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GIG WORK ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS:

Case Study 4: Information-Sharing Platforms – Golden Dreams

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I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in digital work platforms that aggregate labor demand and supply. Less discussed but also relevant are digital platforms that provide information and support to workers to help address exploitative and unfair working conditions. This follows earlier and ongoing attempts to leverage new mobile and digital technologies to strengthen worker voices.¹ While many of these initiatives are still at a nascent stage, making it too early to judge their efficacy, some of the emerging literature points to their potential to empower workers.

Golden Dreams, developed by Issara Institute, is one such platform. Golden Dreams is a Burmese language app developed for migrant workers seeking job opportunities in Thailand. The app aims to “revolutionize safe migration, jobseeker empowerment, ethical sourcing due diligence, and anti-human trafficking.”² The app contains information about government-approved recruitment agencies, job opportunities, information about workers’ rights and entitlements, a helpline, tips for safe migration, and information about local health clinics and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It also allows users to rate recruitment agencies and employers. Issara Institute is a non-profit organization that works to improve labor conditions in global supply chains by strengthening worker voice mechanisms, partnerships, and innovation in Southeast Asia.

It is estimated that two to three million migrants from Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia live and work in Thailand. Over 80 percent are from Myanmar,³ though exact figures are difficult to ascertain because many workers are undocumented. In 2009, there were 1.3 million Burmese workers with work permits issued by the Thailand government.⁴ Burmese people have migrated into Thailand for decades, and not just for work—large numbers of persecuted minorities have taken refuge in Thailand. Early migrant workers were lured by the promise of higher earnings in Thailand’s industrial towns, and employers were happy to hire migrant workers because they were hard-pressed to find native workers willing to work in low-skill, low-wage jobs. The absence of industry or gainful employment opportunities drove Burmese workers to migrate from border towns to other countries.

¹ Rende Taylor, L., & Shih, E. (2019). Worker feedback technologies and combatting modern slavery in global supply chains: Examining the effectiveness of remediation-oriented and due-diligence-oriented technologies in identifying and addressing forced labour and human trafficking. *Journal Of The British Academy*, 7(1), 131-165. Retrieved from <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/journal-british-academy/7s1/worker-feedback-technologies-and-combatting-modern-slavery-in-global-supply-chains>.

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² Issara Institute. (n.d.). Golden dreams: A 'Yelp-like' smartphone app for Burmese and Cambodian workers. Retrieved September 18, 2019, from <https://www.issarainstitute.org/issara-labs>.

³ Pollock, J., & Lin Aung, S. (2010). Critical times: Gendered implications of the economic crisis for migrant workers from Burma/Myanmar in Thailand. *Gender & Development*, 18(2), 213-227. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13552074.2010.491324?journalCode=cgde20>.

⁴ Ibid.

2. RESEARCH QUERY

2.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to understand the role of information-sharing platforms for worker agency, rights, and employment conditions, this study examines the case of Golden Dreams. Do information-sharing platforms like Golden Dreams successfully facilitate workers' understanding of their rights and their ability to organize? Are social media tools effective in improving workers' agency and access to information? How does the use and efficacy of such platforms compare with other more commonly used social media tools?

2.2 ABOUT GOLDEN DREAMS

Golden Dreams was launched in 2017 and currently has over 14,000 registered users. It is available for download on the Google Play Store for Android phone users. The platform began as a hotline number for jobseekers or migrant workers and grew into a standalone app with additional features. The platform publishes a variety of resources that are helpful to jobseekers, such as listings of government-approved recruitment agencies, openings for job opportunities, news and current affairs from Myanmar relevant for migrant workers, a list of dos and don'ts for jobseekers, and a hotline for workers. The app allows users to rate companies and recruitment agencies and leave comments about their experiences. Users can sign up using their Facebook account or by creating an account within the app itself. Users seem to find out about the platform primarily through Issara Institute's Facebook page or through trainings or workshops conducted by the civil society organizations (CSOs) with which Issara Institute partners. Issara Institute Myanmar's Facebook page has a large following with over 100,000 likes and strong engagements related to migrant workers and job opportunities.

Issara Institute maintains strong network ties with CSOs and NGOs in Myanmar that work on issues related to human trafficking, safe migration, worker welfare, and child welfare. Issara Institute supports these organizations financially and facilitates activities in the form of workshops and trainings that are beneficial for jobseekers. Partner CSOs appoint ambassadors or community members to act as resource persons or points of contact with jobseekers, migrant workers, and families of migrant workers. CSOs and ambassadors encourage jobseekers and migrant workers to use the Golden Dreams app, and include a segment in their trainings and workshops on how to download and use the app. It is not uncommon for family members, usually spouses or parents, of migrant workers to attend these workshops and then relay the information to their family members who are away.

2.3 METHOD AND LIMITATIONS

We conducted a review of secondary literature and spoke with labor market and migration experts to understand the context of migration from Myanmar to Thailand and the challenges workers face. Following this research, we reached out to Issara Institute to explain the motivations and goals of the app and connect us to its users.

Issara Institute facilitated contact with five Golden Dreams users who were seeking work but had not yet found a job.⁵ We interviewed four users in person and one user over the phone. The five jobseekers we interviewed were male and between the ages of 24 and 36. Four respondents left school before they obtained a high school degree, and one had a bachelor's degree. Three had previously worked in agriculture on family-owned farms, and one worked on a family-owned textile business. They were all first-time migrant jobseekers. One respondent had found a job through the Golden Dreams app and was leaving for Thailand soon. The other respondents were looking for jobs in plastic factories and the food packaging industry. We spoke to workers about a range of issues, including previous jobs, wages, their experiences looking for work through recruitment agencies, their motivations for looking for work in other countries, the way they use the app, and changes they expect to see on the app.

