The loan sharks confiscated the sewing machine upon default of payment.”*

**– Man Home-based Worker**



**19%** started another type of work

While some respondents returned to their hometowns to cultivate agriculture, the majority who took on alternative work simply swapped one type of vulnerable informal work for another. Out of those who took on new work, 37% reported that their alternative work was vending. This group included existing street vendors experimenting with selling new products, but also domestic workers, home-based workers, waste pickers, and motorcycle taxi drivers. According to experienced vendors, these new vendors are often the most vulnerable, since they lack business expertise and frequently rely on informal lenders for capital.

14% of those seeking alternative work turned to domestic work including cleaning, housekeeping, and care work. Like street vendors, domestic workers confirmed that competition for work and clients in their field had increased since the start of the pandemic. Motorcycle taxi drivers, some of whom found alternative work via online food delivery platforms (e.g. GrabBike), found similarly that the growing competition on these platforms reduced their profitably.

Massage therapists attempted to continue their normal occupation in different forms, such as by providing massage therapy to clients at home or by seeking jobs at new shops.

### Coping Strategies: From Livelihood Adaptation to Asset Erosion

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing new products or services</li> <li>● Working longer hours</li> <li>● New business location</li> <li>● Using digital tools (e.g. online sales)</li> <li>● Reducing expenses</li> </ul>	<p><i>“I had to sell earlier and longer. I needed to extend selling hours. The money earned is less, and I had to cut down expenses. Prior to COVID, I had 2 workers, now I have one left because of limited income.”</i></p> <p><b>– Man Food Vendor</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relocating to hometown</li> <li>● Renegotiating loans or payments</li> <li>● Borrowing from family or friend</li> </ul>	<p><i>“My income only covers my daily meals but not enough to pay for my flat rent. The owner wants me to pay on time so I have to borrow money from someone to pay.”</i></p> <p><b>– Woman Motorcycle Taxi Driver</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skipping payments</li> <li>● Borrowing from informal lenders</li> <li>● Pawning or selling assets</li> <li>● Reducing number of meals, quantity, or quality of food</li> </ul>	<p><i>“I am in arrears of housing rent for 3 months and car payments for 2 months. The financial institution refused to grant the waiver announced by the government. I have to borrow from a loan shark at 20% interest to pay the debt.”</i></p> <p><b>– Man Home-based Worker</b></p>



## Recovery and Beyond: Informal Workers' Needs and Demands

FIT has submitted the following “Demands for Restoration of Informal Workers after COVID-19” to the Government, businesses, and civil society:

### 1. Work and Employment Recovery

#### 1.1. Creation of Informal Worker Fund:

- 1.1.1. Provide no-interest loans of THB 50,000 to THB 300,000 for individual Informal Workers to restart their occupations, without requiring a guarantor.
- 1.1.2. Provide grants of THB 100,000 to THB 1 million for registered Informal Worker groups or cooperatives.

#### 1.2. Promotion of Homeworker Fund:

- 1.2.1. Provide no-interest loans of THB 50,000 to THB 300,000 for individual home-based workers to restart their occupations, without requiring a guarantor.
- 1.2.2. Support grants of THB 100,000 to THB 1 million for registered producer groups.

#### 1.3. Right to work in public space: “Return the pavement” to street vendors and motorcycle taxi drivers who were displaced by anti-worker policies, supporting them to return to their original places of work.

#### 1.4. Jobs guarantee: Guarantee 10 days of work per month at minimum wage to all workers, by providing urgently needed services such as: care support for children, elderly, and infirm individuals; public works such as upgrading civic infrastructure; administrative support for public agencies, schools, or health facilities; and “green” services, such as home retrofitting and eco-system restoration to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

#### 1.5. Employment protection payments: Provide co-payment for SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) affected by the pandemic to guarantee workers half of their normal salary, to prevent formal workers from becoming Informal Workers.

#### 1.6. Informal worker goods and services quota: Institute quota for government at all levels to procure at least 30% of goods and services from Informal Workers affected by COVID-19.

#### 1.7. Business platform development: Help Informal Workers market goods and services, to increase their competitiveness.

#### 1.8. Equality in policy-making: Guarantee that supportive economic policies for Informal Workers are inclusive of all informal occupational sectors.

### 2. Training and Skills Development for Post-COVID Economy

#### 2.1. Care upskilling: Provide trainings and professional certification for Informal Workers to improve their capacities and earning power, for instance as skilled professional caregivers for children, elderly, and people with disabilities.

#### 2.2. Technology and marketing upskilling: Provide technology trainings, including for online sales and marketing.

#### 2.3. Free and subsidized training: All training should be free, offer stipends equivalent to minimum wage, provide meals, and transportation, and connect workers to jobs or directly improve their business models.



Mr. Manop Kaewpaka, leader of the garment producers cooperative Solidarity Group and President of the HomeNet Thailand Association. Since January 2020, Solidarity Group experienced a precipitous drop in orders as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, and a drop of 40%-60% in piece rates for those orders that they did receive. He expressed concerns about the survival of his cooperative. Photo credit: Pattarapon Virat

### 3. Equity in Social Security

- 3.1. Unemployment Insurance for All:** Guarantee that workers registered under Social Security Article 40 are entitled to unemployment benefits.
- 3.2. Equality in Social Security:** Reform Social Security to guarantee that all enrollees of Article 33, 39, and 40 receive the same benefits. Reform the Social Security Office as an independent agency, with workers as members of a governing body, and equal representation from workers enrolled under Articles 33, 39, and 40.
- 4. Stakeholder Participation:** For the above agenda (1 to 3), guarantee participation and monitoring from FIT, civil society, and academics to assure the implementation process is effective and efficient.

**COVID-19 Crisis and the Informal Economy** is a collaboration between Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) and partner organizations representing Informal Workers in 12 cities: Accra, Ghana; Ahmedabad, India; Bangkok, Thailand; Dakar, Senegal; Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Delhi, India; Durban, South Africa; Lima, Peru; Mexico City, Mexico; New York City, USA; Pleven, Bulgaria and Tiruppur, India. The mixed methods, longitudinal study encompasses phone questionnaires of Informal Workers and semi-structured interviews conducted with Informal Worker leaders and other key informants. Round 2 will be conducted in the first half of 2021. For more information, visit [wiego.org/COVID-19-Global-Impact-Study](http://wiego.org/COVID-19-Global-Impact-Study).

**Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)** is a global network focused on empowering the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy to secure their livelihoods. We believe all workers should have equal economic opportunities, rights, protection and voice. WIEGO promotes change by improving statistics and expanding knowledge on the informal economy, building networks and capacity among Informal Worker organizations and, jointly with the networks and organizations, influencing local, national and international policies. Visit [www.wiego.org](http://www.wiego.org).

**About the Federation of Informal Workers of Thailand (FIT), HomeNet Thailand, and the Foundation for Labour and Employment Protection (FLEP)**

The Federation of Informal Workers of Thailand (FIT) represents over 23,000 Informal Workers across Thailand. Its affiliates include HomeNet Thailand Association, the Association of Motorcycle Taxi Drivers of Thailand, the Network of Domestic Workers in Thailand, Muubaan Nakila Service Cooperative, the Network of Thai Street Vendors for Sustainable Development, and Confederation of Street Vendor Groups in Bangkok. HomeNet Thailand and FLEP provide technical support to FIT and its members.



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