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WEATHERING CHANGE



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How Extreme Heat is Reshaping Women's Lives in Thailand

Executive Summary

Across Thailand, more than 11 million women are working in scorching temperatures to earn a daily wage. As a vital part of the country's informal sector, these women spend long hours working outdoors or in poorly ventilated spaces as street vendors, motorcycle taxi drivers, domestic workers, and home-based workers. Many are the primary earners in their household, where their daily wages underpin the family's financial stability, cover educational and healthcare costs, and power local, regional, and national economies. However, extreme heat is diminishing the number of hours they can work, reducing the quantity of products and services they can provide, and causing heat-related illnesses.

These women are not passive victims of climate stress. They are experienced problem solvers who continuously adapt, endure, and innovate in the face of hardship. What they lack is access to systems that recognize their value, bolster their knowledge, and protect their health and livelihoods as temperatures rise.

Women's Climate Shock Insurance and Livelihoods Initiative: An Innovative Model

HERA (formerly known as Climate Resilience for All) is a women-led climate adaptation non-governmental organization dedicated to protecting the health, income, and dignity of women on the frontlines of extreme heat. Our work centers on women's lived experience, and we co-develop, test, and scale tangible heat solutions.

In 2023, we launched the Women's Climate Shock Insurance and Livelihoods Initiative (WCSI), an innovative model that combines financial solutions—parametric insurance, health and life insurance, direct cash assistance, and grants—with practical, on-the-ground interventions that reduce the risks and impacts of heat, including adaptive protective equipment, cooling infrastructure, early warning systems for heat, and public awareness and heat literacy campaigns. In addition to Thailand, we deliver WCSI in India, Pakistan, Ghana, and Sierra Leone.

In 2024, HERA partnered with the Prudence Foundation to expand WCSI in India and launched WCSI Thailand, to co-create solutions for the multiple impacts of extreme heat on women in the informal economy. Together, we are working alongside frontline communities to understand, quantify and communicate the impacts of heat and co-create solutions toward better protection in a hotter world.



Learning from Women in Thailand

In partnership with HomeNet Thailand and Just Economy and Labor Institute (JELI)—two grassroots organizations in Thailand—we conducted more than 20 workshops and focus groups, reaching 299 women informal workers among a total of over 319 informal workers in Bangkok, Nakhon Pathom, Samut Songkhram, Khon Kaen, Chiang Rai, Songkhla, Nonthaburi, and Pathum Thani. These workshops facilitated the exchange of knowledge on climate change and extreme heat while laying the foundation for collaborative action to address the impacts of rising temperatures.

Across trades and regions, the workshops revealed a consistent narrative: extreme heat is a financial and health crisis, simultaneously impacting women’s health, income, and dignity.

Key Findings

- **There are severe immediate and long-term health impacts:** Women reported acute and chronic conditions linked to extreme heat, including dehydration, headaches, dizziness, fainting, heatstroke, nosebleeds, rashes, and in some cases, miscarriages. Worsening mental health was also reported, including insomnia, anxiety, irritability, and depression.
- **Heat can cut women’s earnings by 50 percent:** Participants reported losing up to half of their daily income as productivity dropped and food spoiled, while rising costs for electricity, water, and healthcare further strained household finances.
- **70% of participants (over 90% of whom were women) reported increased understanding of extreme heat following participation in workshops:** Initially unaware of the link between climate change and rising heat, participants—and our partners working with them—transitioned from seeing heat as a daily nuisance to recognizing it as a systemic, climate-driven threat to their livelihoods and health.
- **Women are calling for solutions that match the scale of the crisis:** While women shared individual strategies for coping with extreme heat—working at night, wetting clothing, taking extra baths, and seeking shade—they emphasized the limits of these stopgap measures. Participants identified a diverse mix of financial and non-financial solutions grounded in local realities and experience to address the physical, mental, and financial toll of rising temperatures on women.

Proposed Solutions to the Challenges of Extreme Heat

Participants displayed a strong readiness for collective, community-led solutions. WCSI programs are built around four flexible programming pillars, and many of the participant-generated solutions align with these pillars:

- **Innovative Financial Tools:** Participants expressed interest in co-designing financial solutions like those offered under the WCSI model—parametric insurance, direct cash support, and improved platform policies—to offset income losses and build resilience during extreme heat events.
- **Practical Cooling Solutions:** Women highlighted the need for affordable protective gear and community-based cooling infrastructure.
- **Activated Awareness:** Women discussed the benefit of tailored education, outreach, and mobile early warning systems to increase awareness and preparedness for extreme heat in informal worker communities.
- **Regional Leadership:** Participants raised the need for policy and multi-level solutions such as maternity leave, healthcare access, and engagement with health volunteers.

