Migrant workers in Sabah, East Malaysia: The importance of legislation and policy to uphold equity on sexual and reproductive health and rights

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Sabah

Sabah, located in Southeast Asia, hosts the highest number of non-Malaysian citizens (27.7%), predominantly the Indonesian and Filipino migrants in comparison to other states in Malaysia. Sabah has inadequate data on migrants’ sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHRs). Various migrant-related policies and laws are present, but they do not offer full protection and rights to legal migrants in terms of their SRHRs. The aim of the laws and policies appears to be controlling the migrants from having any negative impact on the locals, rather than protecting migrants’ health and rights. This affected their rights to marriage, having children, increase their vulnerabilities to labour trafficking and sexual abuse and access to health-care services. Female migrant workers and undocumented migrants form the most vulnerable subgroups of migrants. This narrative review highlights the status of SRHRs of migrants in Sabah and the migrant-related Malaysian laws and policies affecting their SRHRs.

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Second Stage

In each sampled school, a list was compiled of all classes from Form 1 to Form 6 (Form 1 to Form 5 for schools without Form 6).

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One class was then randomly selected from each level.

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All students in the selected class were the respondents for the study.

Group 2 - University/college students

Group 2 respondents were selected from both public and private higher education institutions. The total number of respondents from this target group was approximated to be 500 persons. University of Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and University of Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) were selected by virtue of their status being the largest public higher education institution in Sabah and Sarawak, respectively. In addition, one other higher education institution was randomly selected from each of these two states namely the International College of Advanced Technology Sarawak (ICATs) and Institute of Sinaran Sabah to cover respondents from private institutions.

Within UMS and UNIMAS, five faculties were randomly selected to ensure wide coverage of student’s academic background. Within the selected faculties, the lists of all core courses for each year of study were obtained. Then one core course was randomly selected for each year of study. Core courses were chosen because they are compulsory and students’ attendance is usually high. Within the selected course, all the Sabahan and Sarawakian students who were not married in the class were invited to participate in the study. Within ICATs and Institute of Sinaran Sabah, the selection of Sabahan and Sarawakian students was based on randomly selected courses. The estimated sample size by higher education institution and faculty in Sabah and Sarawak is shown in Table 2.6.