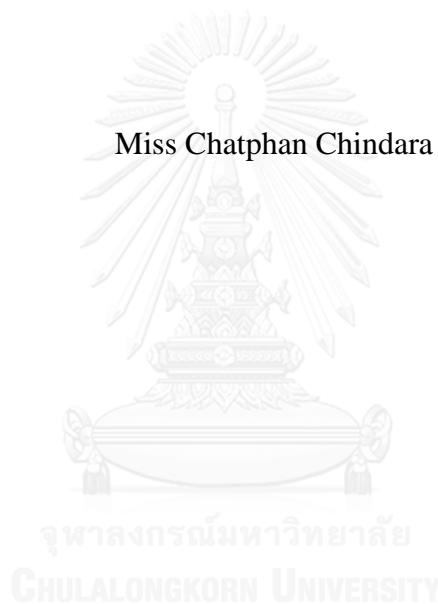


AGRARIAN TRANSITION, INTENSIFICATION AND THE RENEGOTIATION  
OF MIGRANT LABOR RELATIONS: CAMBODIAN WORKERS IN SUGAR  
CANE PRODUCTION IN NONG SANO VILLAGE, SAKAEO PROVINCE,  
THAILAND

Miss Chatphan Chindara



บทคัดย่อและแฟ้มข้อมูลฉบับเต็มของวิทยานิพนธ์ตั้งแต่ปีการศึกษา 2554 ที่ให้บริการในคลังปัญญาจุฬาฯ (CUIR)  
เป็นแฟ้มข้อมูลของนิสิตเจ้าของวิทยานิพนธ์ ที่ส่งผ่านทางบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts Program in International Development Studies  
Faculty of Political Science  
Chulalongkorn University  
Academic Year 2015  
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ความเปลี่ยนแปลงทางการเกษตร ความเข้มข้น และความสัมพันธ์ใหม่ของแรงงานข้าม  
ชาติ: แรงงานกัมพูชาในการผลิตอ้อย หมู่บ้านหนองโสน จังหวัดสระแก้ว ประเทศไทย



วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต  
สาขาวิชาการพัฒนาระหว่างประเทศ  
คณะรัฐศาสตร์ จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย  
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ลิขสิทธิ์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย



ชัชพรธม จินดาหารา: ความเปลี่ยนแปลงทางการเกษตร ความเข้มข้น และความสัมพันธ์ใหม่ของแรงงานข้ามชาติ: แรงงานกัมพูชาในการผลิตอ้อย หมู่บ้านหนองโสน จังหวัดสระแก้ว ประเทศไทย (AGRARIAN TRANSITION, INTENSIFICATION AND THE RENEGOTIATION OF MIGRANT LABOR RELATIONS: CAMBODIAN WORKERS IN SUGAR CANE PRODUCTION IN NONG SANO VILLAGE, SAKAEO PROVINCE, THAILAND) อ.ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์หลัก: ดร.คาร์ล มิคเคิลตัน, 109 หน้า.

การเกษตรในไทยได้เปลี่ยนมาเป็นการผลิตเพื่อการค้ามากขึ้น เกษตรกรหันมาปลูกพืชเศรษฐกิจที่ให้ผลกำไรสูง การเปลี่ยนแปลงเหล่านี้ได้เกิดขึ้นในจังหวัดสระแก้วเช่นกัน เกษตรกรเปลี่ยนมาปลูกพืชเศรษฐกิจที่ได้ผลตอบแทนที่สูงกว่า การเปลี่ยนแปลงไปสู่การปลูกอ้อยอ้อยเป็นหนึ่งในตัวอย่าง การเปลี่ยนแปลงนี้เป็นผลมาจากการส่งเสริมจากภาครัฐและโรงงานน้ำตาล เกษตรกรปลูกอ้อยเพิ่มมากขึ้นเนื่องจากผลตอบแทนที่สูง มีการเพิ่มผลผลิตด้วยการเพิ่มความเข้มข้นในการใส่ปุ๋ยที่ดินและแรงงาน การเพิ่มความเข้มข้นในการปลูกอ้อยทำให้ความต้องการแรงงานกัมพูชาเพิ่มขึ้น และทำให้แรงงานกัมพูชามีอำนาจในการต่อรองมากขึ้นจากความสัมพันธ์นี้

วิทยานิพนธ์นี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่ออธิบายสาเหตุของการเพิ่มความเข้มข้นในการปลูกอ้อยและนำเสนอว่าเกษตรกรได้เพิ่มความเข้มข้นนี้อย่างไร นอกจากนี้วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ยังได้ค้นหาว่าการเพิ่มความเข้มข้นนี้ส่งผลอย่างไรต่อความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างเกษตรกรไทยและแรงงานชาวกัมพูชา โดยใช้แนวความคิดการเปลี่ยนแปลงทางการเกษตร การเพิ่มความเข้มข้นและความสัมพันธ์ทางสังคมมาประยุกต์ใช้ ซึ่งได้ทำการเก็บข้อมูลด้วยการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพในหมู่บ้านหนองโสน ตำบลหนองหว้า อำเภอเขาฉกรรจ์ จังหวัดสระแก้ว

วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ชี้ให้เห็นว่า 1) การเปลี่ยนแปลงไปสู่การปลูกอ้อยในหมู่บ้านหนองโสนเกิดขึ้นเนื่องจากการสนับสนุนจากภาครัฐและโรงงานน้ำตาล ซึ่งนำไปสู่การเพิ่มความเข้มข้นในการปลูกอ้อยในภายหลัง 2) การเพิ่มความเข้มข้นในการปลูกอ้อยทำให้แรงงานชาวกัมพูชามีอำนาจในการต่อรองมากขึ้น เนื่องจากความต้องการแรงงานมีมากขณะที่แรงงานขาดแคลน 3) สมาคมเกษตรกรชายแดนบูรพามีหน้าที่สำคัญในการเจรจากับภาครัฐเพื่อให้แรงงานกัมพูชาสามารถเข้ามาทำงานในจังหวัดได้อย่างถูกต้อง

## 5781205724 : MAJOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

KEYWORDS: AGRARIAN TRANSITION / SUGAR CANE PRODUCTION / INTENSIFICATION / RENEGOTIATION / CAMBODIAN WORKERS

CHATPHAN CHINDARA: AGRARIAN TRANSITION, INTENSIFICATION AND THE RENEGOTIATION OF MIGRANT LABOR RELATIONS: CAMBODIAN WORKERS IN SUGAR CANE PRODUCTION IN NONG SANO VILLAGE, SAKAEO PROVINCE, THAILAND. ADVISOR: CARL MIDDLETON, Ph.D., 109 pp.

Agriculture becomes more commercialized which farmers shift to cash crops that generate greater income. In Sakaeo province, there is also a transition to sugar cane. Factors that made farmers shift to sugar cane growing is support from both government sector and sugar cane mill. Farmers apply more inputs, land use, and labor in sugar cane production. This intensification heavily affects to labor dimension as there is a high demand on labor for sugar cane growing. As a result, Cambodian migrant workers have more bargaining power to renegotiate relations with Thai farmers.

This thesis aims to explain why farmers intensified their production to sugar cane, and how they intensified it. Moreover this thesis also determine how intensification shapes renegotiation between Thai farmers and Cambodian migrant workers. This thesis applies agrarian transition as a conceptual framework which focuses on intensification process. It also employs social relations as another framework. This thesis used qualitative methodology to collect data from farmers and Cambodian migrant workers in Nong Sano village, Sakaeo province.

This thesis argues that, firstly, agrarian transition from other crops to sugar cane growing in Nong Sano village occurred according to support from government sector and the sugar cane mill. Secondly, intensification in sugar cane production reduces Cambodian migrant labor vulnerability because increase on labor demand creates new kind of relations between Thai farmers and migrant labors which migrant labors have more choice and bargaining power to renegotiate. Thirdly, this thesis argues that Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association plays an important role in giving legal status to Cambodian migrant workers which also empower them.

Field of Study: International Development  
Studies

Student's Signature .....  
Advisor's Signature .....

Academic Year: 2015

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to pay my gratitude to my advisor ajarn Carl Middleton who dedicated his efforts and time to this thesis and made it as good as possible. This thesis could not finish without his suggestions. I would also like to thank to my thesis committees ajarn Jakkrit Sangkhamanee and Albert Salamanca for their valuable suggestions and comments.

I would like to thank to all interviewees that help me explore to new territory I have never experienced before. Thanks to sugar cane farmers in Nong Sano village that spend their happily rest time from hard working in the field to answer my questions. Thanks to head of Tambon Nong Wha Administration Organization, Mr. Weera Huadhaeng, head of Nong Sano village, and representative of Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association for useful information and suggestions. Thanks to Cambodian migrant workers who kindly shared their information and experiences to me. And Thanks to Thom, my patient translator, who helps me to interview all Cambodian workers.

I would like to thank to MAIDS staffs, P'Jeab, P'Bass, P'Boyne, and P'Oh. And thanks to MAIDS friends and all of my friends who helps me get through difficult times. None of mentally support from them this thesis could not happen.

Special thanks to my family for encouragement, financial support, and understanding. And lastly, thanks to myself for achieving one of the most challenged tasks I have ever done.

## CONTENTS

	Page
THAI ABSTRACT .....	iv
ENGLISH ABSTRACT.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	vi
CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES .....	10
LIST OF FIGURES .....	11
CHAPTER I.....	12
INTRODUCTION .....	12
1.1 Statement of the Problem.....	12
1.2 Research Questions.....	15
1.3 Objectives .....	15
1.4 Conceptual framework.....	15
1.5 Scope of research.....	25
1.6 Research Methodology .....	28
1.7 Limitation of research.....	34
1.8 Significance of research.....	35
1.9 Structure of the thesis .....	35
CHAPTER II.....	37
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	37
2.1 Thailand’s agrarian transition .....	37
2.2 Sugar cane and its challenges in developing countries.....	40
2.3 Migration of Cambodian migrant workers to Thailand.....	45
2.4 Gap in knowledge .....	50
CHAPTER III .....	51
AGRARIAN TRANSITION AND INTENSIFICATION IN SUGAR CANE PRODUCTION IN NONG SANO VILLAGE.....	51
3.1 Background of Nong Sano village.....	51
3.2 Agrarian transition from other crops to sugar cane growing.....	55

	Page
3.3 Changing in land holding in Nong Sano village.....	64
3.4 Factors promoting transition to sugar cane.....	66
3.5 Changing rural farming aspiration.....	72
3.6 Chapter summary.....	73
CHAPTER IV.....	75
RENEGOTIATION OF MIGRANT LABOR RELATIONS IN NONG SANO VILLAGE.....	75
4.1 Situation of Cambodian migrant workers in sugar cane production .....	75
4.2 Role of Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association (CBFA) .....	81
4.3 Push and pull factors making Cambodian workers work in sugar cane production.....	85
4.4 Elements lead to renegotiation of Cambodian migrant labor relations .....	87
4.5 Chapter summary.....	90
CHAPTER V.....	91
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	91
5.1 Discussion.....	91
5.2 Conclusion.....	95
5.3 Recommendations.....	96
5.4 Directions for future research .....	97
REFERENCES.....	99
APPENDIX.....	102
VITA.....	109



## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Tables</b>	<b>Page</b>
Table 1. In-depth interviews with sugar cane farmers .....	29
Table 2. Cambodian migrant workers participated in focus group discussion .....	30
Table 3. Research questions .....	31
Table 4. Formal Deployment of Cambodians in foreign employment, 2006-2011 .....	46



## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figures</b>	<b>Page</b>
Figure 1. Eastern Sugar and Cane Company and ethanol plant.....	21
Figure 2. Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association .....	23
Figure 3. Map of Nong Wha sub-district .....	26
Figure 4. Deployment of Cambodians in foreign employment 2006-2011 .....	45
Figure 5. Map of Nong Sano village.....	52
Figure 6. Sugar cane production in Nong Sano village .....	58
Figure 7. Cassava production in Nong Sano village .....	59
Figure 8. Longan production in Nong Sano village.....	60
Figure 9. Sugar cane planted area of Sakaeo province (rai).....	61
Figure 10. Example of support from government sector in the province on sugar cane production.....	66
Figure 11. Example of support from the mill.....	68
Figure 12. Brochure and magazines from the mill.....	69
Figure 13. Representatives of sugar cane farmers from Sakaeo province called for new sugar cane mill .....	70
Figure 14. Cambodian migrant workers collecting sugar cane.....	79
Figure 15. Cambodian migrant workers camps .....	80

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Thailand is historically abundant in phases of agrarian transition as its prosperity is originally based on agricultural activities. In the past, this country depended on subsistence agriculture but was dramatically changed after Thailand oriented towards the Green Revolution in the 1960s (Royal Irrigation Department, n.d.). With the advancement of science and technology, agriculture has been changed from produce for consuming in households to produce for industry and exportation scales.

The transition from subsistence to mass agricultural production has created large amount of money to the country and has spread development to many places. On the other hand, the transition also had disadvantages to Thailand as it required the massive use of natural resource. Too much consumption had put a strain on the natural resources, and later resulted into many problems especially on the environment (Center for Agricultural Resource System Research, n.d.).

The changes in the ways farmers grow their crops do not only affect the agriculture dimension. It also affects the livelihoods of Thai farmers who feel the necessity to adjust their lives according to the new patterns of agriculture such as the use of pesticide and fertilizer. Especially in the advent of commercialization, Thai farmers are forced to produce more and more.

Sakaeo Province, still base one of its main income from engaging in agricultural activities, even though an industrial factory and other businesses are present there (Sakaeo Provincial Statistic Office, 2012). People in the province still stick with agriculture as their ancestors did in the past. Rice used to be popular since the subsidy

on rice scheme<sup>1</sup> especially during the Thaksin administration in 2004 (Thai Publica, 2014). Therefore, farmers grew rice a lot during that time because of the subsidized policy on rice by the administration which in effect put rice pricing at a better condition. Nevertheless, after the fall down of the rice pledging scheme because of corruption and loss from price distortion, rice was not popular as it used to be (Thai Publica, 2014). Finally, the policy was ceased. Farmers turned their back on rice and moved to other crops that had greater price. Nowadays, there are many crops that farmers grow. Apart from rice, other cash crops such as cassava, sugar cane, soy bean, among others, are widely grown in Sakaeo province (Nong Wha Agricultural Extension Office, n.d.).

These cash crops have become popular because the market price is better, and that these crops can grow in a short period of time. Farmers began to maximize their production due to high demand from the market and also the greater economic return that they can earn. In order to create a lot of products to sell, farmers need more capital and materials to put in. Basically, in order to do so, farmers have to improve both quality and quantity of their products. However, it is difficult for farmers to do quality improvement because it involves with science and technological knowhow which need cooperation from the government. Therefore, the easier way farmers can do by themselves is to put more capital such as labors and lands, and other materials in order to gain higher quantity.

In the case of Sakaeo Province, sugar cane growing is one of the examples of intensification in agriculture because it has been massively and widely grown for industry. Because of the support coming from the government on pricing, especially on sugar cane mill production which requires substantive capital on labor, finances, and materials, farmers changed from growing rice to sugar cane farming. Farmers have motivation on growing sugar cane because they can earn higher income from selling it and there is policy that stimulates demand on sugar cane such as on renewable energy (Thai Tapioca Starch Association, 2011). Meanwhile they can also get easier access to

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<sup>1</sup> Subsidy policy on rice which aimed to raise rice price. The offered price to Thai rice farmers was about 50 per cent above the market price (WARR, P. 2014. Thailand's rice subsidy scheme rotting away.

loans, materials, and knowledge that the mill is offering. Therefore, sugar cane has become widely grown in the province.

Not only financial and materials that farmers have intensified in sugar cane growing, they also found more land to maximize in their production. Sugar cane planted areas have become greater in number as well as the volume of products (ton) has been increasing in each year. Farmers use both their own and rented land from others to grow sugar cane. However, rented lands always out-number the land that farmers have. Farmers also use these lands for a long time as sugar cane can be grown all year round. Because of the intensive nature of sugar cane production, farmers face, therefore with soil degradation which somehow forces them to put more fertilizer in order to grow sugar cane.

Sugar cane growing in Sakaeo Province depends on Cambodian migrant workers for a long time. The replacement of Thai laborers by Cambodians is seen significant in agriculture. Formal and informal Cambodian migrant labors cross the Thai borders and work in Sakaeo Province. As a result of the growing sugar cane industry, the demand on laborers becomes higher as well. However, farmers prefer to employ Cambodian migrant workers rather than Thai workers. This circumstance facilitates and encourages Cambodian migrant labors to benefit from the preferred relations.

This thesis, therefore, aims to understand the agrarian transition in Nong Sano village in Sakaeo Province particularly under the perspective of sugar cane growing. It will also look at the agrarian transition through intensification process and the social relations it entails. As pointed out in this thesis, sugar cane growing in Nong Sano village has been intensified in terms of inputs, land, and laborers which are the results of the support coming from both government and private sectors (the mill). Moreover, this thesis also looks at the result of the transition which significantly, in the case of Nong Sano village, affected the social relations among the government sector, the mill, Thai farmers, and Cambodian migrant laborers. Finally, this thesis would like to show how the transition benefits the Cambodian migrant laborers by addressing the

relationship dynamics between two main stakeholders: the Thai farmers and the Cambodian migrant workers.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

1.2.1 Why have the farmers intensified their production from other crops to sugar cane in Nong Sano village?

1.2.2 How have farmers intensified their sugar cane production in Nong Sano village?

1.2.3 Since the transition to sugar cane production, how have the labor relations between Cambodian migrant workers and Thai farmers changed?

## **1.3 Objectives**

1.3.1 To explain why farmers have to intensify inputs, land use, and labor in sugar cane production in Nong Sano village.

1.3.2 To address how farmers intensify their production in terms of inputs, land use, and labor in sugar cane production in Nong Sano village.