Looking Forward

Building on the success and learnings from 2024 and 2025, over the next several years, we will continue to build heat-health awareness and financial literacy and raise women's voices while delivering heat solutions. The evidence-based foundation we are establishing with our partners ensures that WCSI is grounded in the experiences and needs of women in Thailand's informal economy. To do this, we are strengthening existing partnerships, forming new relationships, and engaging a broad ecosystem of partners spanning government, policy, research, labor, and community action. Ongoing engagement with HomeNet Thailand and initial conversations with the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA), Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI), Baan Dek Foundation, Asia Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), Yunus Thailand, International Labour Organization (ILO), urban planning academics, and heat-health and occupational stress researchers ensure our work is grounded in community needs and priorities and connected to larger national action and awareness.

Together, we will develop practical solutions that protect women's health and income—establishing WCSI Thailand as a model for climate adaptation and heat resilience across Southeast Asia.



Weathering Change

How Extreme Heat is Reshaping Women's Lives in Thailand

The Disproportionate Impact of Thailand's Extreme Heat on Women

Thailand's "hot season" is no longer limited to March through June. While record-breaking temperatures capture global media attention—such as the 2024 heatwave when temperatures soared to 50°C (122°F) killing more than 60 people^I—the heat has become oppressive nearly year-round. Climate change has brought longer periods of incredibly hot, humid days to the country. Temperatures are intensified in cities where dense development, concrete surfaces, and limited green spaces trap heat. In Bangkok, the average daily temperature hovers around 29.9°C (86°F) with about 80 percent humidity. Each year, the daytime temperature in the city rises by 0.018°C (0.032°F) and nighttime temperatures increase by 0.049°C (0.089°F).^{II} Rural areas register temperatures only slightly cooler.

"It is extremely hot—not only the burning sunlight but also the scorching sand. Even in the early morning hours, the heat is intense. I often have to collect waste under these conditions for one to two hours depending on what is assigned."

- Ms. Kanokwan Khunchum, known as "Chaliao," street sweeper and sun-dried salted fish producer and seller

This heat does not affect all workers equally. It compounds existing gender, economic, and labor inequities felt by the 11 million women working in the informal sector.^{III} Many of these women are the primary earners for their households and rely on inconsistent daily wages typically ranging from USD 10–25 to support their families. While approximately 97 percent of households in Thailand have access to financial services,^{IV} many women in the informal workforce do not have enough money in savings to cover emergency costs and are forced to take high-interest informal loans when unexpected expenses arise. Because of these financial realities, women in Thailand's informal workforce feel incredible pressure to work even when climbing temperatures create potentially life-threatening conditions.

The Informal Workforce: A Sample of Professions

- **Outdoor livelihoods:** street vendors, motorcycle taxi drivers, construction workers, farmers, vegetable sellers, and street cleaners
- **Home-based livelihoods:** textile workers, food producers, and processors
- **Indoor and mixed-setting livelihoods:** shellfish processors, domestic workers, housekeeping and laundry workers, factory workers, barbers and hairdressers, and massage parlor workers

Working with Women Impacted by Extreme Heat

HERA (formerly known as Climate Resilience for All) is a women-led climate adaptation non-governmental organization focused on protecting the health, income, and dignity of women on the frontlines of extreme heat. Our work begins with—and centers on—listening to women’s experiences, amplifying their voices, and co-developing tangible solutions that help them prepare for and recover from periods of dangerous heat.

In 2023, we launched the Women’s Climate Shock Insurance and Livelihoods Initiative (WCSI), an innovative resilience model designed to protect women against the impacts of extreme heat, boost their access to resources, and increase their capacity to adapt to a hotter world. WCSI combines innovative financial solutions that transfer risk—parametric insurance, health and life insurance, direct cash assistance, and grants—with practical, on-the-ground solutions that reduce risk, including adaptive protective equipment, community-level livelihood investments, cooling infrastructure, early warning systems for heat, and public awareness campaigns.

WCSI’s flexible, holistic approach places women in decision-making roles, ensuring that solutions adopted in each location are grounded in local knowledge, aligned with socio-cultural norms, and tailored to address their most pressing needs. To date, the WCSI is being implemented in India, Pakistan, the United States, Ghana, Thailand, and Sierra Leone. Through this global implementation, WCSI has become a proven, innovative climate adaptation model demonstrating how to build extreme heat resilience for women and fostering cross-border learning and replication.

