

# Homeless people in Thailand and the Philippines

Boonlert Visetpricha

Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology, Thammasat University

Nopphan Phromsri

Human Settlement Foundation (HSF)

Jeff Wong

Leaders and Organizers of Community Organizations in Asia (LOCOA)

# Outline

1. Homeless people in Thailand
2. Homeless people in the Philippines

# I. Homeless People in Thailand

- *How homeless people are defined in Thai language*



# 1) “*khonraeron*” – “vagrant”



## 2) “*khonraiban*” – “homeless”

- Introduced by Human Settlement Foundation (HSF) to destigmatize the homeless



# *How homeless people are defined in Thai language*

- Khonraeron – khonraiban – homeless people:
- people who have no home and sleep in public places

### 3) “*pu chai chiwit nai ti satarana*” - “person living in a public place”

- Includes groups of people who might be found in public places but may also have houses, such as alcoholics, sex workers, and people with “sexual diversity.”

# Three sources of information about homeless people in Thailand

- 1) Bangkok Department of Social Development
  - 600- 700 homeless people in and around *Sanam Luang*
  - Based on rough visual assessment



# Three sources of information about homeless people in Thailand

- 2) Issarachon Foundation and Bangkok Friendly Home (Ministry of Social Development and Human Security)
  - 3,140 homeless people in Bangkok
  - Methodology questionable

# Three sources of information about homeless people in Thailand

## 3) HSF enumeration and survey

- HSF definition of homeless: People with no home who sleep in public places

PLUS:

- People renting cheap rooms on daily basis
- People living in abandoned buildings
- People living in *tuktuks* (motorized tricycles) or pushcarts
- People in homeless shelters

### 3) HSF Enumeration and Survey

- The 2010 HSF Survey in Bangkok
- 6:00 to 9:00 pm on the night of 17 January 2010
- 24 sites
- Survey teams consisted of three to four people (NGO staff, homeless people, and slum dwellers)

# The 2010 HSF Survey in Bangkok



### 3) HSF Enumeration and Survey

- The 2010 HSF Survey in Bangkok
  - 1,093 homeless people counted:
    - 922 men
    - 141 women
    - 30 children
    - Includes 25 families
  - Age: majority 30-55 years old

### 3) HSF Enumeration and Survey

- The 2010 HSF Survey in Chiang Mai Municipality
- 21 sites
- 166 homeless people counted:
  - 152 men
  - 13 women
  - 1 child (male)
  - Includes 4 families

# The 2010 HSF Survey in Chiang Mai Municipality



### 3) HSF Enumeration and Survey

- The 2014 HSF Survey in Khon Kaen Municipality
- 20 sites
- 136 homeless people counted:
  - 111 men
  - 25 women
- Age: majority (55.6%) 31-50 years old

# The 2014 HSF Survey in Khon Kaen Municipality



# HSF Survey Plan

- HSF plans to join with homeless people, state agencies, academics, and other civil society organizations to carry out the survey of homeless people in all areas of Bangkok by September 2015
- The results will be accepted by all parties

## II. Homeless People in the Philippines

- How homeless people are defined in the Philippines



- <http://www.wheninmanila.com/manila-philippines-city-with-the-highest-homeless-population/>
- <http://www.shoot.ph/2013/10/photowalk-in-quiapo/#sthash.dbIvDxu1.OHfNWedO.dpbs>

# How homeless people are defined in the Philippines

- Generally, the term “homeless people” is used widely to include both slum dwellers and street people.
- “Metro Manila has the highest homeless population in the world” (Clapano, *Philippines Star* May 6, 2014).

# How homeless people are defined in the Philippines

- The group living in North Cemetery in Manila City are called homeless people too.



- <http://www.odditycentral.com/videos/living-with-the-dead-manilas-cemetery-dwellers.html>
- [http://izismile.com/2009/10/30/life\\_in\\_the\\_cemetery\\_19\\_pics.html](http://izismile.com/2009/10/30/life_in_the_cemetery_19_pics.html)

# How homeless people are defined in the Philippines

- People living under bridges are considered to be homeless people too.



# How homeless people are defined in the Philippines

- “street dwellers” and “homeless street families”
- Refer to people living in public spaces, such as on the sidewalk, in parks, under bridges, and in port areas.



# Information about homeless people (Philippines)

- The 2010 DSWD survey of street dwellers in Metro Manila
- 1,745 homeless street families in Metro Manila in 2010.



# Information about homeless people (Philippines)

- The 2010 DSWD survey of street dwellers: Manila City
- Covered all public areas in Manila City
- All five districts were surveyed
- Major areas are included in the report

# Information about homeless people (Philippines)

- The 2010 DSWD survey of street dwellers:  
Manila City
- 1,476 street dwellers
  - 411 men
  - 291 women
  - 706 street children
  - 68 infants
  - 155 homeless street families
- However, survey counted members of the *Badjaos* community (71 people) as homeless people

# Information about homeless people (Philippines)

- Recently, according to Director of DSWD –NCR:
- 3,500 street-dwelling families in just the two cities of Manila and Quezon City alone.

# Some observations about the 2010 DSWD Survey

- First, the number of street dwellers counted in the 2010 survey (702 people, excluding children) in Manila City seems to be too low.

# Some observations about the 2010 DSWD Survey

- Second, the ratio of homeless women to men in the DSWD 2010 survey was quite high,
  - 291 adult females 41.45 %
  - 411 adult males 58.54 %

# Some observations about the 2010 DSWD Survey

- The estimated number of homeless people in Metro Manila (30,000) is much higher than in Bangkok (a few thousand people).



# Thank you very much