1.3.3 To determine how intensification process in sugar cane growing shapes relations between Cambodian migrant workers and Thai farmers in Nong Sano village.

## **1.4 Conceptual framework**

### **1.4.1 Agrarian transition**

Agrarian transition covers the following transition processes such as “geographical (spatial), environmental, economic, social, political and technological” (Koninck et al., 2012, p.25). In order to understand agricultural transition and discern the direction of these changes as a result of sugar cane booming, agrarian transition is the conceptual framework used to explain this phenomenon. Agrarian transition is the term

explaining changes in agriculture in several aspects. Basically, agrarian transition involves these key processes: “commercialization, diversification, deagrarianization, differentiation, extensification (or expansion), intensification, commoditization, mechanization, proletarianization, marginalization, degradation, rural industrialization and integration (Koninck et al., 2012, p.25)

Agrarian transition explains agricultural changing which does affect many aspects of the society. According to the description above, agrarian transition is concerned with the livelihood of farmers and the way they produce agricultural goods to feed the market. However, in the context of agricultural production in the present day it is not just farmers who are affected from agrarian transition. Due to changes in the way farmers produce which are different from the production in the past, for example, in terms of technology or labor capital applied, or demand in the production. Producers become more varied and transnational which make agrarian transition more complicated.

In the case of Nong Sano village, agrarian transition also involves migrant workers as they are important factor for most of agricultural production of the village. Agrarian transition helps to understand changes of agriculture, land ownership, and labor relations between employers and Cambodian migrant workers in the area which are the results of massive sugar cane production.

The changing pattern of agricultural production as manifested in farm inputs, land use, and labors change are described by process of intensification of sugar cane production which is constrained by influence of private and government policy (section 1.4.1.1). For labor situation in Nong Sano village, it is explained by social relations which aims to understand relations between Thai farmers (employers) and Cambodian migrant workers. It was applied to explain the pattern of interactions between employers and migrant workers which very much influenced by lack of Thai laborers for sugar cane growing and cheap wage (section 1.4.1.2).

#### **1.4.1.1 Intensification process**

Intensification is defined “as an increase in agricultural production per unit of inputs which may be labour, land, time, fertilizer, seed, feed or cash” (FAO, 2004, p.3). Intensification process occurs due to high demand on sugar cane from sugar industry. Farmers are able to intensify their sugar cane production because of the value in domestic consumption, and also for exportation. Intensification process can be divided into two ways. One is the increase of inputs for higher production, for example, the use of more fertilizer and pesticide. Another one is the decrease of certain inputs. This means that farmers utilize less resources and focus more on effectiveness as FAO (2004, p.3) addresses: “By more effective delivery of smaller amounts of fertilizer, better targeting of plant or animal protection, and mixed or relay cropping on smaller fields”.

Sugar cane production has been intensified as a result of influence from Thai government’s renewable energy policy on ethanol<sup>2</sup> (Thai Tapioca Starch Association, 2011). By-product from sugar production such as molasses is the material used for renewable energy production. Consequences of sugar cane production on livelihood occurred from promoting bioethanol policy from government sector that encourages farmers to grow energy plant in order to strengthen energy security and reduce greenhouse gases from fossil fuel. Therefore, in order to meet that demand, sugar cane production is necessary to be increased in order to feed both individual consumption, exportation, and for energy.

Furthermore, sugar cane production has been affected by excessive production of rice. Government also would like to curb amount of rice which, at that time, is excessively produced due to rice pledging program. Therefore, government supports shifting from growing rice to other crops. Moreover, the market makes sugar cane growing more attractive for farmers as it has more stable price has high demand in the market. Farmers can get greater income from growing sugar cane. This shift from rice to sugar cane affects the increase of the sugar cane production.

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<sup>2</sup> The Ministry of Energy has issued the National Substitute Energy Development Plan for 15 years by setting the target for ethanol domestic consumption of 3 million liters per day in the year 2008–2011 and increase to 6.2 million liters within the year 2012–2016 and to 9.0 million liters in the year 2017 – 2022.



Despite the increased economic returns for the sugar cane industry, concerns are raised that the intensive use of fertilizer, pesticide, water, and land for sugar cane cultivation might create stress on the environment. For example, soil erosion which is the result of burning during harvesting season and the excessive application of fertilizer and pesticide. Water consumption in sugar cane cultivation is another issue related with environmental degradation because sugar cane cultivation needs a lot of water which might lead to water scarcity. To grow sugar cane for industry, farmers have to use a lot of resources in their cultivation. For example, farmers need to intensively use fertilizers and machines to help in the cultivation process. These practices lead to degradation of natural resources such as quality of soil and water due to the long-term harmful effects of excessive use of pesticide and fertilizer. Moreover the process of harvesting also affects to air quality as they will burn sugar cane before they collect cane.

In this thesis, intensification process is described as the changing of patterns of doing agriculture, sugar cane production in this case, that has been in a transition to the way that depends more on science and technology which contrasts with the labor-intensive means where farmers prefer human resources and consider laborers as a main element of sugar cane production. According to intensification process which aims to maximize production, in addition with supporting policy from government, production of sugar cane in Nong Sano, like in other sugar cane growing areas, has increased. Intensification process in the village comes in the form of increasing in inputs and increasing in outputs as well. Increasing in inputs refers to higher application of fertilizer, herbicide, using of agricultural machine, and the hiring of more laborers in production to gain more output such as the farm produce. Intensification also shows how policies in the energy sector can indirectly influence expansion of sugar cane growing which affects directly to land use situation in the village.

#### **1.4.1.2 Social relations in sugar cane production**

Agriculture nowadays involves many actors rather than in the past. As Sangkhamanee (2013, p.6) argued about social relations in Thailand, the point is that:

“the recent transformation in Thailand’s rural society shows that it is better to consider rural trajectory as a politics of “agrarian desires” rather than a kind of diversified apprehension and resistance. These agrarian desires have been part of the ongoing transformation in rural society where communities and individuals are better engaged—and seek greater engagement—with state development, market economy, and multiplicity of social connections in different scales.” (p. 6)

Therefore in order to achieve these goals, actors in agricultural production need to cooperate with state actors and other sector such as private sector more than in the past.

In this thesis, there are four key actors that are involved in sugar cane production. These actors are the following: of 1) government sector, 2) sugar cane mill, 3) farmers, and 4) Cambodian migrant workers. They have different backgrounds and come from different sectors. Nevertheless, they interact with each other in order to pursue their own interests. These four key actors drive sugar cane production in the Sakaeo Province in different ways according to different powers that they have. Moreover, they also have their own strategies to achieve their goals. The following describes the four actors in terms of their identity, interests, power, and strategies that they use in sugar cane production:

1) Government sector

Sugar is considered as one of the most important exported agricultural products in Thailand. The government specifically initiated a policy and regulation in order to manage the sugar industry. Policy on sugar cane production mainly comes from the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative and the Ministry of Industry.

*a. Office of Cane and Sugar Board*

One of the government sectors that is involved in sugar cane is the Office of Cane and Sugar Board (OCSB). Sugar and cane industry has been under control of

OCSB which is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Industry of Thailand. OCSB performs its duties and responsibilities as derived from Article 61 (1)– (11) of the Cane and Sugar Act of 1984, which is described briefly as follows:

1. Perform all administrative works for the Cane and Sugar Board.
2. Formulate policies and plans for the development of the cane and sugar industry.
3. Monitor the cane and sugar production and distribution complying with rules and regulations under the Cane and Sugar Act.
4. Coordinate technical cooperation with regard to the promotion and development of the industry between local and international organizations.
5. Promote research and development of cane varieties, sugar products and by-products as well as technology development to enhance the competitiveness of the industry. (Office of Cane and Sugar Board, n.d.)

OCSB controls all sugar cane production and industry in Thailand. It influences sugar cane industry through policy at the national level.

*b. Khaochakan District Agriculture and Cooperatives Office*

Another government sector that plays an important role in sugar cane growing is Khaochakan District Agricultural and Cooperatives Office which is under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. This actor has direct responsibility in managing all aspects relating to agriculture in the province. The office coordinates and provides knowledge on agriculture, aquaculture, livestock, soil treatment, and so on, to farmers in the district in order to improve living quality and income of the farmers (Khaochakan District Agriculture and Cooperative Office, n.d.).

The Provincial Agriculture and Cooperative Khaochakan Office is responsible for sugar cane growing in Nong Sano village. This office is mandated to implement the government policy on agriculture. However it does not much concentrate on sugar cane.

Its focus is on rice more than sugar cane because there is also the mill to response on these duties, for example, knowledge transfer, loans and material supply.

*c. Sakaeo Provincial Department of Employment*

Another actor under the government sector is the Provincial Labor Department. The department is under the authority of the Ministry of Labor. Its involvement in the sugar cane production is strong, especially in the case of Sakaeo Province, as it has a duty to facilitate sugar cane growing in terms of providing labor to the industry. Its duties and responsibilities (Sakaeo Provincial Department of Employment, n.d.) are outlines as follows:

1. Developing system and providing domestic employment services;
2. Developing system and providing overseas employment services;
3. Promoting, developing and providing vocational and career guidance services;
4. Providing job seekers protection; and
5. Facilitating foreign workers

The department mostly interacts with farmers associations in order to record Cambodian migrant workers that cross border in each harvesting season. The department loosens regulations to allow Cambodian migrant workers to work during harvesting season in order to solve the lack of laborers in agriculture.

These actors drive sugar cane growing in Sakaeo Province in different levels. OCSB has the responsibility to implement the policy at the macro level which involves the pricing of sugar cane and the application of subsidies. On the other hand, the Provincial Labor Department is involved especially during harvesting season, while the Provincial Agriculture and Cooperatives Office provides knowledge to farmers in order to improve the quality of sugar cane.

## 2) Sugar cane mill

The mill in this thesis refers to Eastern Sugar and Cane Company who plays an important role in the development of sugar cane growing at the micro level. It is a private company that is originally based in Rayong Province but relocated to Sakaeo Province in 1994. It encourages high quality sugar cane growing in order to reach the preferred quality according to international standards. The mill also extended its production line to energy field as it invested in ethanol industry and electricity from sugar by-product gas (Eastern Sugar and Cane, n.d.).

The mill is an influential actor in the sugar cane growing due to its capacity to provide financial and materials for growing sugar cane for farmers. Farmers can easily access capitals for growing sugar cane because of this support. Moreover the mill is a main agency to distribute knowledge and knowhow in growing sugar cane to farmers.

Figure 1. Eastern Sugar and Cane Company and ethanol plant



Source: Google Map

### 3) Farmers

For farmers, they usually appear in form of a group or association. In this thesis, it was found out that farmers gather themselves as an association which is formally known as Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association (CBFA). The association is registered according to the Sugarcane and Sugar Act B.E.2527 (A.D. 1984) in 2001. The Association is located in Klong Had district. It was established to be a collective voice of farmers in negotiating with government sectors in order to facilitate farmers' needs especially in terms of labor requirements.

The association deals with lack of laborers working in agricultural production especially in sugar cane and cassava which are in itself labor intensive. If farmers want to hire Cambodian migrant workers, they must be a member of CBFA. There is a meeting every year between involving sectors in order to allow Cambodian labors to cross the border and work in the province for a certain period of time.

Figure 2. Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association



Credit: Chatphan Chindara, May 2015

The association has a certain bargaining power towards the government sector, and sometimes they can pressure or pursue government in conditions favorable to the group. It was observed in this thesis that this farmers association can pressure government sector to help them in terms of hiring laborers – local or migrants – during harvesting season.

#### 4) Cambodian migrant workers

There are two kinds of migrant workers: formal and informal. In sugar cane growing in Sakaeo Province, there are two kinds of formal migrant workers. The first one is the long-term formal workers who are those that are permanent workers and who

can work in the province all throughout the year as they have a valid identity card. Their employers have secured work registration for them from the Department of Labors. The second one is the seasonal formal workers. These migrant workers only work in Thailand during harvesting season. Seasonal formal workers do not have identification cards like long-term formal workers. The workers have copies of the documents that their employers keep with themselves and have to show these to the concerned authority when the employers require the services of the workers. They can stay in a certain period depending on the mutual agreement between involving sectors. Usually, Cambodian migrant workers are allowed to stay from November until March which is the harvesting period in the province. Sugar cane production in Sakaeo province relies a lot on seasonal workers.

On the other hand, there are also informal workers who illegally crossed the Thai borders. These workers do not have an identity card. Informal workers have to bribe some officials in order to pass checkpoints. They also get paid at the same rate with formal migrant workers.

For Cambodian migrant workers, they do not have formal association to protect or propose on the behalf of migrant workers. However it seems that they can effectively negotiate with Thai farmers in terms of wage due to a general labor shortage, especially in the case where there are government regulations that protect Cambodian migrant workers. Nevertheless, these regulations neither are strict nor have the mechanism to scrutinize or monitor in case there are violations.

### **1.5 Scope of research**

Nong Sano village is one of the villages in Nong Wha sub-district located in Khaochakan District of Sakaeo Province. It was selected to represent the village that has massive sugar cane production. This village is involved in sugar cane production for 20 years. There are some farmers growing sugar cane in a big scale who employ



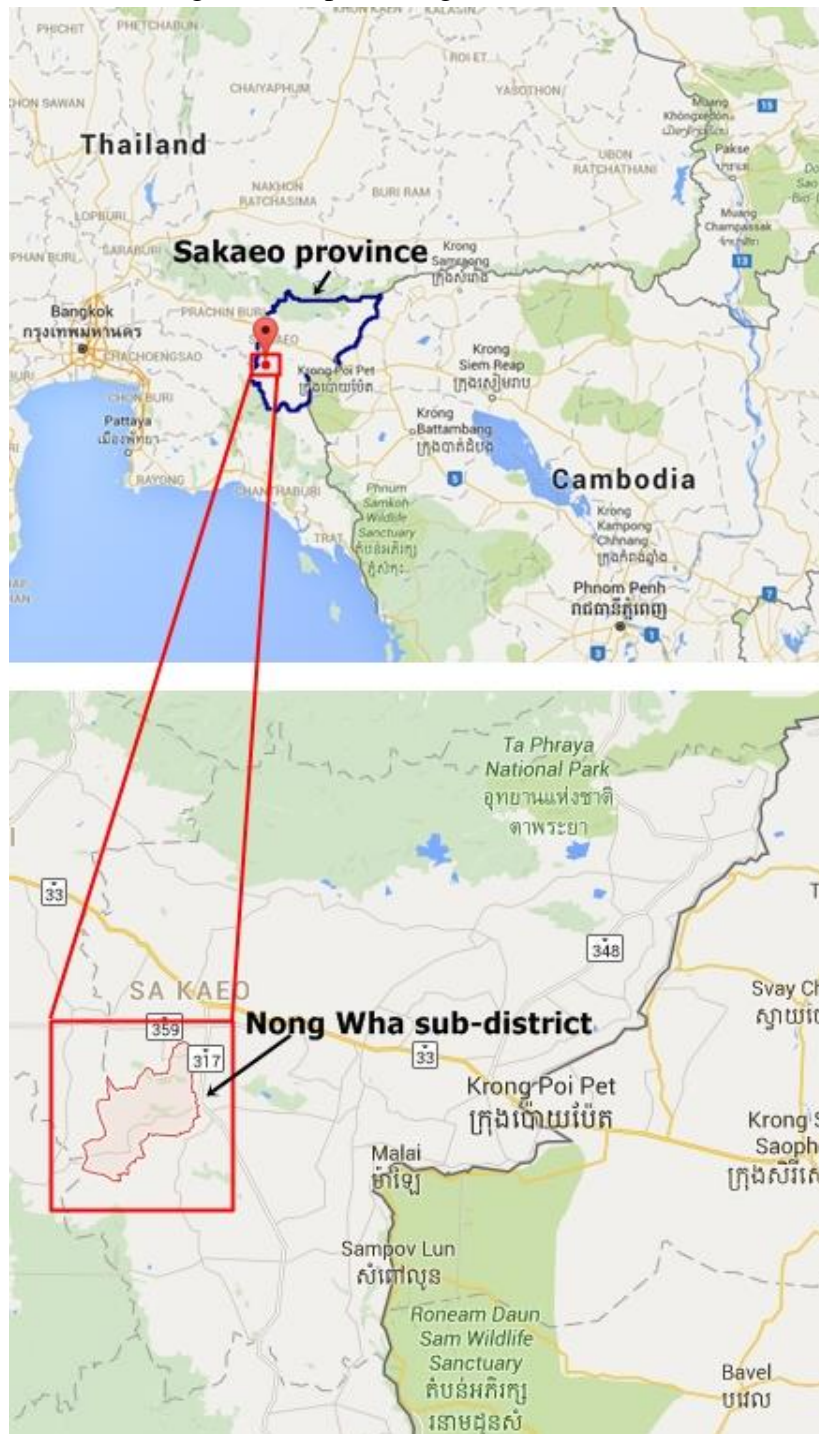
Cambodian laborers. The village is located around 90 kilometers from the Thai-Cambodian border which allows the village to see the movement of workers through government sector support policy.

Agricultural activities in this province, including sugar cane, have relied a lot on Cambodian migrant workers. There are both formal and informal Cambodian migrant workers who come to work in the village. This thesis, therefore, focuses on the experiences and perspectives of Thai farmers and Cambodian migrant workers in Nong Sano village in order to answer research questions.

This thesis explores agrarian transition during these 20 years. It is divided into three periods:

- 1) The first period is from the past-1996 including establishment of sugar cane mill;
- 2) The second period is from 1997-2011 including the severe drought; and,
- 3) The third period is from 2012-present including Alternative Energy Development Plan.

Figure 3. Map of Nong Wha sub-district



Source: Google Map

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

### **1.6.1 Data collection**

Data collection in this research used both secondary and primary data in order to answer two research questions. It started with finding general information from secondary sources that were used later on for further exploration. Secondary data consisted of documents from many sources such as books, journal, article, news, website, and so on (section 1.6.1.1). Primary data collection was conducted in order to clarify the pre assumptions and to find answers according to the context of the case study. For this method, observation and interview were the tools that were used to collect data (section 1.6.1.2).