Case Study: WCSI India



In 2024, HERA, in partnership with the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), SWISS Re Public Sector Solutions, and ICICI Lombard, launched WCSI India across three states.

The program is a first-of-its-kind microinsurance and cash assistance program that included an early warning and heat-health messaging system to help women prepare for and recover from heat shocks. Participants included street vendors, waste recyclers, ship breakers, farmers, salt pan miners, and other self-employed women whose incomes are irregular. These women often work in temperatures exceeding 45°C (113°F) and earn approximately USD 3–5 per day.

SEWA members enrolled in the program were eligible for direct cash payments equivalent to a day’s wages when temperatures hit 40°C (104°F). That year, 100 percent of the 50,000 participants

received cash support, and 92 percent received an insurance payout. Women could use the funds to manage immediate impacts—buying drinking water, getting medical care and medications, or buying groceries—and for long-term financial security, including paying for medical costs related to chronic illnesses, buying seeds, or investing in their children’s education. During in-person focus groups, some participants reported that their self-respect and dignity had been restored with the agency and independence that came with owning a bank account and receiving cash directly.

In 2025, HERA and its partners expanded WCSI India, reaching 300,000 women across 34 districts in six Indian states and one union territory—with women’s contribution toward the program increasing to 40 percent. This fourfold increase shows the significant demand from women workers for the WCSI and demonstrates a broader need for innovative risk transfer solutions that reach vulnerable women.



Learning from the Women in Thailand

In Thailand, HERA partnered with HomeNet Thailand and Just Economy and Labor Institute (JELI)—two local grassroots organizations—to conduct more than 20 workshops and focus groups, reaching 299 women informal workers among a total of over 319 informal workers and a further 20,000 online in Bangkok, Nakhon Pathom, Samut Songkhram, Khon Kaen, Chiang Rai, Songkhla, Nonthaburi and Pathum Thani (Figure 1). Deep-rooted local partnerships are foundational to our approach and the WCSI model.

Prior to collaborating with HERA, extreme heat was not an organizational focus for JELI or HomeNet Thailand. In advance of the workshops, we worked with these partners to build their climate and heat understanding, equipping them with the knowledge needed to lead effective discussions. In doing so, we influenced a shift in partner organization priorities and action on climate-driven extreme heat while raising awareness among women workers.

Each WCSI country program begins by listening to women on the frontlines of extreme heat—understanding firsthand how it affects their health, livelihoods, and daily lives; building trust; and gaining community buy-in—to ground programming in their lived experiences. We work with our partners to design workshops that create a safe space for participants to share and an opportunity for learning.



Figure 1. Map of workshop locations in Thailand

"What makes (HERA) a unique partner is how this project strengthened our own ability—and our confidence—to lead on heat in a context where knowledge about and support for informal workers' heat adaptation is still limited. The workshops helped participants move beyond superficial climate knowledge and recognize heat as a nearby, serious threat."

– HomeNet Thailand

The Workshops

The workshops followed common approaches and goals that included:

- 1. Survey:** Determine participants' knowledge of climate change and the impacts of extreme heat on women's health and livelihoods.
- 2. Educate:** Provide participants with information on climate change, extreme heat, and the impact on health and livelihoods.
- 3. Listen:** Create space for participants to share their firsthand experiences with extreme heat.
- 4. Identify:** Capture locally-relevant solutions proposed by participants.
- 5. Assess:** Conduct a post-workshop survey to determine message resonance and engagement level among participants.

The Impacts of Extreme Heat on Women Informal Workers in Thailand

The workshops provided participants with a platform to tell their stories—at times revealing intimate details about their health and home life. Across trades, women disclosed their personal experiences of increased health challenges and lost income due to extreme heat, compounded by other socio-cultural realities such as increased caregiving and fear of sexual violence.

These findings are based on qualitative workshop data and partner-led surveys. While these insights provide critical evidence of the lived experiences of women informal workers, they are based on a specific sample of participants and may not be statistically representative of the entire informal workforce across Thailand.

Health Impacts

During the focus groups and workshops, women reported a range of acute and chronic health challenges directly linked to extreme heat. These included headaches, dizziness, fainting, heatstroke, nosebleeds, rashes, and in some cases, miscarriages. (Figure 2)

- **72 percent of workshop participants reported headaches.** Rates were higher (95 percent) among motorcycle taxi drivers, with 26 percent also reporting episodes of fainting.
- **Women reported painful heat rashes** that required the frequent use of cooling cloths and ointments to manage skin irritation.
- **Mental health challenges were widespread,** including irritability, anxiety, insomnia, and depression, particularly among women balancing paid labor with intensive caregiving roles.
- **Women motorcycle taxi drivers discussed menstruation-related hardships,** where excessive sweating made sanitary pads unbearable and a lack of clean toilets led to significant physical discomfort and body odor.

- **Financial trade-offs for personal care were common**, with some women forced to switch to more expensive tampons to remain mobile, shifting limited earnings away from other essential needs.
- **Women food stall workers reported increased urinary tract infections** as they avoided using the toilet during high-traffic hours to maximize sales and income.
- **Healthcare can cost between 3 and 10 times a woman's daily wage**, creating a significant barrier to receiving treatment for heat-related illnesses. Many participants found private insurance expensive, and the national healthcare plan's coverage for heat-related illnesses too limited. Women reported long wait times and clinic visits costing approximately 1,000 baht—frequently exceeding a full day's wage.

The Physical Breaking Point

Supaporn Charoenchaithawonchit (Koi), 42, Motorcycle Taxi Driver



Koi sits on her motorcycle at the stand, wipes the sweat from her face, and checks the weather forecast on her phone. For the 42-year-old driver, the heat is a physical barrier that dictates how much and how efficiently she can work.

"As soon as the weather gets hot, I start getting headaches and dizziness—I just can't keep driving. I have to rest... and some days, I can't go out at all," she shared.

During the record-shattering heat of April 2025, Koi hit a breaking point. Two months pregnant, she was being pushed beyond her limits. While working through the scorching Songkran festival, she began to experience severe abdominal pain and bleeding.

"The heat was unbearable... In the end, I miscarried," she shared.

Despite the trauma, she chose not to go to a hospital, fearing the medical costs and the loss of income from a long stay. Instead, she followed a pharmacy's advice, used warm compresses, and returned to work after just five days of rest.

The health of her family is also at the mercy of the thermometer. Back in her hometown, her 78-year-old disabled mother—who has suffered a broken leg and eye surgeries—struggles to breathe when the air turns stagnant.

"She's disabled and just sitting at home makes her exhausted—she already has trouble breathing," Koi noted, explaining why she had to buy a 5,000 baht air-cooling fan for her mother to cope.

To manage the constant physical strain, Koi and her husband rely on cooling towels, cold water, and over-the-counter medicines from pharmacies rather than formal healthcare.

For Koi, the extreme heat is not just an environmental condition; it is a direct threat to her health, physical endurance, and that of her family.

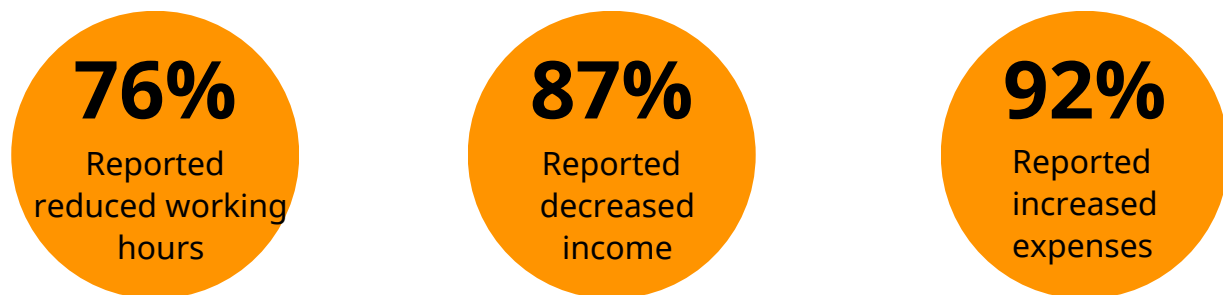
Financial Impacts

Many of the workshop participants live and provide for their families on daily wages and have little to no financial safety net. Even a slight decrease in income causes increased financial stress and pressure to continue working in dangerous conditions. With budgets already stretched thin, these costs and income losses further eroded the financial stability of households.