#### **1.6.1.1 Secondary data**

Documents were used as an initial base for collecting secondary data. Documents that were considered necessary for this thesis are those that contain information on the sugar cane production in Sakaeo province involving the policy on sugar cane both from government and private sector such as bioenergy development (ethanol) and cash crops, and the policy on Cambodian laborers working during harvesting season. Another part of the documentary research was the conceptual framework part. Agrarian transition and labor relations were focused, especially on Thailand's context, Southeast Asia, developing countries, or countries that have similar migrant workers situation.

Furthermore, the document research covered the content analysis of documents from local government level such as from the Office of Commercial Affairs Sakaeo on policy about Cambodian migrant workers, and information of Sakaeo agriculture from Sakaeo Provincial Agricultural Extension Office. Data were obtained from both non-online and online databases such as books, journals, electronic books, online database, and news articles.

#### **1.6.1.2 Primary data**

#### **1.6.1.2.1 Observation**

One of the tools that was used to collect primary data in through observation method. Prior to conducting interviews in the village, an observation (in February 2015) was done to provide initial insight of the phenomenon needed to be studied. This technique was made useful in clarifying or confirming the data obtained from documents. For this thesis, observation was conducted in order to see the real phenomena in terms of land use, agricultural production, and labor relations situation in Nong Sano village which are results of the sugar cane production.

#### **1.6.1.2.2 Key informant interview**

Key informant interviews were conducted to collect information from individuals who have knowledge or are considered as experts on particular issues. Two informant interviews were done for this thesis. The first one is representative from Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association which was interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The information provided by the informant drew a picture of Cambodian migrant workers in sugar cane production. This interview enabled the study to understand the process of negotiation between farmers and the government regarding the permission of Cambodian laborers to work in the village during harvesting season. The second one is the head of Nong Sano village. The interview was conducted on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015. This interview was key in obtaining information about the situation of sugar cane production, agrarian changes in terms of land use and agricultural production, and the state Cambodian migrant workers in the village.

#### **1.6.1.2.3 In-depth interview**

In-depth interview is another tool used in this thesis to collect primary data. This specific data collection method which is qualitative in nature was premised to build the confidence of the conversations between the interviewer and the informants. The identity of the informants were protected and that information provided by them were

validated with them before including these in this thesis. In-depth interview was applied to four (4) sugar cane farmers in May 2015; three (3) of them have their own laborers while only one has to hire from other sugar cane farmers. Three sugar cane farmers who have their own workers have employed Cambodian laborers for a long time since the day they started growing sugar cane. These characteristics were seen necessary in providing information about their experiences on employing Cambodian workers. They were also able to describe changes in employing these migrant workers in terms of wage negotiation and actions from government comparing between the past and in the present day. In-depth interviews also included conversations with other three farmers who do not growing sugar cane in the village. The interviews were conducted in February 2016.

Table 1. In-depth interviews with sugar cane farmers

Number	Date of interview	Gender	Age
1	09/05/2015	Male	53
2	17/05/2015	Male	43
3	19/05/2015	Male	55
4	19/05/2015	Male	57
5	20/02/2016	Male	52
6	20/02/2016	Male	57
7	21/02/2016	Male	55

#### 1.6.1.2.4 Focused group discussion

Focused group discussion was conducted among laborers in Nong Sano village. This data collection method was considered necessary to be able to find more detailed information about the research topic. This also created more comfortable environment for participants which allowed them to provide deeper answers to a person who they consider as a stranger. For Cambodian migrant workers, there were three focused group

discussions conducted for this thesis. There were 19 Cambodian migrant workers included in the sampling. The composition of the three focused group discussions is as follows: 1) first group was composed of 4 male individuals, 2) second group was participated by 13<sup>3</sup> individuals, and the third group was composed of 3 persons. These informants are the only Cambodian labors working in sugar cane production available in Nong Sano village at the moment when the interviews were conducted.

The discussion started in the evening after Cambodian laborers were done with their work in the sugar cane field. A translator was needed in the discussion because the Cambodian workers cannot speak Thai and the researcher cannot speak Khmer either. All workers who participated in the discussion shared their experiences with no stress even though most of them did not cross border legally.

Table 2. Cambodian migrant workers participated in focus group discussion

Number	Date of interview	Gender	Age	Place of interview
1	13/05/2015	Male	25	Sugar cane farmer #1 house
2		Male	27	
3		Male	46	
4		Male	15	
5	18/05/2015	Female	45	Sugar cane farmer #2 house
6		Female	16	
7		Male	31	
8		Female	45	
9		Male	56	
10		Female	28	
11		Female	38	
12		Male	22	
13		Male	19	

<sup>3</sup> For the second group, Cambodian laborers came with their families and also brought their children with them, hence the bigger headcount.

14		Male	30	
15		Male	22	
16		Male	28	
17	21/05/2015	Male	24	Sugar cane farmer #4 house
18		Male	32	
19		Male	21	

### 1.6.2 Data analysis

Data in this thesis was analyzed under the agrarian transition conceptual framework. The conceptual framework was able to explain the changes in terms of land use, agricultural production, and labor relations in the village according to sugar cane production.

In order to get the data, qualitative method was applied. These were the key informant and in-depth interviews, and focused group discussions. During the interview, conversations between the researcher and informants were recorded and taken note. All conversations recorded from the interviews were transcribed. Transcribed conversations were translated from Thai to English and were organized in a matrix to help categorize the discussions accordingly to key words that relate to the conceptual framework. In addition, photographs relating to the research were taken in order to show the situation in the areas.

Table 3. Research questions

Research questions	Key data	Sources of data	Research tools
1. Why have the farmers intensified their production from other crops to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shift to sugar cane growing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land use situation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Head of Nong Sano village</li> <li>- Thai farmers</li> <li>- Year book of sugar cane</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review, key informant interview, in-depth interview</li> </ul>

<p>sugar cane in Nong Sano village?</p> <p>2. How have farmers intensified their sugar cane production in Nong Sano village?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of land for sugar cane production</li> <li>• Changing of land for agriculture in the village</li> </ul> <p>- Increase in inputs, land, and labors</p> <p>- Land holding in the village</p> <p>- Influence from private and government policy that affect the agricultural sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy</li> <li>• Subsidies</li> <li>• Knowledge transfer</li> </ul>	<p>- Sakaeo Provincial Statistical Office</p> <p>- Document of Nong Sano sugar cane production from sugar cane mill</p>	
<p>3. Since the transition to sugar cane production, how have the labor relations between Cambodian migrant workers and Thai farmers changed?</p>	<p>- Changing of labor employment in the village</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thai to Cambodian</li> </ul> <p>- Dependency of sugar cane growing on Cambodian migrant laborers</p>	<p>- Head of Nong Sano village</p> <p>- Thai farmers</p> <p>- Cambodian migrant workers</p>	<p>Document review, key informant interview, focus group interview</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Thai laborers</li> <li>• Cheap labor from Cambodia</li> </ul> <p>- Allowing Cambodian to cross border during harvesting season</p>		
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### 1.7 Limitation of research

At first the limitation of this research was expected to come from Cambodian migrant workers because some of them crossed border illegally. Therefore it was expected that they might not want to talk or give information. However, during the course of the actual research process, the actual limitation was the difficulty in getting data from key informants due to distrust, especially from private sector, the mill. Because they were afraid that this research would affect their sugar industry in the same way that happened to the fishery industry as there are right violation on migrant workers. In order to minimize this difficulty, the researcher talked with the head of agriculture department of the mill and explained about this thesis and its aims which does not concern about any sensitive issue that could be against sugar cane industry.

Another limitation in this thesis is the language and communication with the migrant workers. All Cambodian migrant workers could not communicate in Thai therefore a translator was required to communicate and interpret the message (from Thai to Khmer and Khmer to Thai) between there researcher and the informants.. The translator is a Cambodian who has worked in Thailand for more than 10 years, and can speak Thai fluently. His similar experiences as a migrant himself helped a lot in communicating with the Cambodian migrant workers.

## **1.8 Significance of research**

This research gives an opportunity to reconsider the impacts of agrarian transition to sugar cane production. For example, in Nong Sano village, the most distinguished dimensions affected by sugar cane production are land use, changes in agricultural production, and labor. In the context of Nong Sano village, Sakaeo Province, labor force in the sugar cane production is different from the context of the other parts of Thailand. In Sakaeo, most of the laborers in sugar cane cultivation are Cambodian migrant workers who are vulnerable to be exploited in terms of wage due to their illegal status.

This thesis also explored the different side of labor relations between Thai farmers and migrant laborers. In the case of Nong Sano village, migrant laborers become necessary actors in sugar cane production as they come to fill the empty gap of Thai laborers in the village. There are also some elements that could support them to have more choice, and can bargain with their employers easier.

## **1.9 Structure of the thesis**

The overall structure of this thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter I provides the background information of the whole thesis. Chapter II is dedicated for literature review which will provide reviews on three topics: Thailand's agrarian transition, sugar cane cultivation and its challenges in developing countries, and the situation of Cambodian laborers in Thailand. This chapter also addresses the knowledge gap regarding the topic.

Chapter III will answer the first and second research questions by describing the agrarian transition in the village through three phrases: from the past-1996 including establishment of sugar cane mill, 1997-2011 including severe drought, and 2012-present including Alternative Energy Development Plan. In this chapter, roles of two drivers in shaping the transition – the government sectors and the mill, will also be discussed. In

addition, future prospect of farmers according to the transition will also be included in the discussion.

Chapter IV will answer the second research question by looking at the renegotiation between Cambodian migrant workers and Thai farmers under the context of the influence from Chidan Burapa Farmers Association (CBFA) and the government sector. This chapter also discusses the pull and push factors that promote Cambodian migrant workers to work in sugar cane growing in Sakaeo Province. In addition, factors enhancing bargaining power of Cambodian labors, lack of labor and cheap wage, will also be presented in this chapter.

Finally, Chapter V will provide the conclusion of this thesis through providing of discussion relations between agrarian transition, intensification, and renegotiation of migrant labor. This chapter also addresses the significance of finding in this thesis to the development theory and Thailand as this thesis could be a lesson learn for other provinces where migrant workers flow into agricultural sector like Sakaeo province. It also provides recommendations for government, the mill, and farmers according to the thesis. At the end of this chapter, direction for future research also provided.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to answer the research questions, three topics will be reviewed which are organized as follows: section 2.1 will discuss the Thailand's agrarian transition; section 2.2 will be on sugar cane cultivation and its challenges in developing countries; and, section 2.3 will provide information on the situation of Cambodian laborers in Thailand. These three sets literature will help in identifying the gap in knowledge that this thesis aims to fill in. Therefore, towards the end of this chapter, section 2.4 will address the knowledge gap of the literature review.

#### **2.1 Thailand's agrarian transition**

Agrarian transition in Thailand occurred to meet the needs for modernization and industrialization. There were several significant events that demonstrated this transition for agricultural production and investment. For example, the Green Revolution in 1960s changed the way people do agricultural activities by means of using scientific research and development, and technology that helped in agricultural production. Agricultural production increased worldwide as a result of the Green Revolution as it involved the expansion of irrigation, better management, better seed breed, the use of fertilizers and pesticides. Green Revolution affected agricultural production and generated social impact as farmers can produce more than ever and get greater income. Green Revolution became a guideline for policy development and implementation in most countries including Thailand (Royal Irrigation Department, n.d.). However, this Revolution affected the social dimension as it caused health

problems due to the intensive use of chemicals in agriculture (Center for Agricultural Resource System Research, n.d.).

Even though agricultural production has been improved as a result of Green Revolution, it was argued that it created negative impacts to the environment due to the presence of pesticides and fertilizers, in the extremely exhausted soil. Intensive use of these chemical substances led to soil erosion, water contamination, reduction of biodiversity, and the increase of water shortage due to massive agricultural production.

The implicit government support on agriculture in Thailand, appeared since in the first National Economic and Social Development Plan. The first plan emphasized on increasing agricultural production for exportation (The National Economic Development Board, 1967). During that a period, the agricultural sector contributed about one-third of the GDP despite its share in the GDP declined from 38.3 per cent in 1961 to 33.7 per cent in 1966 (The National Economic Development Board, 1967, p. 4). However, agricultural output increases at an average rate of 4.9 per cent against the Plan's target of 4 per cent as a result of complementary development of irrigation, use of key agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides, crop diversification combined with the international market demand, and improvement of the road network which have a sustaining influence on the total production. The expansion of output in this sector is vital since over two-thirds, or about 79 per cent, of the labor force earns its livelihood off agriculture (The National Economic Development Board, n.d., p. 5). The first plan also presented direction of agriculture in the future which transited to new cropping pattern. The new pattern that was introduced to farmers which included crop rotation and diversified planting has begun to have an appreciable effect. Production of such field or upland crops as maize, cassava, sugar cane and kenaf has risen sharply (The National Economic Development Board, n.d., p. 5) due to this change.

The succeeding National Economic Development Plans were not much different as these plans emphasized on increasing productivity and quality of agricultural products which involves mostly with irrigation, agricultural zoning, diversification, and human resource in agricultural sector. The first plan was launched

during the time that Thailand began to orient its agricultural production towards massive exportation, especially on raw materials. As a result, shifting from produce to meet the farmers' basic needs to commercialized farming was considered unavoidable. Commercialization was seen as one of the important factors that drove agricultural transition in Thailand for a long time. The government tried to increase both quantity and quality of agricultural production in order to compete in the international market. Intensification in terms of applying of fertilizers and pesticides were mentioned in the success of increased output. The first National Economic and Social Development Plan was originally to promote manufacturing sector which, at that time, increased tremendously due to relocation of Japanese production base to Thailand. However, most of the GDP still depended on agricultural sector at this period.

Agrarian transition in the past was concerned about rural labor force. However, under the current scenario, the transition has been involving transnational labor for agricultural work. Agrarian transition has directly affected the flow of labor in the agricultural sector. In Thailand, especially around the border areas, migration and agrarian transition have been considered as mutually reinforcing. For example, agricultural transformations have been developing in Tha Sao sub-district (Trebuil et al., 1994), north of Saiyok district, Kanchanaburi Province which is located at the shared border with Myanmar. A process of penetration of migrants, agricultural production and market economy could cause agrarian transition in one area quicker than the area without these factors (Trebuil et al., 1994). For the case of Tha Sao, the rapid transformation of agrarian landscapes was dominated by the following three successive components of an extensive process of:

- Degradation of the mixed deciduous forest coverage;
- Conversion of degraded forest types into farm land for annual field crops production;
- Re-introduction of tree through orchards and other perennial plantations

In some locations, the rainfed lowland rice fields were converted into upland cash crop plots as the local agriculture became more commercialized (Trebuil et al., 1994). This agrarian transition always involves the relationship between farmers and land. For example, the occurrence of large size monocrop plantation indicates that land ownership has been transferred from local farmers to landlords, most of them living outside the area such as Bangkok or neighboring provincial capitals (Trebuil et al., 1994). Transition for this case refers to, for example, means of production, techniques used in cultivation, marketing conditions, farm supplies, labor market, state intervention, farmer income and productivity. These transitions also occurred in other parts of Thailand where large scale cash crop plantation has been applied.

Agricultural policy also affects the labor dimension as it could accelerate demand on labors for agricultural production. In this thesis, agrarian transition emphasized on the consequences of massive sugar cane production on agricultural production, land use, and labors relations. For labor relations, Cambodian migrant workers have been involved with sugar cane production as a solution for lack of workers. In a study done by the Agricultural Economics Operation Centre (AEOC) and Center for Applied Economic Research of Kasetsart University (CAER) revealed that lack of labors in Thai agricultural sector has been driven by three factors: 1) labor force in agricultural sector is transitioning toward the aging society; 2) young people who have higher education level opt to work in the industrial sector; and 3) agricultural production cost is higher due to price of fertilizer, pesticide, and labor wage. Therefore, migrant workers have replaced Thai workers in order to reduce production cost and solve the labor problem (Thairath, 2014).

## **2.2 Sugar cane and its challenges in developing countries**

Being heavily dependent on imported fossil fuel and being an agricultural-based economy, it was considered a good condition for Thai government to generate policy on renewable energy. Bioenergy in Thailand was developed almost two decades ago. It

has many significant events in its history. Ethanol industry in Thailand came to spotlight when King Bhumipol sanctioned a study on converting sugar cane to alternative fuels in 1985; the Royal Chitralada Project, which tested ethanol production from sugar cane in 1994; and the National Metals and Materials Technology Center collaborating in ethanol research with Ford Motor Corporation in 1999 (Mudiyanselage et al., 2013).

Since then ethanol has been pushed and has become crucial as there was an establishment of the National Ethanol Committee in 2001 and followed by the Ethanol-Biodiesel Foundation in 2003 (Mudiyanselage et al., 2013). The government at the time used this as an opportunity to introduce another alternative energy to Thai people. For example, in 2003, the government chose Gasohol 95 (E10) as the blend to be distributed in the market (Mudiyanselage et al., 2013). According to the government strategy established in 2003, the quantity of ethanol to be used would be one million liters per day in 2006 and three million liters per day in 2011 (Mudiyanselage et al., 2013). This showed the development of renewable energy in terms of biofuel consumption.

It was until 2003 that such a policy had materialized due mainly to a sharp increase in oil price (Wattana, 2014). Thai government came up with the second alternative energy plan in 2008 which covered the period of 2008-2022. The Second Alternative Energy Development Plan (AEDP) was developed with the main target of increasing the proportion of alternative energy to 20 per cent of the national final energy consumption by 2022. According to the plan, the production of bio-ethanol and biodiesel are expected to grow significantly. Government has been expecting that biofuels will substitute about 44% of oil consumption in 2021 (Wattana, 2014, p. 4). In order to meet the biofuels substitution target, bioethanol production is expected to rise considerably, from 1.3 million liters per day in 2012 to 9 million liters per day in 2021 (Wattana, 2014, p. 4). The highly increasing use of renewable energy in transportation has been demonstrated by the use of bioethanol and biodiesel, which comes along with the booming development of bioenergy plants such as on cassava, sugar cane, oil palm, and so on.