Women reported a range of impacts to their financial stability due to rising temperatures. (Figure 2)

- **Shellfish processors experienced a 75 percent income drop.** On hot days, daily earnings often plummeted from an average of 300-400 baht (USD 10-12) to as low as 100 baht (USD 3) as extreme heat caused rapid food spoilage and lost inventory.
- **Home weavers reported a 50 percent productivity loss** as workers experienced a sharp decline in output—such as a drop from 10 to 5 baskets a day—because extreme temperatures make labor impossible between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- **Motorcycle drivers saw a 50 percent cut in income**, with daily earnings slashed from 800 to 400 baht as drivers were forced to reduce hours during peak heat when passenger demand vanishes or conditions become too dangerous to operate.
- **Women reported electricity costs tripled**, as utility bills surged from increased air conditioning and fan usage during heatwaves, with a single month's bill consuming nearly an entire week's wages.
- **Water bills spiked 75–80 percent** as participants reported massive increases in water costs as families were forced to bathe more frequently to manage body temperature and prevent heat-related skin infections.
- **Domestic and garment workers experienced significant delays** as sewing and washing machines overheated, forcing them to complete labor-intensive tasks by hand in high temperatures.
- **Street vendors reported a direct hit to their bottom line** as increased spoilage and a lack of customers during the hottest parts of the day forced them to absorb the cost of wasted product.

Survey Results: Impacts of Heat on Workshop Participants



Rising Cost of Business

Benjawan Siriwetchnuaykit (Ben), 47 years old, Food Vendor



Ben sells Northern Thai cuisine in Chiang Rai. Her menu ranges from traditional sausage to cold-pressed juices. She sets up shop at the Walking Street Market every Saturday and at the Kon Muan Street Market every Sunday, both of which are bustling with people and popular tourist destinations. But no matter where she sets up, the weather has become a major factor in whether she'll make her sales targets.

"If it's blazing hot, some people just decide not to leave the house at all," she said.

Beyond the drop in customers, the heat also causes her costs to rise. Food made with coconut milk or fermented soybeans spoils more easily and vegetables wilt faster. Fruits lose weight and their skins dry out. She has to buy four sacks of ice instead of the usual

two just to keep her fruit cold.

"Our fruit has to be ice-cold—that's the only way it tastes truly refreshing."

She tried selling through delivery platforms, but she had to raise the prices of each dish by 35 percent to cover the cost of the delivery service.

"Customers really do order less. If I deliver the food myself, customers can get it at a different price—cheaper than ordering through the platform," remarked Ben.

However, delivering food in the hot weather affected her energy levels the rest of the day.

"When I got back home, I was so exhausted."

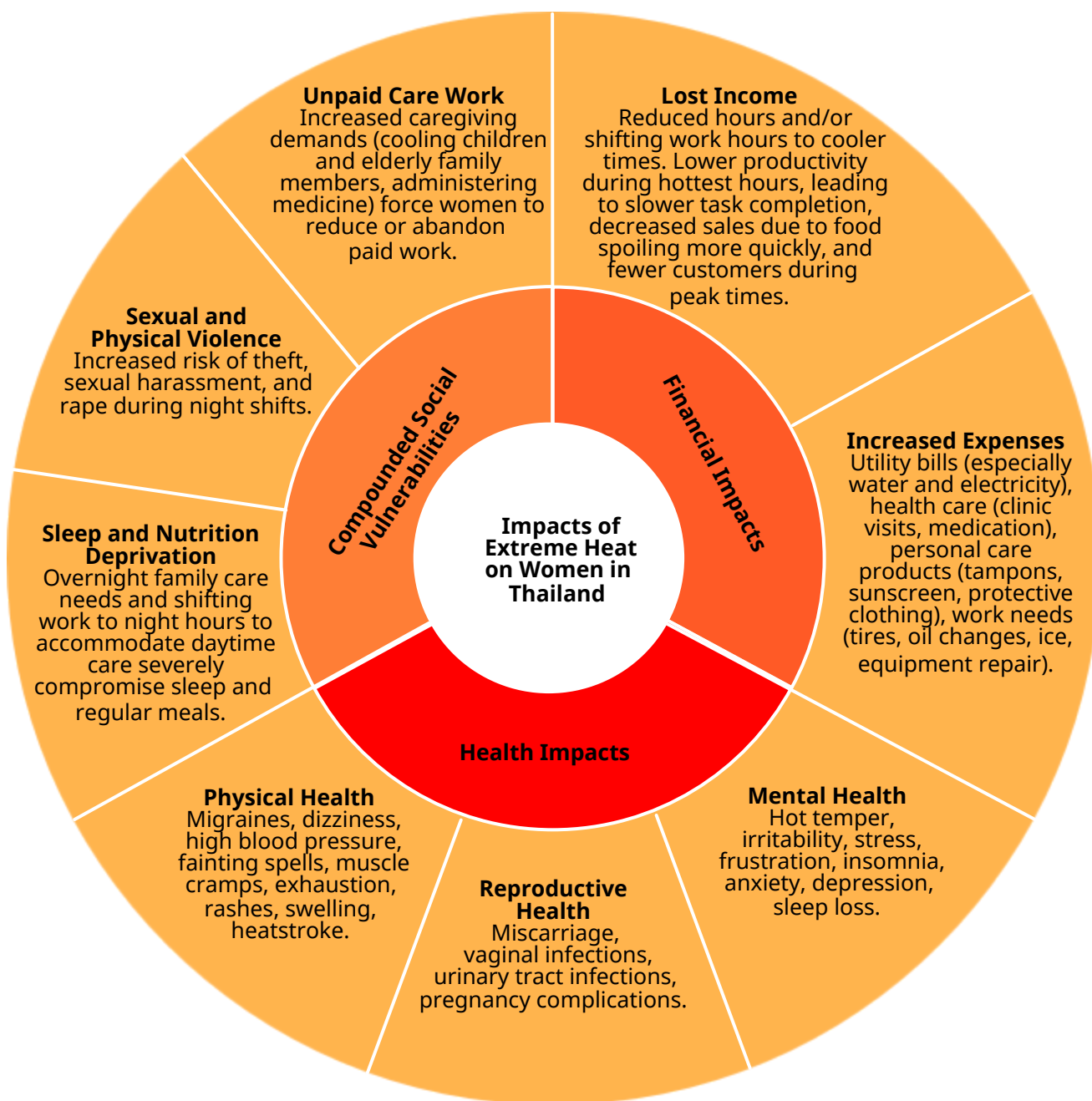
Compounded Social Vulnerabilities

Beyond health and financial strain, extreme heat exacerbates deep-seated societal issues that disproportionately affect women in the informal workforce. These socio-cultural realities, ranging from safety risks to invisible labor, create a "double burden" that traps women in cycles of exhaustion and vulnerability, and compounds underlying risks. Globally, women perform over 75 percent of unpaid care work—a factor that remains largely invisible in economic systems yet serves as a primary barrier to climate adaptation. (Figure 2)

- **Workshop participants faced heightened safety risks.** Women motorcycle taxi drivers reported facing increased risk of theft, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and rape as they worked night shifts to avoid the daytime heat. Their exposure to these risks increased as they worked more hours during the night to earn as much as they would during daytime shifts.
- **Workshop participants reported that extreme heat spikes their caregiving responsibilities** for children, the elderly, and even pets, often to the point where they have no time to address their own physical or mental health needs. Caregiving responsibilities also limit the time and opportunities available for paid employment and income generation, reducing a woman's financial security and ability to adapt to climate-related stresses.

- **A majority of the women fell into the “Exhaustion Trap.”** As both primary earners and caregivers, women frequently shift their labor to the night to both prevent spoilage and to care for heat-impacted family members during the day, like the shellfish worker who reported moving to night shifts solely to process her catch before it spoiled, while spending her daylight hours managing her children’s needs. Another woman described sacrificing income-generating hours to spend the hottest parts of the day wiping down children with heat rashes and tending to overheated elderly relatives. This “shift-working” eliminated opportunities for rest and sleep. Without access to maternity leave, childcare, or adequate financial safety net, workshop participants were forced to work in a state of total exhaustion during the most dangerous heat conditions.

Figure 2. The Impacts of Heat on Women in Thailand



The 24-hour Workday

Wanta Wilailak (Noi), 67 years old, Domestic Worker



Noi has worked as a domestic worker for nearly 30 years. After working a full day cleaning houses that leaves her on the verge of fainting, Noi's day is far from over.

She lives in Bangkok in the same household with her husband, son, daughter-in-law, and two granddaughters.

"After coming back from work, I still have to cook, take care of my husband, clean, and do the laundry myself. It's like working two rounds a day."

Noi is the primary caregiver for her husband who suffers from heart disease. The hot weather is especially tough on his health.

"In weather like this, my husband finds it even harder to breathe. I have to keep giving him water and move the fan around constantly.

I'm afraid he'll faint," said Noi.

Even though her son and daughter-in-law live with her, both work outside the home. This leaves most of the household burden on her shoulders, including caring for her two granddaughters. The children are affected by the heat, too. Their skin is more sensitive, often breaking out in rashes.

On scorching days, staying home with the two kids and her husband means triple the work — wiping down the children's bodies, taking care of her husband, and cleaning rooms to keep them from getting stuffy.

"Some days it feels like the whole day is spent taking care of others. I don't even get to sit down and rest. I'm overheated myself while also trying to protect everyone else."