Furthermore, AEDP was developed to “utilize alternative energy as a major energy substitute for imported oil, to increase energy security of the country, to promote an integrated green energy utilization in communities, to enhance the development of alternative energy industry, and to research, and develop high efficient technology for alternative energy” (Wattana, 2014, p. 9). The plan consists of three phases:

- Short term (2008-2011): focus on promotion of commercial alternative energy technology from high potential energy sources including biofuels, biomass, and biogas.
- Medium term (2012-2016): focus on development of alternative energy technology industry, encourage new alternative energy research and development of economically viable technological methods and sources, and introduce a model for the concept of “Green City” to help communities move toward energy self-sufficiency through sustainable development.
- Long term (2017-2022): enhance utilization of new available alternative energy technology, i.e., hydrogen, bio hydrogenated, extend green city models throughout the country and ASEAN countries.

The plan has been considered successful in the sense that it was able to increase production and consumption of biofuel as outlined in the plan. However, in the medium term plan, the move toward becoming a “Green City” is still difficult to achieve. In order to achieve the objectives of the AEDP, particularly on the “Green City”, cooperation from public sector and other departments is needed. Small power producers need to be supported by government in terms of subsidies. Importantly, technological know-how should be provided as these will help in developing renewable energy in a sustainable way.

Thailand, like other developing countries, still uses first generation ethanol technology which uses sugar cane as a material supply to produce ethanol (Guardabassi and Goldemberg, 2014, p. 2). In the past 20 years, Thailand’s sugar cane and sugar industry has been growing continually and the country now has become one of the

world's largest sugar exporters (Office of the Cane and Sugar Board, 2006). Because of the highly increasing need for bioenergy, energy crops are widely planted in order to meet that demand. Energy crops have features like crop boom which consists of, first, rapid conversion of large area of land to monocropped production with the rising crop price, new techniques in cultivation, and various kinds of state support. Second, it causes transformation in land use which makes long term implications for land relations of the specific choice of crop which were limited. And third, it involves three important actors: smallholders, agribusinesses, and states, in land relations (Hall et al., 2011, p. 5).

Biofuel is considered as an option in reducing the impact of climate change. For rich countries, they pledged to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases by using biofuels, while in the low and middle income countries biofuels help in decreasing the import of energy which causes a huge amount of money. Moreover biofuels can create opportunities for these countries to earn income. However, there are some risks in biofuel production as it can make negative impacts to forests in order to grow energy crops (Khan et al., 2010). Without appropriate management, cash crops growing could be a mistake rather than serving as an opportunity.

The industry (renewable energy industry) is one of the country's key industrial sectors, which play an important role in the country's economic and social development. This industry can generate revenue to the local economy for more than 50 million baht (around 1.395 million USD<sup>4</sup>) annually from exports and domestic sales of sugar. It also creates employment and income for more than 1,000,000 sugarcane farmers and people in related sectors (Office of the Cane and Sugar Board, 2006). Cash crops have brought employment opportunities for millions of Southeast Asians. Nevertheless there are downsides of the cash crops production. They have also "resulted in the exclusion of large numbers of people from access to land through the processes that accompany and follow in the wake of a boom" (Hall et al., 2011, p. 87).

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<sup>4</sup> Exchange rate is 1 US Dollar = 35.8200 Thai Baht

Large-scale crop plantations for biofuels pose both opportunities and challenges, and will inevitably compete with food production for land, water, nutrient resources, and other inputs (Mudiyanselage et al., 2013). Boom crops, except from generating high income, have a high risk in the sense that if the agriculture fails, for example, from disease or falling price (Hall et al., 2011, p. 87) the crop production will be affected tremendously. Massive cash crops could lead to many problems. For example, soil degradation, forest destruction, decrease of biological diversity, water pollution, and so on.

Increased sugar cane cultivation for ethanol production can significantly have an impact on the use of land, fertilizer, and water (Kongboon and Sampattagul, 2012). In order for crops to be grown for biofuel production within the context of sustainable agro-ecosystems, the impact of biofuels on food prices as well as their potential to contribute to energy security, climate change mitigation through reduced GHG emissions, and rural development will remain the subject of considerable debate (Jaradat, 2013). Sugar cane growing has both benefits and burdens. It might be a good resolution for energy security, environment as it mitigates CO<sub>2</sub> emission, and development in the rural area.

Crop booms is a good example to demonstrate the trajectory problems of intensive energy plant growing. The agricultural transition according to the crop booms shows the relations of society, environment and agriculture. Since the AEDP was announced, energy plants such as cassava, sugar cane, and Jatropha have increased, both in terms of plantation areas and quantity of products. Being fast-growing crops, sugar cane could be counted as a boom crop. Boom crops bring a lot of changes to society, especially in rural areas in the sense that practice in agricultural production and investment have been changed, and this affects a lot in rural people livelihood. It changes in land use and access: “transformation and land relations. In terms of mobilization, when booms begin, the prospect of enrichment often stimulates large-scale migration to boom areas and the transfer of land to the newcomers” (Hall et al., 2011, p. 87). Moreover agrarian change affects to farmers as they shift from producing

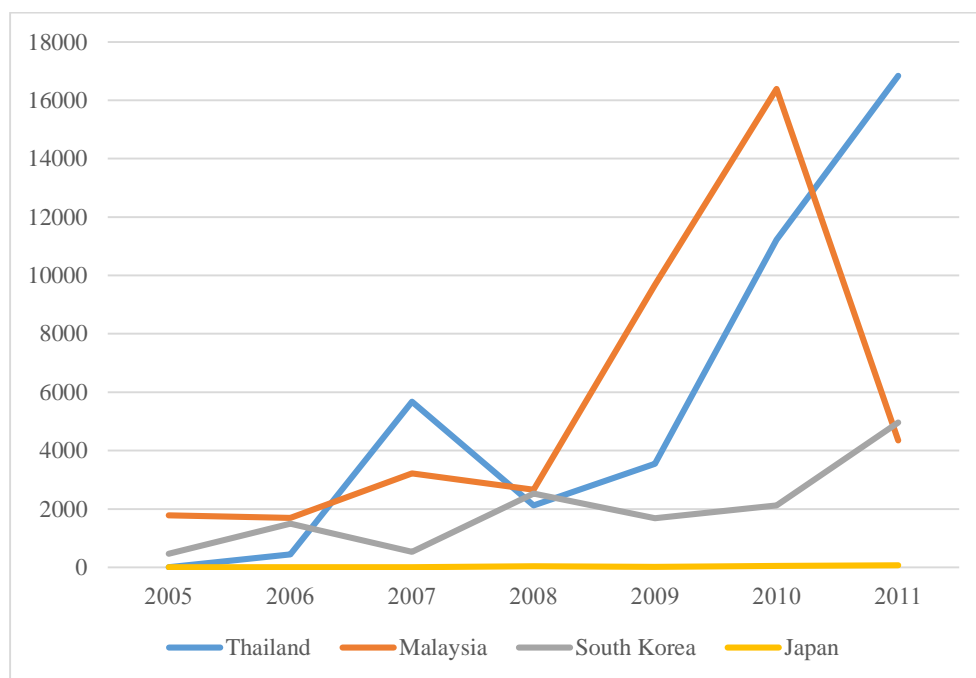
in small-scale to large-scale for industry. There are some people who gain benefits from boom, but some might lose their land according to the crops classified as boom crops. Nevertheless boom crops farming is still considered as an opportunity for modernization and development of the countryside (Hall et al., 2011, p. 87).

This section shows that growing energy plant for renewable energy has both advantages and disadvantages. In this section ethanol was used as an example to show advantages it gives to developing countries such as decrease oil payment, reduce greenhouse gases, and generate income for the country. It also leads environmental impacts that caused by intensive sugar cane production. These impacts should be carefully considered in order to build sustainability in bioenergy production and use.

### **2.3 Migration of Cambodian migrant workers to Thailand**

Southeast Asia has history of migration within and from the region for a long time. Migration in the region still continues and tends to be more intense due to closer interconnectedness of the countries. Migration can be categorized into four types of movement: 1) trans-continental permanent emigration; 2) regional temporary flows (encompassing Southeast, South, and East Asia, and the Middle East); 3) intra-national and cross-border rural-rural flows; and, finally, 4) expanded forms of everyday mobility among non-migrant villagers (Kelly, 2013). These migrants sometimes are considered as a threat to local community they move into. For example, local people might think that migrant workers could steal their jobs when, in fact, the influx of migrant workers benefits both Thailand and the migrants themselves. Moreover in terms of labor relations which are centralized on the wage issue, Cambodian migrant workers have more bargaining power due to lack of labors.

Figure 4. Deployment of Cambodians in foreign employment 2006-2011



Source: Department of Employment and Manpower (2013)

Migration of Cambodian migrant workers to other destination countries has increased in each year. Thailand is still considered as the number one destination of Cambodian migrants due to many attractive reasons. Malaysia also has become one of the most attractive destinations for Cambodians. Other destination such as South Korea and Japan are also being followed by small number of Cambodian migrant workers as shown in Figure 4. It should be noted however that the number of migrant workers as shown in Table 4 might be higher when illegal migrants are counted especially in the agricultural sector along border which heavily depends on migrant workers. While Thailand is the most popular country of destination for Cambodian migrant workers, only a small proportion of the migrants, which is less than 10 per cent of migrants, migrated through legal channels. These legal channels were established under the

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two countries<sup>5</sup>. The number of migrants using legal channels has increased by 173 per cent over a five-year period, from 4,116 in 2006 to 11,224 in 2010, and 16,837 (of whom 37 per cent were women) in 2011. Of the three countries<sup>6</sup> with which Thailand has such MOUs, Cambodia is over 60 per cent of the total number of migrants who have entered Thailand through legal channels (Tunon and Rim, 2013, p. 4).

Table 4. Formal Deployment of Cambodians in foreign employment, 2006-2011

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,244</b>	<b>3,636</b>	<b>9,476</b>	<b>7,340</b>	<b>14,928</b>	<b>29,783</b>	<b>26,219</b>
Male	899	1,798	4,611	3,616	4,292	10,501	15,563
Female	1,345	1,838	4,865	3,724	10,636	19,282	10,656
<b>Thailand</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>5,670</b>	<b>2,116</b>	<b>3,543</b>	<b>11,224</b>	<b>16,837</b>
Male	n.a.	226	3,935	1,425	1,968	6,304	10,624
Female	n.a.	219	1,735	691	1,575	4,920	6,213
<b>Malaysia</b>	<b>1,776</b>	<b>1,690</b>	<b>3,219</b>	<b>2,654</b>	<b>9,682</b>	<b>16,394</b>	<b>4,351</b>
Male	467	231	174	53	876	2,522	457
Female	1,309	1,459	3,045	2,601	8,806	13,872	3,894
<b>Korea, Rep. of</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>1,501</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>2,531</b>	<b>1,687</b>	<b>2,116</b>	<b>4,957</b>
Male	432	1,341	499	2,125	1,438	1,635	4,429
Female	36	160	85	406	249	481	528
<b>Japan</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>74</b>
Male	n.a.	n.a.	3	13	10	40	52
Female	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	26	6	9	22

Source: Department of Employment and Manpower of Cambodia (2013)

<sup>5</sup> Thailand-Cambodia MOU on Cooperation in the Employment Workers, signed by Thai Minister of Labor and Cambodian Minister of Social Affairs, Labor, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation on 31 May 2003.

<sup>6</sup> Three countries consist of Laos, Myanmar, and Cambodia.

Cambodian laborers have been crossing the Thailand border for a long time. In the past, the significant migration of Cambodian occurred during the unstable political situation in the country especially under Khmer Rouge, in the late 1970s. The regime was suppressive toward many groups of people in Cambodia. As a result, a huge number of Cambodian refugees fled to provinces along the border of Thailand, particularly the Sakaeo Province. It was considered as one of the most significant border crossing between Thai-Cambodian borders in the past.

Nowadays, Cambodians move to Thailand for economic purposes rather than flee away from political unrest. The short-range migrants did daily wage work for Thai farmers along the Thai-Cambodian border. These jobs include transplanting and harvesting rice, picking corn, harvesting sugar cane, weeding, among others. The long-range migrants are those who work as construction workers, ferry porters, in the fishing industry off the Thai coast, and in manufacturing or food-processing firms (Sophal and Sovannarith, 1999, p. 5-6).

Historically, migration of Cambodians provided benefits to both source and destination countries. Destination countries were able to address the workforce shortage in particular sectors due to the presence of Cambodian migrant workers. For the source, Cambodia in this case, the country benefits from income earned by the migrants workers which are regularly remitted back to their families. As a result, these remittances increase the families' living standard and also stimulate Cambodia's economy. The remittances of migrant workers support their families in Cambodia, and the economic contributions of migrant workers support the Thai economy, as documented by the International Labour Organization (ILO)<sup>7</sup>. In 2010, it was estimated that Cambodian migrants sent US\$ 151 million back to their country, the equivalent of 1.3 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (UN-ACT, 2015). While working in

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<sup>7</sup> See more information on "Migrant Workers Remittances: Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar" of Aree Jampaklay and Sirinan Kittisuksathit. PDF file at [http://www.oit.org/wcmssp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms\\_111543.pdf](http://www.oit.org/wcmssp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_111543.pdf)

Thailand, these migrants serve in many sectors such as in fisheries, construction, and agriculture – sectors that employ Cambodian migrant workers in the highest number for both registered and undocumented (Maltoni, 2007, p. 6-7). Cambodian laborers fill the gap in the sector which the Thai labor cannot fill in to work such in the service sector, industrial sector, and especially in the agricultural sector where the shortage is more apparent (Thairath, 2014).

Most of them come to Thailand due to job opportunities being offered in the country. In addition to this, with the set minimum wage in Thailand which is pegged at THB 300 per day) attracts Cambodian workers to migrate in the hope that they will get better wage than working in Cambodia. According to Business Risk Research Department of Krung Thai Bank, the minimum wage policy was predicted to increase the flow of informal labors to Thailand due to The Labor Protection Act B.E. 2541 which specified that migrant workers in Thailand have to be paid the same as the Thai workers (KTB BusinessRiskResearchDepartment, 2012). In practice, however, while formal migrant workers gain at least 300 baht per day, most of them still gain less than the Thai worker rate. This is because some employers have opted to hire migrants in order for them to decrease their production cost. In 2013, Chanthaburi Thai-Cambodia Border Tourism and Trade Association recorded the highest number of Cambodians crossing borders to work in provinces in eastern of Thailand where industrial zone were located as they would like to gain 300 baht per day (TV3News, 2013).

The presence of Cambodian migrant workers has been considered a very important part of the workforce in the sugar cane production because it requires a huge number of laborers to work during the harvesting process, especially in a bordered province like Sakaeo. Comparing to Thai workers, employers pay less if they employ Cambodian workers.

Nevertheless there are some group of people who are taking advantage of the situation by bringing Cambodian migrant workers to Thailand illegally. Labour migration is not only expensive, but also illegal and risky. There were some Cambodian labors who were cheated by their guides. Some of them were abandoned even before



they arrive at the labor camp or work place. After being abandoned, the workers faced risky situations where they were violated by arresting and beating and were sent home with no money and were in serious debt. These migrant workers had to sell their assets in order to solve the problem (Sopha and Sovannarith, 1999, p. 8-10).

this section tries to show that the presence of Cambodian migrant workers in the Thai labor market does not just only bring insecurity to society, rather it also creates economic benefits to Thailand where both formal and informal migration solve the labor shortage issue in the country's key sectors such as in agriculture. Cambodian migrant workers have dominated in sugar cane production in Sakaeo province as they comprise the majority of labor force in the area.

#### **2.4 Gap in knowledge**

Based on the discussions made in this section, it seems that agrarian transition in Thailand has been driven a lot by cash crops. These crops have influenced in agriculture as farmers tend to grow it more than other crops. It also seems that labor relations always just focus on the domestic laborers' perspective and involves migrant workers' agenda less in the discourse. As one of the key important factors that play a big role in the Thai agrarian transition, the case of migrant workers should have been more emphasized. In this thesis, the situation Cambodian migrant workers in sugar cane production is explored. This research is aimed to contribute to the growing need to understand the dynamics of labor relations between Thai farmers and the migrant workers, especially in the case where Thailand's labor supply is not able to meet the demands of the agricultural production, notably in the sugar cane industry.

## CHAPTER III

### AGRARIAN TRANSITION AND INTENSIFICATION IN SUGAR CANE PRODUCTION IN NONG SANO VILLAGE

The purpose of this chapter is to answer the two of research questions: 1) why have the farmers intensified their production from rice to sugar cane in Nong Sano village? and 2) how have farmers intensified their sugar cane production? This chapter is divided into five sections. Section 3.1 will present the background of Nong Sano village; Section 3.2 will discuss the agrarian transition from rice to sugar cane; Section 3.3 will address changing in land ownership; Section 3.4 will focus on the factors promoting transition from rice to sugar cane; Section 3.5 will look at changing rural farming aspiration; and, Section 3.6 will provide the summary of the arguments raised in this chapter.

#### 3.1 Background of Nong Sano village

Agriculture is the main job of people in Sakaeo Province. There are 2,340,093 rai (374,414 hectares)<sup>8</sup> of agricultural areas in Sakaeo province which is 52 per cent of the total land area of the province (Information and Technology Department Sakaeo Province, 2002). Several crops and fruits are grown. Main crops that generate a lot of benefits to the province are rice, cassava, sugar cane, corn, eucalyptus, and vegetables. Fruits such as cantaloupe, rose apple, mango, papaya, among others, can also be found in Sakaeo Province (Information and Technology Department Sakaeo Province, 2002).