Moving the Needle

At the outset of the workshops, many participants had a limited understanding of how climate change and extreme heat affected their health, daily income, and financial security. By the end of the sessions, however, participants reported significantly greater awareness of the impacts of extreme heat. This increased awareness serves as a critical catalyst for systemic change, mobilizing workers and organizations to recognize, prioritize, and act on heat—highlighting both the effectiveness of the workshops and the importance of heat and health literacy.

Shift in Climate Change Knowledge Among Workshop Participants

- 99% believed that extreme heat is a serious threat to their lives and livelihoods.
- 96% connected extreme heat to lost income, increased expenses, and health risks.
- 71% reported greater overall knowledge of climate change following the workshops.
- 70% gained a stronger understanding of how extreme heat affects workplaces and livelihoods.

Transferring Knowledge into Action

While systemic gaps exist, the workshops demonstrate how quickly awareness translates into life-saving adaptation. Petch, a food seller, community health volunteer, and workshop participant, shared how the training moved her from understanding the "why" of climate change to the "how" of daily survival. "We exchanged with friends that if the weather is extremely hot while working, just stop, rest, and stay under trees—it really helps to relax." Petch also shared the knowledge with her relatives, helping her and her family cope with heat safely.



Participants: Shaping Actionable Solutions

The workshops provided participants with an open forum to co-identify and co-create solutions that protect their health and income from the impacts of extreme heat. While participants revealed individual coping strategies for managing extreme heat, they expressed strong interest in broader adaptive and financial solutions, peer learning, and community-level investments that address the interconnected challenges of climate, health, and income insecurity.

Co-Designing Resilience: From Insights to Solutions

Through these conversations, the workshop participants moved beyond survival mode to solution generation. Their roadmap of action included infrastructure, cooling wear, communications, and financial protection solutions. We're advancing and mainstreaming heat solutions alongside government and other key actors to meet the needs of women on the front lines of extreme heat.

Communication and Engagement

- Increase heat literacy by investing in educational materials for community health workers and launching public awareness campaigns.
- Build an early warning system for extreme heat events that could be integrated into existing community networks and gig platform communication channels.
- Continue to share stories, learnings, and personal experiences with family, friends, and community members.

Workplace and Community Adaptations

- Integrate more cooling solutions into homes, workplaces, communities, and street markets, including drinking water stations, shaded rest areas, reflective paint that keeps buildings cooler, water sprays, and misters.
- Use protective gear, including cooling vests and wide-brimmed hats, to shield skin from UV exposure and actively regulate core body temperatures.

Financial Protection and Risk Transfer

- Co-design and deploy parametric insurance and/or direct cash assistance, triggered by predefined temperature thresholds, to offset lost income and help build financial resilience to extreme heat climate events.
- Introduce inclusive financial products through social security schemes, savings groups, climate-smart credit, and low-interest installment plans to boost the adaptive capacities of women, including the purchase of protective equipment, physical gear, and other cooling interventions to build the heat resilience of those hardest hit by heat.





Community Health Volunteers as Mobilizers

In November 2025, 20 community health volunteers participated in one of the workshops. Community health volunteers play an essential role in primary health care in Thailand. They talk to and educate the public on disease prevention, manage public health campaigns, conduct health surveys, and maintain family health records. During the workshop, they emphasized the need for training in identifying heat-related illnesses and care. They were interested in learning about heat-health risks. Investment in training and educational resources and working alongside community health volunteers could result in educating more women in Thailand on the impacts of extreme heat.

Fostering Continued Dialogue

The response to the workshops was overwhelmingly positive. Participants highlighted a desire to continue the conversations and recommended that HERA expand its education on extreme heat to reach more women in Thailand. Many reported feeling empowered and energized to share the information they learned with family and friends, and to bring new solutions to their communities.

In the months following the workshops, we continued working with HomeNet Thailand and JELI to disseminate heat-health messaging through their platforms, including social media channels such as Facebook and LINE.

- In partnership with HomeNet Thailand, posts generated a cumulative 28,830 views and 229 shares. Of these, 399 engagements focused on physiological and financial differences in heat impacts between men and women, while 117 engagements highlighted local resilience solutions, maintaining momentum on the climate-gender nexus.
- In partnership with JELI, outreach engaged more than 23,600 workers, at least 50 percent of which were women. The engagement took place primarily through a high-impact Facebook campaign that secured 22,607 views across 10 labor union and worker network groups. A follow-up poll conducted via LINE chat groups reached 744 members across five diverse worker networks, including women riders and labor activists. Results demonstrated high message retention, with

nearly all respondents correctly identifying heat-health risks and women showing notably higher awareness of gendered vulnerabilities.