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<sup>8</sup> 1 hectare = 6.25 rai

Nevertheless cash crops such as rice, corn, cassava, palm, rubber tree, and sugar cane dominate Sakaeo's agricultural sector.

Nong Sano village is under Khoachakan district which is divided into 4 sub-districts and is comprised of 71 villages, 1 municipal, and 4 Tambon Administration Organization (Sakaeo Province, 2012). The village has 292 households with around 1,230 population (Nong Wha Tambon Administration Organization, 2008). It is part of Nong Wha, Khoachakan district which has border next to Chachaengsao and Prachinburi province. This district has become bigger in terms of development in many aspects because of the support driven by both the government and private sectors. Khoachakan district is famous for its spectacular natural scenario such as the mountain.



Figure 5. Map of Nong Sano village



Source: Google Map and Tambon Nong Wha Administration Organization

Nong Sano village was divided from Klong Thammachart village in 1982. During that time, Sakaeo Province was still part of Prachinburi Province. Currently, the total area of the village is 5,398 rai (864 hectares) which is sub-divided to: 1,600 rai as a housing area, 2,318 rai (371 hectares) as a paddy and field crops area, 50 rai (8 hectares) as a fruit trees area, and 400 rai (64 hectares) for miscellaneous land (Nong Sano village Committee Meeting, 2012).

For agricultural inputs, farmers had to buy from agricultural shop in the sub-district. In addition, they were able to obtain a loan from the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC). Farmers accessed financial support from BAAC through registration with Agricultural Extension Office. In 1997, inputs such as chemical fertilizer, pesticide, and herbicide have already influenced the farming practices in agriculture. Despite this, farming inputs were only used in a little quantity. Farmers only used to apply chemical fertilizer in field crops for around 0.044 kg fertilizer per rai (Sakaeo Provincial Statistic Office, n.d.).

There are two public water sources which are weirs and a canal. These weirs were constructed by Tambon Administration Organization (TAO). Nong Wha TAO invest in irrigation system in every 2-3 years. Nowadays there are 5 weirs in the village. In addition, there are 234 artesian wells in the village that people use in their household activities and for agriculture.

Agriculture is the main occupation of people in Nong Sano village, where 260 households are engaged in farming and rice paddy plantation. The second popular job is working in factories, where most of the 15 households work in Prachinburi Province. Main agricultural products that are produced in the village are rice, cassava, sugar cane, and corn. In the village, there are agricultural machines such as threshers and walk-behind tractors.

### **3.2 Agrarian transition from other crops to sugar cane growing**

This section describes agrarian transition to and how farmers intensified their sugar cane production in the village through three sub-sections. Section 3.2.1 will describe the establishment of sugar cane mill in 1994 which is 47 kilometers far from the Nong Sano village. It further describes the status of agriculture in Nong Sano village and the aftermath of the event towards sugar cane production. Section 3.2.2 will focus the discussion on the severe drought in 1997 which created debt amongst farmers, and emerged many of them to grow sugar cane as loans were readily available from the sugar cane mill. Section 3.2.3 is on the Alternative Energy Development Plan since 2012 which sugar cane production in Nong Sano village was intensified by micro policy mandated by the government.

However there is limitation in reaching official data in village level as available official data is only in provincial level. Therefore this section used some provincial level data, and quotes from farmers in Nong Sano village are envisaged to contribute in describing the transition process that has happened in the village.

#### **3.2.1 Past-1996 including establishment of sugar cane mill**

Rice paddies have been utilizing a big area of land in Sakaoe Province according to Agricultural Census in 2003 (Sakaoe Provincial Statistic Office, n.d.-b). It has been focused as an important agricultural product especially since the introduction of the rice subsidy scheme during the Thaksin's administration (2004-2006) which has also been continued by the succeeding governments. Because of this, rice production in the entire province increased.

However, for Nong Sano village, rice was not widely grown unlike in other places in the province. Farmers in the village grew rice just for household consumption and not for selling. Therefore the policy about rice did not apply that much to farmers in the village as interviewed with head of Nong Sano village: *“There are a few farmers*

*growing rice. They grow it in 3-4 rai to consume in their households.”* (Interview with head of Nong Sano village, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2016)

Before the booming of sugar cane after 1997 (see section 3.2.2), farmers in the village grew corn and cassava. Sugar cane was not grown as much as nowadays because before there is no mill in Sakaeo Province. Sugar cane farmers at that time had to sell their cane to the nearest mill which is located approximately 160 kilometers away from the village, in Chonburi Province. This trip to the mill did not only consume a lot of time of the farmers, but also affected the quality of the sugar cane due to long distance travel. Therefore there were just a few people growing sugar cane as interviewed with sugar cane farmer: *“20 years ago [in 1995], there were just only 6 persons in this village growing sugar cane. However in present day, there more than 30 that growing it.”* (Interview with farmer 1, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

After the establishment of sugar cane mill in 1994, there were some farmers who did not change to sugar cane because they did not have enough land and money to invest in. Moreover they were familiar with growing other crops rather sugar cane.

Cambodian migrant workers started to make its appearance in Nong Sano at that time. Cambodian migrant workers did not only work in sugar cane field; they also work in other kinds of field crops, too: *“Cambodian migrant workers work in this village for long time. They purposely came to this village for growing sugar cane. In the past, when I grew corn, I did not employ them because I did in a small scale. However my friends who grew in a big scale like cassava or other crops used to employ Cambodian migrant workers due to only Thai labors were not enough.”* (Interview with farmer 6, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2016)

For sugar cane, which is more labor intensive, Cambodian labors were hired. This is because there is pressure on labor price and Cambodian labor wage was cheaper than those of Thai laborers.

### **3.2.2 1997-2011 including severe drought**

Agriculture in Nong Sano village in 1997 was a hard time for farmers since they faced with a severe drought in the village. Due to El Niño, it created a huge problem to the whole province (Kasikornbank Research Department, 2010), especially to the agricultural sector. Every crop was unproductive and destroyed due to drought as there was no enough water to watering the crops. Because of the decline in the agricultural production, farmers incurred debts many years after the drought: *“I grew corn in 1997 and faced with the very failed year in doing agriculture. Everyone in the village cannot earn money from crops. I have pay my debt to agricultural shop since then for 10 years. I still doing agriculture but not as much as the same due to I have debt to pay.”* (Interview with farmer 5, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2016)

Farmers also had fewer inputs to invest in their production. Most of them did not have enough money to pay back the agricultural shop which sell on credit. Farmers hardly bring any inputs to further increase their production. During this period, the government sector allocated resources to help farmers who were facing difficulty in the drought season. It should also be noted that the impact of drought in Thailand was made worse by the Asian Financial Crisis which saw the collapse of the Thai baht. Because of the crisis, budget for drought for individual farmers was small. They spent many years to fully recover financially from the damage caused by drought.

Because of the drought, farmers who did not grow sugar cane had a hard time as they were in debt and no one wanted to give them credits. Therefore it was difficult for them to put inputs like they did before the drought to their agricultural production. However sugar cane farmer seemed easier to recover from drought and continue their



production because the mill supported them in terms of loans and materials. This condition encouraged the farmers to change to sugar cane.

### **3.2.3 2012-present including Alternative Energy Development Plan (AEDP)**

Because the government realizes the importance of energy independence of the country, the Alternative Energy Development Plan was (AEDP) in 2012 in order to deal with the energy scarcity and to strengthen energy security in the country. Ethanol production is involved a lot in agricultural sector due to the fact that it produces raw materials for producing ethanol. Sugar cane production directly links with ethanol production. A result of the support from the government in ethanol production, for example, subsidize and price guarantee, it was very attractive for entrepreneurs to invest in bioenergy project, and for farmers to shift from growing other crops to sugar cane. Price of sugar cane has been strictly controlled by the government agency which, in a way, brings more security for farmers to grow sugar cane rather than on other energy crops such as cassava, palm, or *Jatropha* (National News Bureau of Thailand, 2015).

Sakaeo provincial government also decided to engage with energy development of the province by putting the improvement of the energy crop growing in one of its provincial strategies for 2014-2018 (Sakaeo Provincial Statistic Office, n.d.-a). Therefore, agriculture in Sakaeo Province has focused more on energy crops such as cassava, sugar cane, and eucalyptus in order to meet the demand for energy in the future. In addition, energy market such as bioenergy in the province has been growing its popularity as there are establishment of new factory which attracts farmers to shift to energy crop growing.

Nowadays, sugar cane growing dominates agriculture in Nong Sano village. Despite of this, there are still other crops and trees that farmers grow such as cassava, longan, eucalyptus, among others.

Figure 6. Sugar cane production in Nong Sano village



Credit: Chatphan Chindara, February 2016

Figure 7. Cassava production in Nong Sano village



Credit: Chatphan Chindara, February 2016

Figure 8. Longan production in Nong Sano village



Credit: Chatphan Chindara, February 2016

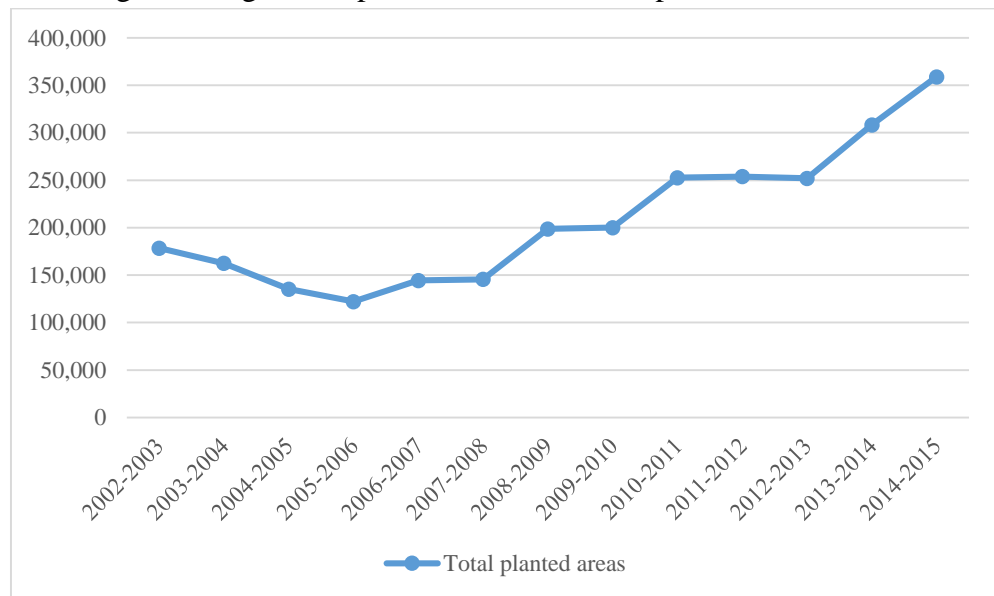
In total, there are 54 farmers in Nong Sano village who are growing sugar cane (Eastern Sugar and Cane, 2015). This number is quite far from 20 years ago when there were just only 6 sugar cane farmers in this village. According to the survey of Eastern Cane and Sugar<sup>9</sup>, in Nong Sano village, there are 1,647.93 rai (264 hectares) of sugar

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<sup>9</sup> This number is calculated from statistic data belonging to Eastern Cane and Sugar Company which survey during March and April, 2015

cane plantation areas. The trend of utilization of land for sugar cane production goes along with agricultural production of sugar cane in Sakaeo Province.

Figure 9. Sugar cane planted area of Sakaeo province (rai)



Source: Year book of sugar cane planted areas

At the course of continued use of fertilizer for agricultural production, farmers have eventually been faced with the issue soil degradation which affected the volume of their produce. As an attempt to treat the soil, they use more organic fertilizer as a farmer in the village shared: *“Growing sugar cane needs a lot of fertilizer in order to make sure that it is fertile due to soil quality is decreased. I concern about downgrade of soil, thus I uses more non-chemical fertilizer... I spend 15,000 baht per rai for growing sugar cane. Per rai, I use 1 bag of chemical fertilizer and 3 bags of non-chemical fertilizers. I do not use pesticide, because sugar cane does not have problem with insects. But I do use Paraquat (herbicide) for killing weed and also use man power to do this. Last year, I can produce 28,000 ton of cane. I earned 3,000,000 baht.”* (Interview with farmer 1, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

As already mentioned in the previous section, farmers were also challenged by the difficulties brought by drought to their farming cycle. Farmers were forced to use groundwater in order to have enough water for their crops, apart from using fertilizer to strengthen the survival of their crops during extreme dry season: *“From my experience, sugar cane has to use more fertilizer, but it is better in terms of water consumption. Like other sugar cane farmers in this area, I use water from small irrigation which is different from other areas in Sakaeo that use water just only from rain fall. I also use ground water for my plantation.”* (Interview with farmer 3, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

Most of sugar cane farmers who participated in the interviews, who used to grow other crops, have spared other sources of water for their crops because the crops they grew such as corn, cassava, or sugar cane consume a huge volume of water. Moreover, in the recent years, the weather was observed to be quite unpredictable and very extreme. Therefore water has become even scarce which led to water constraint among farmers. Generally, as a solution to the problem, farmers would hire people to dig a well which they had to pay for around 50,000-60,000 baht. Another option was to wait for from the government sector, notably from the Department of Groundwater Resources. Moreover, farmers who have been growing sugar cane could get loan from sugar cane mill to dig a well and pay the loan by installments.

According to the Agricultural Census in 2003, the number of Thai laborers working in the province at the time was recorded more than migrant workers (Sakaeo Provincial Statistic Office, n.d.). Thai laborers comprised more than 90 per cent of permanent labor force, and migrant labors appeared in just a small number in 2003. In 2013, however, migrant workers became dominant as it was around 70 per cent of the total laborers in the agricultural sector while Thai labors was only pegged 29 per cent (Sakaeo Provincial Statistic Office, n.d.). However this data did not cover informal labors which, at that time, there were many cases of labor smuggling happening at the

border of Sakaeo province. If both formal and informal laborers are accounted for, the figures should be much higher than the ones reflected in the 2003 census .

Some of Thai laborers in Sakaeo Province move to work in other provinces. Agricultural sector is one of the sectors that have always been faced with lack of labors even though the majority of labor force of the province are already working in this sector. It was observed that working in agricultural sector is not preferable for Thai laborers. Because of this, Cambodian migrant workers are able to capitalize on this as they are considered as the main source of labor especially in sugar cane growing.

### **3.3 Changing in land holding in Nong Sano village**

Better price and great financial and material support from the sugar cane mill are not only affected to transition and intensification to sugar cane of farmers. It also affected to land holding of farmers. Most of land tenure in Sakaeo province, according to Agricultural Census 2003, are Sor Por Kor 4-01, Nor Kor 3, Sor Tor Kor 5, and Por Bor Tor 5 (Sakaeo Provincial Statistic Office, n.d.-b). After 10 years, in Agricultural Census 2013, these land increased while only Por Tor Bor 5 that decreased. Most of land was used for agriculture and, basically, gave to those who do not have their own land to earn their livings.

For Nong Sano village, land in Nong Sano village was allocated by the Agricultural Land Reform Office (ALRO). The last time this land was divided to farmers was in 1995 by Chuan Leekpai administration under the Agricultural Land Reform Act B.E. 2518 (1975) (Chiangkool, n.d.). Therefore most of lands are used for doing agriculture. Most of the farmers hold a possessory right (Por Bor Tor 5) and Agricultural land titles (Sor Por Kor 4-01).

#### **3.3.1 Before 1994**

During these years, land holding in Nong Sano village was not much change from the last time that central government, at that time was Chuan's administration,

divided land to farmers. As a result, agriculture in the village increased due to villagers have land to do agriculture.

### 3.3.2 1995-2011

Severe drought affected farmers a lot. It made production in agriculture decreased due to farmers had less money to put in their agriculture. It also caused changing in land holding. As a coping mechanism to drought, farmers in the village had to sell some of their land rights to richer farmers because their production has failed, and they needed money to grow their crops. However it was considered risky for the buyers because technically this kind of land (Tor Bor 5 and Sor Por Kor) cannot be sold. The land actually belongs to Tambon Nong Wha Administration Organization which can be expropriated back to the government at any time.

### 3.3.3 2012-present

For sugar cane growing, farmers use both their own land and rent from other people. In Nong Sano village, farmers who grow sugar cane in a big scale can use land up to 400 rai: *“I grow 400 rai<sup>10</sup> of sugar cane per yield year. And I grow sugar cane for 20 years already. Land that I grow sugar cane had received from Agricultural Land Reform Office.”* (Interview with farmer 1, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2015).

They do not grow sugar cane just only in the village. They also grow in other places due to land in the village is not available enough for them. As a result, they have to rent land to grow sugar cane as one of them from the interview said: *“I grow sugar cane for 190 rai. I rented 100 rai and another 90 rai is my own land.”* (Interview with farmer 2, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015).

There is not only sugar cane growing that need a lot of land. In the present there are some outsiders who buy land in the village to do agriculture also. As a result, some

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<sup>10</sup> This number includes both his own land and rented land in the village and outside the village.



farmers in the village faced with lack of land to do their agriculture which sometimes forced them to quit doing agriculture and move to other sectors.

### **3.4 Factors promoting transition to sugar cane**

The increase of sugar cane production is a result of its stable pricing in the market and also its resistant characteristic to drought compared to corn and cassava. There has been also a supporting policy from both government and private sectors that attract farmers to grow sugar cane. Relations between three main actors, sugar cane farmers, mill, and government sectors, directly affect sugar cane production. Support from government and the mill are discussed in the sub-sections that follow.

#### **3.4.1 Role of government**

Sugar cane is considered as one of the most important agricultural products both for consumption and for exportation. Since sugar production industry provides plenty of benefits to Thailand, the Thai government, in almost every period, tries to control sugar both in terms of price and quantity in order to maintain balance between producers and consumers. Policy from government on sugar cane production, mostly, is in macro level which is more on keeping balance in domestic consumption and export price. The government established Cane and Sugar Act B.E. 2527 in 1984 in order to control distribution of profits.

Policy from government to help sugar cane farmers was created to control sugar price in the domestic market. The government has to step in in the price mechanism to manage this in order to meet the demand of domestic market and external market. Sugar being one of basic goods that is massively consumed in Thailand, to let its price depend on market mechanism is a risky move as the sugar price might be higher and thus might create chaos among people.

At the micro level, such as in Nong Sano village, government sector is quite not active in sugar cane production due to the presence of sugar mills who takes the responsibility on this issue. Sugar cane farmers can directly consult with staff from the

mill. Moreover there are some of sugar cane farmers who registered themselves with the Provincial Agricultural Office, despite the mill having all the information of sugar cane farmers selling cane to them. This allows the mill to monopolize and dominate the sugar cane market of Sakeo Province with sugar cane farmers having less bargaining power to negotiate with the mill.

Figure 10. Example of support from government sector in the province on sugar cane production



Source: Sakeo Provincial Agricultural Extension Office

As shown in Figure 10, the photo indicates that the government Increasing Production of Energy Crops Project in February, 12<sup>th</sup> 2014 which Sakeo Provincial Agricultural Office hold a sugar cane technological transfer workshop in Wattana Nakorn. There are around 200 farmers attending the workshop in order to adjust their sugar cane production accordingly with the province's vision that to become an "City of Energy Crops". Breed of sugar cane, Khon Khaen 3, and organic fertilizers<sup>11</sup> also are provided to farmers after the workshop.

<sup>11</sup> Organic fertilizer sugar cane farmers use is chicken manure.

Farmers who have soil problem are interested in the organic fertilizer production that government sector hold a workshop for them. Because it helps them to reduce cost of production: *“We got budget from government, in 2015, to produce organic fertilizer. We have to produce 300 bags of it. This project aims to create jobs for people in the village. For our village, we did both distribute them to farmers and also sell them and collect money for next time production... Most of farmers got fertilizers are those who grow sugar cane. Because they apply a lot of fertilizers in their production. It uses more than other crops.”* (Interview with head of Nong Sano village, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2016)

### **3.4.2 Role of sugar cane mill**

The bond between the mill and sugar cane farmers in Nong Sano village has been heavily influenced by the mill, especially after the relocation of Eastern Cane and Sugar Company in Sakaeo province in 1994. The mill takes part in almost every process of sugar cane production. The mill makes it easier for those who want to grow sugar cane because of the availability of financial assistance to them.

For material support, it starts with the breed of cane that the mill gives to sugar cane farmers to grow. The mill provides fertilizer, herbicide, and other things to use in growing sugar cane to farmers, including loan or offers to buy machine. The mill transfers knowledge in growing sugar cane to farmers. For example, these are techniques in growing cane in particular soil, or when to apply herbicide: *“Most of the policy I recognized comes from sugar cane mill side consisting of seed, fertilizer, herbicide, and loan for buying machines. Most of my machine is bought from sugar cane mill agent which already has its own suppliers. And they will deduct after I sell sugar cane to the mill. I use fertilizer from the mill, and also use from Bank of Agriculture due to interest from the bank is lower than the mill.”* (Interviewed with farmers 4, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

The mill promotes harvesting green cane rather than burnt cane in order to reduce environmental effects toward communities around sugar cane plantation areas,

and to maintain sweetness and juice of cane which will be destroyed in high temperature.

Figure 11. Example of support from the mill



Source: Office of Cane and Sugar Board (2006)

In the picture (Figure 11) is a workshop on organic farming which was held on 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> September 2006 sponsored by sugar cane mill. Staff of the mill delivered their knowledge on organic fertilizer<sup>12</sup> which is suitable for sugar cane to farmers. They

<sup>12</sup> According to comments from sugar cane farmers on soil degradation which reduces production potential, expertise from sugar cane mill suggest farmers to use organic fertilizer in order to make soil more nutritious.

promoted using insect control pests such as Earwigs. Staff introduced to the farmers the agricultural machinery used in sugar cane growing. In addition, they also showed their sugar cane plantation which is used for breeding sugar cane for the next cultivating season.

Figure 12. Brochure and magazines from the mill



Source: Eastern Cane and Sugar (2015)

The mill also established small offices in each area to promote sugar cane production, to announce activities and news, or even to transfer knowledge to farmers. In those small offices there are staff of the mill who are capable of giving suggestions and consults to farmers or people who want to grow sugar cane. They also monitor sugar cane growing in each area.

Even though there is a great support coming from the mill in terms of growing sugar cane, farmers still consider that the mill has the power to monopolize sugar cane industry. Therefore they suggested that there should be another sugar cane mill in Sakaeo Province.

Figure 13. Representatives of sugar cane farmers from Sakaeo province called for new sugar cane mill



Source: Thai Publica (2014)

In this picture (Figure 13), on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2014, the secretariat of CBFA and some of sugar cane farmers from Sakaeo and Prachinburi Provinces came to Bangkok for a meeting between sugar cane mill associations, sugar cane farmer associations, and the Office of Cane and Sugar Board in order to pressure and ask for progress of a new mill in the province.

### 3.5 Changing rural farming aspiration

Because of the benefits of growing sugar cane in the village, there are many farmers that have shifted to it. However some of the problems that come along with sugar cane production discourage farmers to shift.

One of the problems is lack of money and land to grow sugar cane. It is a major problem for farmers. Therefore some farmers choose not to grow sugar cane because in order to gain profits farmers need at least 9 rai while growing other crops do not require land as much as sugar cane does. Moreover inputs such as fertilizers, herbicides and other machine also tend to be more expensive which increase cost of sugar cane growing: *“We spend about 14,000-15,000 baht in growing sugar cane per rai. In 1 rai, we spend 1,500 for rent, 3,200 for 2 tons of cane, 820 for 2 bags of fertilizers, 1,700 for soil preparation and planting, and 500 for herbicide. For fertilizer, we use both chemical and non-chemical.”* (Interview with farmer 2, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

Growing sugar cane needs a lot of capitals for sugar cane investment. Other farmers who are willing to shift are barred from doing so because they are already in debt. Because of this, it is difficult for them to look for creditors who can loan them a huge amount of money to start the shift to growing sugar cane.

Burning during harvesting season also makes growing sugar cane unattractive. Government sector and the mill have been promoting to harvest green cane rather than burnt cane for a long time due to its severe affects to environment and health of people in planted areas. If burning continues, it might affect to exportation due to environment degradation from growing sugar cane: *“For burning in harvesting season, because my plantation is far from community, plus in this area most of villagers also grow sugar cane and also burn it. Therefore no one complains about this problem. However the mill (Eastern Sugar Cane), Farmers Association and governor also mentioned about this problems and want farmers to harvest green cane. But due to factors such as limited*

*time and lack of labors, burning still my only option.*” (Interview with farmer 1, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

Government sector and the mill promote cutting green cane because it is better than burnt cane in terms of sweetness. However it is difficult for sugar cane farmers to stop burning due to lack of enough workers and time. Cambodian migrant workers also refuse to cut green cane as it is more difficult to get rid of its leaves.

Moreover growing sugar cane causes soil degradation due to use of chemical fertilizer in much quantity for a long time. Farmers growing sugar cane in a long time found out that their production was not as productive as before due to the decrease of soil quality. In addition, perspectives of younger generation do not consider growing sugar cane fits with their lifestyle. They tend to move to other sectors rather than doing agriculture like their parents. Based on the issues raised, it is very likely that sugar cane growing will not be part of the future aspirations of the next generation in terms of work and livelihood.

### **3.6 Chapter summary**

The change in agricultural production in Nong Sano village is significantly focused on shifting from other crops, cassava and corn, to sugar cane. Farmers extended plantation areas and increased of production due to following factors: 1) subsidy policy on sugar cane and supporting policy on bioenergy from government; and 2) supporting on materials, financial, technological know-how and knowledge on sugar cane growing from the mill.

Farmers intensified their production through increasing these three elements: farming inputs, land use, and labor. In terms of inputs, it has been found out in this thesis that farmers have been using chemical fertilizer for a long time. The long-term environmental problem that the fertilizer will cause, such as soil degradation and water pollution, prompted the farmers to consider organic fertilizer in order to treat and reverse the negative impact of fertilizers on their lands. In terms of land use, land in the



village also tends to be utilized for sugar cane production in order to respond to the market demand for increased sugar cane production. In terms of labor, local workers from the village tend to not attach themselves with agricultural jobs. They move to city to be a waged laborer in some other industries. Consequently, the vacuum in the Thai labor force in the agricultural sector in the village led to the replacement by Cambodian migrant workers which is discussed deeper in Chapter 4.

In addition, the intensification in sugar cane growing also affected to land holding in the village. Due to there is high demand on land for sugar cane growing, richer farmers can access to land easier than others. Therefore those farmers who do not have land have to quit doing agriculture and move to other sectors.



## CHAPTER IV

### RENEGOTIATION OF MIGRANT LABOR RELATIONS IN NONG SANO VILLAGE

This chapter aims to answer the third research question: Since the transition to sugar cane production, what are the labor relations between Cambodian migrant workers and Thai farmers? This chapter presents the social relations which is renegotiation between Cambodian migrant workers and Thai farmers as a result from intensification in labor for sugar cane growing. Insights will also be drawn in discussing the context of the relationship between government sector and Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association which has been driven by labor scarcity. This chapter is divided into five sections. Section 4.1 will describe the situation of Cambodian migrant workers in Nong Sano village; Section 4.2 will identify and discuss the role of Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association (CBFA); Section 4.3 will discuss the push and pull factors affecting the decisions of Cambodian workers to work in sugar cane production; Section 4.4 will focus on the perceived elements that create renegotiation relations between Cambodian migrant labor and Thai farmers; and, lastly, Section 4.5 will provide the summary of the arguments of this chapter.

#### **4.1 Situation of Cambodian migrant workers in sugar cane production**

In Sakaeo Province, migrant workers come from three countries – Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar – working in the province according to the MOUs signed between the Thai government and these three countries (Tunon and Rim, 2013, p. 2). Among these countries, the Cambodian laborers comprise 97.39 per cent of the migrant workers working in the province, while Laos and Myanmar workers comprise 1.59 per cent and

1.02 per cent<sup>13</sup>, respectively (Sakaeo Provincial Labors Office, 2015). These migrant laborers work in many sectors of the province.

Sugar cane production employs a lot of Cambodian migrant workers due to the preference of Thai workers to seek employment in other sectors. The percentage of Cambodian workers in sugar cane production is 80 per cent of all workers. Sugar cane production requires more laborers to meet increase of sugar cane production that has been intensified by farmers in terms of farm inputs and land use, especially during the harvesting season when a huge volume of products are needed to be collected and to be sent to the mill in a limited time.

In each year, there are over 20,000 Cambodian migrant workers who cross the border to work in Sakaeo Province through Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association (2015). The number increases in every year due to the growing of economy in Thailand which in need of laborers to accelerate and sustain this growth: *“In each year, there are around 20,000 Cambodian workers register with this association in order to work in sugar cane and cassava production. Association will collect their profile and take their picture. After that association will contact with involving sectors to allow these workers to work in Sakaeo for a period of time. Typically, Cambodian workers in sugar cane production can stay in Sakaeo from November until March. However it depends on period of harvesting.”* (Interview with Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association representative, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

In order to secure sugar cane production of the province, the provincial government of Sakaeo ensures the steady supply of workers especially when there is already lacking of laborers in the agricultural sector especially in the sugar cane production by allowing Cambodian workers to work in the province during harvesting season.

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<sup>13</sup> Collected information in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2015, September to December, which at the time there were 8,534 migrant workers in Sakaeo province.

#### 4.1.1 How they come to Nong Sano village

There are both formal and informal Cambodian migrant workers in sugar cane production in Sakaeo Province. For informal workers, they usually work in agricultural sector which is far from the eyes of the police or government officers. Generally, they work along or close to the border. In some cases, bribery among government officers are done so that the informal workers can move away from the border: *“We [informal labors] have to pay around 1,000 baht for transportation cost. And we paid to soldiers about three check points in order to across border and came to this camp.”* (2<sup>nd</sup> focus group discussion with Cambodian migrant workers, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

Cambodian migrant workers usually come to Thailand and rely with their friends and family from the same village because there is no association or formal agent of Cambodian laborers. Information about the job opportunities in the sugar cane growing by word of mouth. Informal agent, who is a Cambodian laborer him/herself, is a middle person who finds laborers for Thai farmers. An agent plays an important role in wage negotiation. The agent negotiates a satisfactory wage with Thai farmers before Cambodian migrant workers agree with it and go to Sakaeo Province. Thai farmers have to pay the services of the agent. But for the wage of migrant workers, they are paid directly.

The migration of Cambodian workers to Nong Sano is not as difficult as compared in the past because the Thai government has become more concerned about the issues of the migrant workers. Because of Thailand’s human right violation cases on migrant workers in the fishery sector, complains were filed by international organizations and has been warned by them to banned Thailand fishery products (Office of Agricultural Economics, n.d.). As a result, Cambodian labors were treated better. Nevertheless they are, sometimes, exploited by officers, especially the informal laborers: *“I [Cambodian migrant workers 17] came here with other people from my village around 10-16 persons. We contact people who can bring us here and took a car to Sakaeo border. We have to pay some money. And then employer brought us [from*

*border] here.*” (3<sup>rd</sup> focus group discussion with Cambodian migrant workers, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2015)

#### **4.1.2 Daily life of Cambodian migrant workers in Nong Sano village**

Cambodian migrant workers do not have the full freedom to go far from their places. Their employers have to go with them; they cannot be employed in other provinces; and are not allowed travel on Suwannasorn road which is the main road of Sakaeo Province.

Cambodian laborers have to do almost everything in sugar cane growing, from applying fertilizer and herbicide, watering, until cutting during the harvesting season. Cambodian workers are paid in two ways. The first way is that they get THB 200 per day for working all day. But for those who apply herbicide, they will get THB 300 baht even if their services are not required for the whole day. Herbicide spraying work is only available for male workers. The second one is being paid depending on the volume (by tons) of cane that they collect. Laborers usually get around THB 160 per ton of sugar cane which sometimes requires them to work at night: *“We get the same rate [with formal workers], 200 baht per day. During harvesting season depends on how much we can cut cane. It is 160 baht per ton... In harvesting season, it is quite hard because we have to hurry. If it is necessary, we have to work at nights also.”* (1<sup>st</sup> focus group discussion with Cambodian migrant workers, 13th May 2015)

Cambodian migrant workers in Nong Sano village are welcomed by villagers because they are considered as potential buyers of their products in the village: *“These labors do not have a problem with people in the village. Furthermore, grocery or shop in the village also have income from these labors by selling them products.”* (Interview with head of Nong Sano village, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015)

While most of the Cambodian migrant workers are only allowed to work until the harvesting season is over, which is around six months, they still consider this as a

good opportunity for them to collect some money and use this when they go back to their hometown to continue their agricultural activities.

#### **4.1.3 Perspectives of Cambodian migrant workers toward working in Sakaeo Province**

Cambodian migrant workers have good perspectives toward working in sugar cane growing in terms of wage (see in 4.3.2 a.). Therefore, some of the Cambodian migrant workers would want to come back in the next season: *“This the eighth time I work here. I got greater money from working in sugar cane production.”* (2<sup>nd</sup> focus group discussion with Cambodian migrant worker 10, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

However, there are some who felt that life in the village is also difficulty for them, for example, in terms of health care: *“In Thailand it is easier to get job, get money. However there are some disadvantages. For example, I cannot speak Thai therefore it is difficult when my sons get sick. Moreover we cannot go far from where we stay because we do not have id card.”* (2<sup>nd</sup> focus group discussion with Cambodian migrant worker 6, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

When Cambodian laborers get sick, it is the responsibility of the Thai employers to bring them to the hospital (see in 4.2.2). Despite this, the migrants still find it difficult for them because they cannot speak Thai.

Figure 14. Cambodian migrant workers collecting sugar cane



Credit: Chatphan Chindara, Nong Sano village, February 2015

Figure 15. Cambodian migrant workers camps



Credit: Chatphan Chindara, Nong Sano village, May 2015

## 4.2 Role of Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association (CBFA)

Thai farmers have to give some of their profits to farmers association in order to proceed with the employment process. Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association (CBFA) plays an integral role in the sugar cane production of Sakaeo Province. The association's role in solving the labor gap is demonstrated by its active part in negotiating with provincial government sector to allow Cambodian migrant workers to work during harvesting season.

### 4.2.1 Agreement with government sectors

As a result of the negotiation, an agreement is drawn as a solution to the problem in the labor supply in the sugar cane production: *“Every government sector agrees to*



*make exception on Cambodian labors working during harvesting season. This might against immigration law and alien working law of Thailand. However sugar cane farmers have faced with lack of labor problem during harvesting season every year. Therefore Sakaeo province needs to manage this problem domestically in order to solve the problem. In addition, Cambodian labors are not threat to society, but they are workforce that strengthens Sakaeo economy.” (Sakaeo Provincial Government, 2013)*

According to the agreement, government sectors recognized the lack of labors in sugar cane growing, and agreed to solve the issue by giving in to the demands from sugar cane farmers. Government sectors do not have a negative perspective toward migrant workers due to the fact that they consider migrant workers as a tremendous help to the agricultural needs of the province.