Social media survey results after the workshops indicate increasing heat health literacy among participants:

- The women have retained their understanding of the impacts of extreme heat on health and livelihoods.
- They are making changes to their daily lives, including changing their work hours, reducing heat exposure, purchasing and using heat protection equipment, and improving the conditions of their home and workspaces.
- They are sharing the information with colleagues, friends, and neighbors.

Tailoring WCSI for Thailand

HERA is now scaling WCSI Thailand towards strategic deployment of heat solutions, leveraging our evidence and partnerships to expand the reach and impact of the program. This process evaluates

1) the foundational trust required for deep engagement, ensuring interventions are grounded in the lived expertise and localized needs of the women themselves; and 2) the heat-health and financial literacy, which serves as primary evidence of increasing community resilience.

Driven by high engagement and successful outcomes, we have transitioned to the next phase of WCSI in Thailand, moving from the foundational awareness stage to solution design and delivery. Building on our 2024 to 2025 efforts—which focused on documenting impacts, raising awareness, and co-designing solutions—we have now launched into our 2026 to 2028 programming to accelerate localized, gender-responsive interventions. These solutions, proposed directly by women, are integrated into our four core pillars: innovative financial tools, practical cooling, activated awareness, and regional leadership. We are positioned to begin testing these interventions in 2026.

Looking Forward

Building on the success and learnings from 2024 and 2025, over the next several years, we will continue to grow heat-health awareness, activating worker and community organizations, increase financial literacy, and raise women's voices while also creating, testing, and scaling heat solutions.

To do this, we are strengthening existing partnerships, forming new relationships, and engaging a broad ecosystem of partners spanning government, policy, research, labor, and community action. Ongoing engagement with HomeNet Thailand and initial conversations with the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA), Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI), Baan Dek Foundation, Asia Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), Yunus Thailand, International Labour Organization (ILO), urban planning academics, and heat-health and occupational stress researchers ensure our work is grounded in community needs and priorities and connected to larger national action and awareness.

Together, we will develop practical solutions that protect women's health and income, establishing WCSI Thailand as a model for climate adaptation and heat resilience across Southeast Asia.

Methodology

The findings, analysis, and recommendations presented in this report are informed through field-level engagement with women informal workers across Thailand between June and October 2025. This effort utilized a mixed-methods approach including surveys, workshops, and focus group discussions (FGDs) to build a bottom-up baseline of the lived experiences and impacts of extreme heat and vulnerability on women workers with heavy concentration on participatory observation.

Where specific wages or localized climate shocks are detailed, women provided first-person evidence from testimonials and case studies. In total, we engaged a total of 319 informal workers of which 299 were women informal workers across eight provinces in Thailand. The analysis from their survey responses, knowledge assessments, participation in the sessions, and detailed personal testimonies form the foundation for the chapters that follow.

Workshops and FGDs were co-designed and implemented by HERA and its community partners. Specific activities included:

- Six workshops engaging 195 participants (175 women) in Bangkok, Songkhla, Khon Kaen, Chiang Rai, and Nakhon Pathom.
- Twelve FGDs with 124 women workers (including migrant laborers) in Bangkok, Samut Songkhram, Nonthaburi, and Pathum Thani.

Women informal workers who participated in these sessions represented a wide range of trades including construction workers, agricultural laborers, platform delivery riders, massage therapists, domestic workers, home-based workers, motorcycle drivers, hairdressers and market and street vendors. Additional data collection via workshops and focus groups is ongoing in Thailand.



Endnotes

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Acknowledgements

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Visalaakshi Annamalai, Mary McBryde, Siriporn Biew Rathie, Meghan Snow, Catherine Wallace

Funding support

This report would not be possible without the generous support of the Prudence Foundation, the philanthropy arm of Prudential plc. The Foundation's purpose is to build community resilience across Asia and Africa focusing on two key areas: Financial Literacy & Inclusion, and Climate and Health Resilience.



Institutions contributing data and analyses

A special thanks to our partners—HomeNet Thailand Association and Just Economy and Labor Institute (JELI) – for the partnership that extended from 2024 through 2025.



Please cite this document as:

Weathering Change: How Extreme Heat is Reshaping Women's Lives in Thailand. 2026, HERA: (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

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About HERA

Dedicated to protecting the health, income, and dignity of women on the frontlines of extreme heat.



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