Furthermore, government sectors also consider the agreement as a necessary support to the sugar cane industry as it has been growing widely and is considered as one of the most important crops of the province. If government sectors do not pay attention to the problem, sugar cane farmers or even the sugar cane mill will suffer. Moreover according to interview with representative of the CBFA, the association has to pay some amount of money in order to facilitate the migration and working of Cambodian laborers in the province: *“They need labors to continue growing and collecting sugar cane. We need to collect some money from members, sugar cane farmers who register with the association, in order to precede all these processes.”* (Interview with Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association representative, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

#### **4.2.1.1 Process of requiring working permit for Cambodian migrant workers during harvesting season**

In the agreement, roles of both farmers and the CBFA on Cambodian migrant workers issue are outlined (Chaidan Burapha Farmers Association, 2013) as the following:

1. *Resolution:*

- 1.1 *Sugar cane farmers who want to employ Cambodian migrant workers have to make a request to Chaidan Burapha Farmers Association. The association will compile the requests and sends to Sakaeo Department of Employment in order to organize coming of those labors.*
- 1.2 *Chaidan Burapha Farmers Association have to record names and numbers of sugar cane farmers who want to employ Cambodian labors, and record names, pictures, and map of labor camp. The document will be sent to involving sector, soldier, Sakaeo Internal Security Operations Command, Sakaeo Department of Employment, Sakaeo Immigration Bureau, representatives from every district, and police station where there are Cambodian labors working in their areas.*
- 1.3 *Sugar cane farmers bring document that permits to employ Cambodian labors which endorsed by Department of Employment to checkpoint at the border in order to pick their employees. When harvesting season ends, employers have to send Cambodian labors back at the same checkpoint they picked.*  
(page number)

According to the agreement, farmers have responsibility to look after their Cambodian migrant workers. Sugar cane farmers who employ Cambodian labors have to strictly follow the following rules:

- 1) *Keep document of Cambodian labors that get from Chaidan Burapaha Farmers Association and be ready to show it to government officers when they check over.*
- 2) *Employers have responsibility to provide living place to Cambodian labors. Do not cut tree and do not polluted public water resources.*
- 3) *Use of narcotics do not allow.*

- 4) *Responsible for expenses from health problem of Cambodian labors, do not left burdens to hospital.*
- 5) *There should not be children follow with Cambodian labors. If there is, Chaidan Burapha Farmers Association has to record this also.*
- 6) *Employers have to pay wage to labors as they according to their consent.*
- 7) *Employers have to look after their employees not to make trouble to other people, and do not move Cambodian labors to do anything on Suwannasorn Road.*
- 8) *Employers have to bring Cambodian labor back to the same checkpoint they were picked. And they have to send them back in the same date in document and the same number.*

This agreement briefly addresses the responsibility of sugar cane farmers regarding the employment of Cambodian migrant workers under their custody. While this is a good starting point for wage claiming, this agreement is considered loose agreement because it has no mechanism to investigate or punish whenever a violation on the points of agreement occur. For the government sector's part, Cambodian migrants are allowed to work but there is no concrete regulations, for example, on working hours, holidays, welfare, and so on, to protect the rights of Cambodian workers like other migrant workers in other sectors. Because of the lack of rights provision in the agreement, there were some cases where even formal workers were exploited: *“Even though association already make an agreement to every sector, but sometimes Cambodian migrant workers are exploited by some officials when they travel back to Cambodia. They have to pay in order to go back to their home.”* (Interview with Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association representative, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

### 4.3 Push and pull factors making Cambodian workers work in sugar cane production

There are many reasons to explain why Cambodian migrant workers migrate to work in sugar cane production in Sakaeo Province. These are both the pull and push factors that drive seasonal migration which still influence migration of Cambodian workers from the very beginning until the present.

#### 4.3.1 Push factors

There are two push factors that make Cambodian migrant workers move from their hometown to work in Sakaeo Province:

##### *a. Difficulty to get job in Cambodia*

Difficulty to find a get job in Cambodia is one of the push factors that make Cambodian migrant workers move from their hometown to work in Sakaeo. According to the conversations that were made during the group discussion with Cambodian migrant workers in Nong Sano, most of the labors are uneducated<sup>14</sup>. This perceived limitation, therefore, is making it difficult for them to get a job: *“Working in sugar cane production here is not hard as doing agriculture in my village. Moreover working here [in Nong Sano] I can gain more money. If stay in my village I do not know what to do. There is no job.”* (1<sup>st</sup> focus group discussion with Cambodian migrant worker 1, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

While it is accepted that it is difficult to get a job in their hometown, job opportunities in Sakaeo are high as demand on laborers in sugar cane growing increases. This encourages Cambodian laborers to move to Sakaeo in order to get a job.

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<sup>14</sup> They went to school until grade 4. Some of them have never attended school.

*b. Failure in agriculture in laborer's hometown*

Some of Cambodian migrant workers have their own small piece of land in their home village and do agriculture for their living before moving to Thailand. Cambodian farmers leave their hometown because doing agriculture does not benefit them that much. Their crops are unproductive which forced them to move to other places to find a living: *“This is the first time I work here. In my hometown [Kampong Thom province] I help my mother to do paddy rice field. Nevertheless we did not get much money from it so I came here to work in sugar cane production.”* (2<sup>nd</sup> focus group discussion with Cambodian migrant worker 11, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

**4.3.2 Pull factors**

Pull factors that have been identified in Sakaeo province pertain to higher wage offers and policy implementation for migrant workers encouraged Cambodian migrant workers to seek jobs in Thailand.

*a. Higher wage*

Higher wage in Thailand is the major reason for Cambodian workers to migrate to Sakaeo. However, in agricultural sector like sugar cane production, wage might not be as high as other sectors in Thailand which offers more than the THB 300 per day minimum wage. Wage in sugar cane production is not 300 baht per day (see section 4.1.2), but is observed to be increasing every year: *“I came working here because I gain higher wage. I want to collect some money here, and go back to continue my cultivation in Cambodia. I have piece of land that I normally doing agriculture. My wife also is staying at the village and waiting for me to come back.”* (1<sup>st</sup> focus group discussion with Cambodian migrant worker 3, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

Cambodian laborers also have power to negotiate their wages because of the constant lacking of laborers in sugar cane growing in Sakaeo Province (see section 4.4.1).

In addition, sugar cane farmers do not prefer to depend on agricultural machine to perform the work in the plantation. As a result, sugar cane farmers have to comply with higher wage for Cambodian labors in order to find laborers for sugar cane production.

*b. Facilitating policy for Cambodian migrant workers*

Because of the scarcity of laborers in agricultural sector especially in intensive farming such as the sugar cane production, Sakaeo provincial government had to solve the problem by allowing Cambodian migrant workers to work in the province during harvesting season. While seasonal migrant workers are allowed to cross the border during this season, they have to go back when the harvesting season is over.

In the past, Cambodian migrant workers who wanted to work in Sakaeo Province had to pay money to smuggling gangs. Sometimes transportation means to cross the border were very dangerous and migrant workers were deceived or violated of their rights by these crime organizations. The situation had improved after the migration policy was launched.

In order to fill the labor gap and, at the same time, decrease human smuggling cases, Sakaeo provincial government created an agreement (see section 4.3.1) to help meet the local labor demand for sugar cane production. As a result, during harvesting season, Cambodian migrant workers can cross border much easier. They are not required to pay for the identification card which normally costs around THB 3,000-4,000. This way, cases of Cambodian migrant workers being advantaged by human smugglers decrease.

#### **4.4 Elements lead to renegotiation of Cambodian migrant labor relations**

Comparing the status of Cambodian migrant workers between the past and the present times, it is obvious that migrant workers are far more effective in managing their status as laborers in a foreign land. Even though migrant workers do not have formal organization to help them, they are able to secure more bargaining power in their own way and become the most important element in sugar cane growing: “*Without*

*Cambodian migrant workers, sugar cane production in this province will fail.”* (Interview with farmers 1, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

There are several elements that enhance status and bargaining power of migrant workers. These elements are the lack of Thai laborers (section 4.4.1) and cheap labor offered to the Cambodian migrant workers (section 4.4.2).

#### **4.4.1 Lack of Thai labors in sugar cane production**

The flow of Cambodian labors across the Thai border is one of the most distinguished effects caused by sugar cane production. This phenomenon of migrant workers flowing to other places to find opportunity to get better job and salary occurs all around the world. In America, most of the farm work is performed by immigrants, most of whom are undocumented and therefore easily exploited. The big agribusinesses that hire these immigrants will tell you that they need an unfettered supply of cheap foreign labor, because they cannot find Americans willing to do these jobs (Walshe, 2013).

The situation of Cambodian migrant workers in Sakaeo sugar cane production is similar. According to an interview with sugar cane farmers employing Cambodian labors in Nong Sano village, they have the same reason of hiring Cambodians. They said that it is difficult to find laborers to work in the sugar cane field, especially Thai laborers: *“I employ another sugar cane farmer to grow sugar cane for me. At first, there are Thais working with me. However due to high salary and lack of labor, I have to employ Cambodians. I consider that labor is the important part of sugar cane production because during harvesting season everyone needs them [Cambodian migrant workers] to harvest cane and send to the mill as fast as possible in order to minimize losing weight of the cane. In the future if there are less Cambodian to employ I might consider chop machine to harvest sugar cane.”* (Interview with farmers 3, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

In this case, Thai farmers have to employ Cambodians even though their harvesting skill is not favored by employers as it destroys sweetness and weight of cane which decreases income for employers. However, the employers would still prefer Thai laborers, if they are available, as there is no language barrier during work transactions and that Thai workers are more skillful in terms of harvesting green cane.

Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association also plays an important role in facilitating the movement of Cambodian migrant workers in order to meet the demand of farmers during harvesting season: *“We consider these Cambodian workers as a labor who create a lot of benefits to our sugar cane production or even sugar industry. It is necessary to facilitate them to work in this province without any fear. Therefore we decide to make this legal in order to attract Cambodian workers to work in sugar cane production.”* (Interview with Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association representative, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2015)

#### **4.4.2 Cheap waged Cambodian migrant workers**

Compared with Thai labors, wage of Cambodian labors are cheaper. Their minimum wage is lower than Thai laborers. Hiring Cambodian migrant workers can reduce the cost of sugar cane production. Although Cambodian labors are cheaper, their wage increases every year due to Thai farmers' heavy dependence on Cambodian workers. As a result, Cambodian laborers have more bargaining power and can effectively negotiate for higher wage: *“Last year, I give them 160-170 baht per ton, but this year I have to give them 200 baht. And the wage becomes higher and higher. When they ask [for higher wage], I have to give them because I cannot cut all sugar cane myself. If I do not give as they want, it will be difficult to find new labors and my sugar cane will die and I will face failed year yield.”* (Interview with farmer 2, May 2015)

Cambodian migrant workers are satisfied with their wage because there is no way that they can get this salary in their hometown. Some can collect money as they want while some do not have much money left after the season finishes: *“In my*



*hometown I cannot even get wage at this rate. Thus I am also satisfied. It is ok at this moment. I hope that we can get more.*" (3<sup>rd</sup> focus group discussion with Cambodian migrant worker 19, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2015)

Negotiation on wage of migrant labors occurs before they cross the border. It is between the Thai farmer and agent of migrant workers who also works as a head of Cambodian migrant workers.

#### **4.5 Chapter summary**

Based on the transition process to sugar cane growing, demand on migrant laborers working in the production increases especially during the harvesting season. The regular flow of Cambodian migrant workers to the province as a response to the labor supply problem in Sakaeo has become more important than ever because of the growing sugar cane market that requires a lot of labors. Hiring Cambodian laborers is also considered as the best solution because it is more cost efficient and these workers are more willing to do agricultural work than their Thai counterparts.

The main factors that push Cambodian migrant workers to work in sugar cane production in Sakaeo the lack of jobs and the failure in agriculture in their hometown. Moreover, the working conditions related to wage and migrant workers policy in Sakaeo province are the identified pull factors that attract Cambodians to engage in sugar cane production in Nong Sano village.

Due to the quantity of Cambodian laborers and the labor cost, there is a chance for Cambodian migrant workers to renegotiate with the status that have advantage over their employers (Thai farmers). Their bargaining powers in wage negotiation are rather stronger than before, Cambodian migrant workers are seen in a much improved economic status and are treated better by Thai employers compared to other migrant workers.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter aims to show linkage between agrarian transition to sugar cane, intensification in sugar cane growing, and renegotiation of Cambodian migrant workers through discussion (section 5.1), and conclusion (section 5.2). This chapter also provides recommendations (section 5.2), and directions for future research (section 5.3).

#### 5.1 Discussion

##### 5.1.1 Intensification in sugar cane

This thesis explored the agrarian transition from traditional crop farming (e.g. rice) to sugar cane in Nong Sano village. Sugar cane growing has become more commercialized than in the past because of the intensification process which focused on inputs, land, and labor. It was found out in this thesis that changes of agriculture in Nong Sano village occurred according to the circumstances regarding the: 1) establishment of sugar cane mill; 2) severe drought; and the 3) Alternative Energy Development Plan. These events pushed the farmers change to sugar cane growing and increased production, while bearing in mind the adaptation techniques that the circumstances required to sustain and meet the demands of the local and global market for sugar and bioenergy such as ethanol.

The intensification process which involved the increase of farming inputs, land use, and labor requirements, created many consequences both to the Thai economy and the environment. The government was able to gain more revenue because of the growing sugar cane industry. While the economic returns increased both to the farmers and the workers, the environmental degradation as a result of the intensified use of chemicals to increase production, alternative ways to reduce such impacts were

explored and addressed led by the government sectors. Social dimension is also affected by the intensification process.

Lastly, intensification in sugar cane has an impact in shaping the current political condition for migrant workers in Thailand. Because of the overproduction of sugar cane in the market as a result of increase in inputs, land use, and labor, price of this commodity decreased in time. Therefore farmers demand for a new sugar cane mill. They pressure government sector in order to achieve their goal.

### **5.1.2 Renegotiation of Cambodian labor relation**

This thesis also analyzed how intensification in labor creates chance for renegotiation in relations between Cambodian migrant workers and Thai farmers. The renegotiation of relations between Cambodian migrant workers and Thai farmers are considered under the context of relations between government sectors and farmers association (CBFA) who created an agreement that empowers Cambodian migrant workers, in terms of formal status, and helps them gain better result from bargaining with Thai farmers.

Because of the increased production of sugar cane, Cambodian migrant workers are considered as a very important element to sugar cane growing. These workers are treated as the key drivers to sugar cane growing in Sakaeo for over 20 years because constant scarcity of Thai laborers in the sugar cane production.

While wage of Cambodian migrant workers is still considered lower than the wage being given to Thai laborers, the former are still able to maintain their power to bargain their wage according to their satisfaction. As the Thai laborers transition to other industrial sectors in other provinces, their bargaining power in the sugar cane production has weakened.

The association of Thai farmers and the government sectors also played an important role in shaping relations between Thai farmers and Cambodian migrant workers. CBFA and the government sectors have to work with each other in order to solve labor problem in Sakaeo Province. Cambodian migrant workers are empowered

their renegotiation of relations by formal status that they get from the agreement between Sakaeo provincial government and CBFA.

The agreement which allowed Cambodians to work in Sakaeo during the harvesting period created benefits for many sectors. For Thai farmers, they gain benefit as they have enough labors to work in sugar cane growing, while Cambodian migrant workers can legally earn and work in the village at an income higher than what they earn in their hometown – an obvious improvement on the living conditions of migrant workers.

### **5.1.3 The relationship between intensification and renegotiation of Cambodian labor relations**

Intensification process in sugar cane production in Nong Sano village focuses on intensification in farm inputs, land use, and labor. Therefore intensification relates to renegotiation of Cambodian migrant workers in the sense that intensification process creates a change in labor formation and demand which, later on, leads to dependency on Cambodian migrant workers and results in a renegotiation in relationship between Cambodian migrant workers and Thai farmers.

Because of the growing sugar cane demand, sugar cane growing requires more laborers who are especially needed during the harvesting season. As a result, Cambodian migrant workers come into the village more than in the past. They become a key factor in sugar cane production due to farmers need them to fill the gap of the lack of labor. Moreover Cambodian migrant workers can reduce sugar cane production cost as their wage are cheaper than Thai labors.

As a result, Thai farmers heavily depend on Cambodian migrant workers. This situation allows Cambodian labors to have more bargaining power toward their employers which in the past, when there were enough laborers, they cannot effectively negotiate with Thai farmers. Nevertheless, in the present, they can negotiate, for example, for higher wage. Moreover Cambodian migrant workers also are empowered

their renegotiation by formal status that they get from the agreement between Sakaeo provincial government and CBFA.

#### **5.1.4 Significance to development theory**

This thesis presented a different situation of migrant workers which are seen as normally weak and vulnerable for exploitation. This has not been the case for the migrant workers in Sakaeo Province. The observations made on the labor relations in the province revealed a much capable and decisive migrant worker in terms of making their way to the villages for work and in terms of bargaining for their wages in the sugar cane production. This analysis has been drawn against the social, economic, and political contexts of the province in which the conditions for labor migration were in the favorable direction toward the migrants. Findings in this thesis offered a fresh perspective on how development is seen according to the different circumstances and aspirations of the farmers, the migrants, the mill, and the government sector.

#### **5.1.5 Significance to Thailand**

This thesis pointed out the factors that facilitated the agrarian transition in Sakaeo Province, and the key participation of Cambodian migrant workers in sugar cane production. The thesis identified impacts of the booming of sugar cane growing on the social and political dimensions, and especially on the environment. It also offered some insights and directions on how industries should operate in a sustainable manner.

Findings of this research offered suggestions on how alternative ways of producing and harvesting sugar cane can be implemented. Further on the economic dimension, this thesis argued that in order to create sustainability in sugar cane growing, farmers should diversify the risk on labor by using more agricultural machine in their growing rather than depending alone on Cambodian migrant workers.

This thesis has also argued that there is an apparent change in labor supply in participation in the agricultural sector. Thai laborers move out to other sectors while Cambodian laborers become a driver in sugar cane production in Sakaeo Province. This

phenomenon should provide an insight regarding internal and external migration not only in this particular province but also in other areas where massive migration exists. Further, the analysis on political dynamics as manifested in power relations among the mill, the farmers, the migrant workers and the government has been argued as driven by vested its own vested interests and motivations that were anchored in the social, economic, political and environment make-up of Sakaeo Province, in particular. This lens would also be helpful in understanding other similar phenomena in which migration of workers creates lasting impact in the agricultural sector of Thailand.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

This thesis argues that, firstly, agrarian transition from other crops to sugar cane growing in Nong Sano village occurred according to support from government sector and the mill. These events pushed the farmers to change to sugar cane growing due to greater support from sugar cane mill. Sugar cane growing has been significantly increased since the Alternative Energy Development Plan. The plan increased sugar cane production as it created demand on sugar cane for renewable energy, ethanol. In order to produce more to meet the demand, farmers have to intensify their farm inputs, land use, and labor.

Secondly, this thesis argues that intensification in sugar cane production reduces Cambodian migrant labor vulnerability because increase on labor demand creates new kind of relations between Thai farmers and migrant labors which migrant labors have more choice and bargaining power. Labor scarcity and cheap waged labor are key factors that make Cambodian migrant workers have advantage over Thai farmers especially in wage negotiation. Migrant labors can reposition themselves and renegotiate with Thai farmers regardless of their skill or informal status.

Thirdly, this thesis argues that CBFA plays an important role in giving legal status to Cambodian migrant workers due to lack of labor in sugar cane production. Being a representative of farmers, the CBFA solves labor scarcity in sugar cane

growing by negotiating with Sakaeo provincial government sectors to brought Cambodian migrant workers to work during harvesting season. Demand on migrant labors influences farmers and Sakaeo provincial government to weaken laws, and created agreement to facilitate them to work in the province. Thai farmers gain benefit from the agreement as they have enough labors to work in sugar cane growing, while Cambodian migrant workers can legally earn and work in the village at an income higher that what they earn in their hometown – an obvious improvement on the living conditions of migrant workers.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

#### **5.3.1 Recommendation for government**

According to the research, farmers heavily rely on the mill due to its strong involvement in almost every stage of sugar cane production. Therefore, farmers become weak in negotiating sugar cane price options to their advantage. As a result, government sectors should play active role on transition to sugar cane production in order to decrease monopoly of the mill as a main source of knowledge and technological transfer. This will create more sustainability in sugar cane production for farmers.

For migrant labors issues, government sectors should make more concrete regulations in inviting Cambodian migrant workers in order to prevent illegal actions such as human rights violations, illegal border crossing, and corruption involving Thai border authorities, among others.

#### **5.3.2 Recommendation for sugar cane mill**

The mill should heavily promote harvesting green cane in order to decrease air pollution and soil degradation problems during harvesting season. Promoting green cane also helps the mill in gaining higher quality sugar cane which the mill will benefit from that too. Moreover the mill should promote sustainable way to grow sugar cane to

the farmers, for example, organic herbicide or fertilizer, in order to minimize the negative impacts to the environment which is one of the key factors of quality and productive sugar cane.

### **5.3.3 Recommendation for sugar cane farmers**

Farmers should learn about sustainable way in growing sugar cane in order to decrease environmental degradation from heavily intensification in farm inputs and land use. Moreover they should consider about using agricultural machine in their sugar cane production in order to reduce vulnerability in labor scarcity.

For sugar cane farmers and as employers of Cambodian migrant workers, they should strictly comply with the regulations that are mandated by the government. They should legally employ Cambodian migrant workers in order to prevent exploitation.

## **5.4 Directions for future research**

For further research, there are two questions that can be answered in the future:

### **1) How does the relationship look like among Cambodian migrant workers, Thai farmers, and agent workers?**

Apart from the process in which government actors facilitate the migration of Cambodian migrant workers across the border during harvesting season, there are also non-government actors such as Thai farmers and agent workers who cooperate with each other. Therefore it is interesting to know the process in which this negotiation among the Thai farmers, migrant workers, and agents come to play and therefore will provide deeper insights for this research theme.



**2) What is politics between farmers and government sector on building the new sugar cane mill in the province.**

Sugar cane farmers of four provinces, Sakaeo, Prachinburi, Chantaburi, and Chachoengsao, sell their products to Eastern Cane and Sugar. As a result, the mill cannot effectively absorb all the products being sold. Farmers have to wait in a long queue which affects the quality of sugar cane. There is a request for building a new mill since this problem was experienced in 2007. The building of the new mill has perceived to offer many advantages for sugar cane production. However it has not passed yet due to some foreseen obstacles in the industry law. Therefore this topic is interesting to be explored in order to understand the politics between government sector and farmers.



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## APPENDIX



จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย  
CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

## **Questionnaire**

### **1. Questionnaires for key informant interviews**

#### 1.1 Head of Nong Sano village

- 1.1.1 Could you please tell me about agriculture of Nong Sano?
- 1.1.2 What is the most obvious change after coming of sugar cane?
- 1.1.3 Is there any supporting policy from government on sugar cane?
- 1.1.4 What is supporting from the mill?
- 1.1.5 Are there any negative impacts from sugar cane production?
- 1.1.6 In terms of Cambodian labors, is there any problem regarding their coming?
- 1.1.7 What is your responsibility on Cambodian labors?
- 1.1.8 What kind of land title appears in this village? Is there any changing in land holding during these 20 years?
- 1.1.9 What are affects from establishment of sugar cane mill in 1994?
- 1.1.10 What are affects from severe drought in 1997 on agriculture of the village?

#### 1.2 Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association

- 1.2.1 What is purpose of Chaidan Burapa Association?
- 1.2.2 Could you please tell me about general situation of Cambodian migrant workers that association is responsible for?
- 1.2.3 What is the process of bringing Cambodian migrant workers into sugar cane production in Sakaeo province?
- 1.2.4 Which year that the agreement between Sakaeo provincial government and farmers on Cambodian migrant workers launched?
- 1.2.5 Did the agreement launch under MOUs between Thai government and Cambodian government in 2003? Or was it launched by Sakaeo provincial government?
- 1.2.4 What is perspective of your organization toward Cambodian migrant workers?

1.2.5 Is there any problem Cambodian migrant workers negative experienced from government or their employers?

## **2. Questionnaires for in-depth interviews**

### **2.1 Sugar cane farmers**

#### On sugar cane production

2.1.1 How long have you grown sugar cane?

2.1.2 Why you grow sugar cane?

2.1.3 Do you know any of policy from government supporting sugar cane production?

2.1.4 According to there is construction of second sugar cane mill in Sakaeo province, will you grow more sugar cane or still growing in the same quantity?

2.1.5 Compare with other crops, does sugar cane growing spend more resources than other crops growing?

2.1.6 Is there any problem from sugar cane production?

#### On Cambodian migrant workers

2.1.7 Do you have any Cambodian migrant workers, if any, why?

2.1.8 How many workers do you have for sugar cane growing?

2.1.9 Since when that you employ Cambodian migrant workers?

2.1.10 How do you find Cambodian migrant workers?

2.1.11 How do you employ them, is there any employment contract?

### **2.2 Non sugar cane farmers**

2.2.1 What is a crop you growing at the present? And since when have you grown it?

2.2.2 Why did not you change to sugar cane growing after the establishment of sugar cane in 1994?

2.2.3 In 1997 there was a severe drought, how did the drought affect to your agricultural production?

2.2.4 Do you want to grow sugar cane?

2.2.5 Did you ever employ Cambodian migrant workers?

2.2.6 Sugar cane can earn better income, why do not you change to it?

2.2.7 In your opinion, what are obstacles for you to grow sugar cane?

2.2.8 In the future, do you want to grow the same crop you are growing?

And what is the reason?

### **3. Questionnaires for focus group discussion**

#### 3.1 Cambodian migrant workers

3.1.1 What is your duty in sugar cane field?

3.1.2 How did you come here?

3.1.3 Why you decide to come here?

3.1.4 How much do you get from working in sugar cane production here?

3.1.5 As you came here illegally, does your employer pay you less or higher than other migrant workers who come legally?

3.1.6 Do you satisfy with you wage?

3.1.7 How long do you work?

3.1.8 Do you have any problem with your employer or people living in the village?

3.1.9 Why you prefer burning than cutting?

3.1.10 In the next season will you come working here again?



## Interview

### Key informant interview

Interview	Organization	Date
Representative of Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association	Chaidan Burapa Farmers Association	10 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
Head of Nong Sano viillage	Local government sector	22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2015

### In-depth interview

Interview	Interviewee	Date
Farmer 1	Sugar cane farmer	9 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
Farmer 2	Sugar cane farmer	17 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
Farmer 3	Sugar cane farmer	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
Farmer 4	Sugar cane farmer	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2015
Farmer 5	Non-sugar cane farmer	20 <sup>th</sup> February 2016
Farmer 6	Non-sugar cane farmer	20 <sup>th</sup> February 2016
Farmer 7	Non-sugar cane farmer	21 <sup>st</sup> February 2016

### Focus group discussion

Interview	Participants	Date
1 <sup>st</sup> focus group discussion	Cambodian migrant workers 1	13th May 2015
	Cambodian migrant workers 2	
	Cambodian migrant workers 3	
	Cambodian migrant workers 4	
2 <sup>nd</sup> focus group discussion	Cambodian migrant workers 5	18th May 2015
	Cambodian migrant workers 6	
	Cambodian migrant workers 7	
	Cambodian migrant workers 8	
	Cambodian migrant workers 9	
	Cambodian migrant workers 10	
	Cambodian migrant workers 11	
	Cambodian migrant workers 12	
	Cambodian migrant workers 13	
	Cambodian migrant workers 14	
	Cambodian migrant workers 15	
	Cambodian migrant workers 16	
3 <sup>rd</sup> focus group discussion	Cambodian migrant workers 17	21st May 2015
	Cambodian migrant workers 18	
	Cambodian migrant workers 19	

## Agreement document between Sakaeo provincial government and CBFA

### สรุปแนวทางการดำเนินการแก้ไขปัญหาด้านแรงงานตัดอ้อย

ประจำปี ๒๕๕๕/๒๕๕๖

จังหวัดสระแก้ว ได้จัดการประชุมหน่วยงานที่เกี่ยวข้องเพื่อพิจารณาแนวทางการแก้ไขปัญหาด้านแรงงานตัดอ้อย ตามคำร้องขอของสมาคมเกษตรกรชาวดอนบูรพา เมื่อวันที่ ๑๖ ตุลาคม พ.ศ. ๒๕๕๕ ผลการประชุมสรุปแนวทางการดำเนินการแก้ไขปัญหาด้านแรงงานตัดอ้อยได้ดังนี้

๑. ทุกส่วนราชการเห็นร่วมกันว่า การอนุโลมให้แรงงานชาวกัมพูชาเดินทางเข้ามารับจ้างทำงานในช่วงเปิดหีบอ้อย อาจขัดกฎหมายว่าด้วยคนเข้าเมืองและกฎหมายว่าด้วยการทำงานของคนต่างด้าว แต่เนื่องจากเกษตรกรจะประสบปัญหาด้านแรงงานในช่วงการตัดอ้อยทุกปี จังหวัดสระแก้วจึงต้องการบริหารจัดการภายใน เพื่อแก้ไขปัญหาให้กับเกษตรกรทุกปี ประกอบกับแรงงานกลุ่มนี้ไม่ได้เป็นภัยคุกคามแต่เป็นแรงงานที่เสริมสร้างเศรษฐกิจ

#### ๒. แนวทางปฏิบัติในการอนุโลมมีดังนี้

๒.๑ ให้เกษตรกรที่มีความประสงค์จะใช้แรงงานชาวกัมพูชาทำงานยื่นคำร้องขออนุญาตจ้างแรงงานต่างด้าวทำงาน ณ สมาคมเกษตรกรชาวดอนบูรพา และให้สมาคมนำรวบรวมคำร้องส่งให้สำนักงานจัดหางานจังหวัดสระแก้ว เพื่อเป็นการจัดเตรียมข้อมูลของเกษตรกรที่มีความประสงค์ใช้แรงงานต่างด้าวทำงานลักษณะไป-กลับ และตามฤดูกาลต่อไป

๒.๒ ให้สมาคมเกษตรกรชาวดอนบูรพา จัดทำบัญชีเกษตรกรที่แจ้งความต้องการใช้แรงงานกัมพูชาพร้อมบัญชีรายชื่อแรงงาน รูปถ่าย และแผนที่สถานที่ทำงาน/ที่พัก จำนวน ๖ ชุด เพื่อส่งให้หน่วยงานที่เกี่ยวข้อง ได้แก่ กองกำลังบูรพา กองอำนาจการรักษาความมั่นคงภายในจังหวัดสระแก้ว จัดหางานจังหวัด ตรวจคนเข้าเมืองจังหวัด อำเภอและสถานที่ตำรวจภูธรซึ่งเป็นที่ตั้งของสถานที่ทำงาน แห่งละ ๑ ชุด

๒.๓ ให้เกษตรกรนำหนังสือแจ้งผลการอนุญาตให้จ้างแรงงานต่างด้าวที่ออกให้โดยสำนักงานจัดหางานจังหวัด ยื่นต่อเจ้าหน้าที่หน่วย ผ.ก.รม.ทพ.๑๒, ผ.ก.รม.ทพ.๑๓ และ ผ.ก.รม.ตชด.๑๒ ที่หน้าแนวเพื่อรับตัวแรงงานกัมพูชา ณ จุดที่หน่วยเฉพาะกิจกำหนดและให้หน่วยเฉพาะกิจหน้าแนวจัดทำทะเบียนควบคุมการรับ-ส่งไว้ โดยมีเงื่อนไขให้นายจ้างรับแรงงานกัมพูชาจากช่องทางใด ต้องส่งกลับ ณ ช่องทางนั้น

๒.๔ เกษตรกรผู้ว่าจ้างแรงงานชาวกัมพูชา จะต้องปฏิบัติในเรื่องต่อไปนี้

๑) ต้องมีเอกสารบัญชีรายชื่อแรงงานพร้อมรูปถ่าย พร้อมทั้งจะให้เจ้าหน้าที่ตรวจสอบได้ตลอดเวลา

๒) ต้องรับผิดชอบจัดที่พักอาศัยให้แก่แรงงาน ห้ามทำลายต้นไม้และดูแลการใช้แหล่งน้ำสาธารณะ

๓) ต้องดูแลกดขี่ข่มเหงเรื่องยาเสพติด

๔) ต้องรับผิดชอบค่ารักษาพยาบาลกรณีแรงงานเจ็บป่วยไม่ให้เป็นการแก่โรงพยาบาล

๕) ไม่ควรให้มีผู้ติดตามหรือแรงงานเด็ก หากมีให้สมาคมฯ ทำทะเบียนถ่ายรูปไว้ด้วย

๖) ต้องจ่ายค่าจ้างให้แก่แรงงานตามที่ตกลงไว้ให้ครบถ้วนก่อนส่งตัวกลับ

๗) ต้องดูแลควบคุมไม่ให้แรงงานไปสร้างความเดือดร้อนรำคาญแก่ประชาชนทั่วไป และจะไม่ขยับย้ายแรงงานเพื่อกระทำการใดๆ บนถนนสุวรรณศร

๘) ต้องนำตัวแรงงานส่งคืน ณ หน่วยเฉพาะกิจจุดที่รับตัวแรงงานเท่านั้น โดยต้องส่งตามวันที่กำหนดและครบจำนวน

## Example of requirement document for Cambodian migrant workers



### สมาคมเกษตรกร ชายแดนบูรพา

สถาบันชาวไร่อ้อยตามพระราชบัญญัติอ้อยและน้ำตาลทราย พ.ศ. 2527

153 หมู่ 7 ต.คลองหาด อ.คลองหาด จ.สระแก้ว 27260 โทร.แฟกซ์ (037) 512289 . 445120

คำร้องขออนุญาตใช้แรงงาน

สมาคมเกษตรกร ชายแดนบูรพา

1. ข้าพเจ้า (นาย/นาง/นางสาว).....นามสกุล.....

บ้านเลขที่..... หมู่ที่..... บ้าน..... ตำบล.....

อำเภอ..... จังหวัด.....

ซึ่งได้แนบเอกสารหลักฐานประกอบคำร้องขอฯ ดังนี้ 1. สำเนาบัตรประชาชน 2. สำเนาทะเบียนบ้าน

2. ข้าพเจ้ามีความประสงค์ขอใช้แรงงานต่างด้าว ชาว..... จำนวน.....คน

เพื่อช่วยเหลือในการประกอบอาชีพทางการเกษตร (อ้อย) เนื้อที่จำนวน.....ไร่

โดยมีรายละเอียดเพื่อการใช้แรงงาน และข้อกำหนด ดังนี้

2.1 ห้วงวันขอใช้แรงงาน ตั้งแต่.....ถึง.....

2.2 สถานที่ที่ใช้แรงงาน ตั้งอยู่ที่ บ้านเลขที่..... หมู่ที่..... บ้าน.....

ตำบล..... อำเภอ..... จังหวัด.....

2.3 ยานพาหนะที่ใช้ รับ-ส่ง แรงงานประเภทของยานพาหนะ.....

ยี่ห้อ.....

สี.....

หมายเลขทะเบียน.....

2.4 จุดหรือช่องทางกรรับ-ส่ง แรงงานต่างด้าว.....

3. ข้าพเจ้า จะให้ความร่วมมือกับทางราชการในการช่วยเหลือ และควบคุมการใช้แรงงาน รวมทั้ง

จะดำเนินการตามข้อกำหนด/มาตรการควบคุมการใช้แรงงานทุกประการ และยินยอมรับผิดชอบค่าเสียหายที่

อาจเกิดขึ้นจากการใช้แรงงานของข้าพเจ้าทุกประการ

(ลงชื่อ).....ผู้ยื่นคำขอ

(.....)

(ลงชื่อ).....ผู้รับรอง

(นายมนตรี คำพล)

นายกสมาคมเกษตรกร ชายแดนบูรพา

(ลงชื่อ).....ผู้ตรวจสอบ

(.....)

## VITA

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