We also spoke to representatives from four CSOs who are members of Issara Institute's network. The CSOs work closely with jobseekers in communities, encourage jobseekers to use Golden Dreams, and are familiar with issues users may face with the app. We hoped that speaking with them would give us insight into how jobseekers and migrant workers use the app. We interviewed representatives from the following CSOs:

- **Association of Labor and Development:** Works on social development for farmers and factory workers with a network all over the country and provides safe migration workshops in communities where they are active.
- **Friendly Child:** Focuses on issues around human trafficking and social protection, counsels victims, provides resources, and helps victims with official procedures for redressal.
- **Confederation of Trade Unions of Myanmar (CTUM):** Provides safe migration trainings, courses, and counseling, and runs a migrant resource center in North Dagon, a border town.
- **Ratna Mahal:** Works largely in the area of child protection and safe migration that caters to children vulnerable to trafficking from Myanmar and migrant workers' children, and conducts safe migration and pre-departure trainings.

The CSOs' representatives work closely with jobseekers and families of migrant workers in areas where migration is prevalent. We also spoke to an additional CSO that is not part of Issara Institute's network to gauge the situation of Burmese migrant workers in Thailand and their organizing efforts.

Through one of the CSOs, we met two ambassadors—workers or trainers from communities with large migrant worker populations or jobseekers who undertake community engagement activities on behalf of the CSOs. From these respondents, we gathered insights on user engagement with the Golden Dreams app and issues that migrant workers, their families, and current jobseekers face.

Informant access for this case study proved to be more difficult than expected. We were advised to conduct our fieldwork in Myanmar rather than Thailand, because once in Thailand workers are dispersed across the country, often in remote areas, and only available on Sundays. The Issara team suggested that many workers return to Myanmar and we might be able to meet them there. However,

⁵ The interview sample size of three to five people is a standard practice in the field of user experience (UX) research in the early stages of application development.

this proved unfeasible—most of the workers that we connected with through Issara Institute were still looking for work, and the workers they knew who had found work had not returned to Myanmar, at least at the time of our visit. Workers were also unaware of other app users and were thus unable to recommend other informants. Not being able to speak to workers in Thailand who had successfully migrated was a significant limitation of this study. We also spoke to the Issara Institute team in Myanmar and Lisa Rende Taylor, the founder of Issara Institute, about the intended goals, difficulties, and future possibilities of the app. We requested that Issara Institute connect us to workers in Thailand whom we could speak with remotely to share testimonials from workers who had successfully migrated to Thailand, but at the time of writing we are still awaiting this information.

The further constraint was that only five to seven days in the field were available for this case study. This made it significantly harder to access workers, particularly as they are spread across the country, and uptake of the app is still in the early stages. The small sample size consulted for this case study poses obvious limitations for its generalizability, and we were unsuccessful in our attempts to reach more workers through Issara Institute and the CSO network. However, these cases studies were not intended to be in-depth examinations of the specific platforms and their causal impacts. Rather, our aim was generating an initial set of insights that could prove useful for further policy and research. Toward this end, despite the small sample size, we were able to achieve a “good enough” understanding of the likely issues and opportunities presented by this platform at this stage.

3. THREE WAYS TO MIGRATE TO THAILAND

Since 2003, the Myanmar and Thai governments have had a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)⁶ to recruit Burmese workers in various sectors in Thailand, including fishing, packaged food, garment-making, construction, and plastics. The MoU channel, which only came into full effect in 2009, seeks to ensure that workers are paid a minimum wage, are protected from human trafficking, have access to grievance redressal mechanisms against unfair employers, have decent working conditions, and can access assistance from the Ministry of Labour when needed.

Jobseekers are encouraged to apply for jobs through the MoU process because it seeks to ensure workers these protections. Workers who go through the MoU process are charged an official fee set by the government and are assisted by officially approved recruitment agencies. The Ministry of Labour in Myanmar periodically releases a list of government-approved recruitment agencies through which jobseekers are advised to apply for jobs. Recruitment agencies play a crucial role in the pipeline, linking workers, employers, and the government. It is the responsibility of the recruitment agency to arrange job interviews, negotiate salary and working hours on behalf of workers, and help workers with documentation requirements. However, workers are meant to apply for and receive their work permits from employers upon reaching their workplace in Thailand. Recruitment agencies are also usually the first point of contact for workers when facing problems with employers, and workers usually approach recruitment agencies when they face issues with their employers before taking them up with official channels like the labor tribunal.

Despite the benefits and resources offered by the MoU channel, few migrant workers follow it. Most workers migrate through irregular channels. Workers are likely to migrate irregularly in one of two ways. The first is by using the services of a “broker,” a middleman who assists jobseekers in finding employment opportunities and facilitating their move, much like a recruitment agency. However, brokers are known to charge jobseekers exorbitant fees, sometimes three to four times the official amount, taking advantage of vulnerable jobseekers and placing them in exploitative and squalid conditions—if they find positions for jobseekers at all. Jobseekers who use the services of brokers are unlikely to have their required documentation in place, nor are they likely to receive help from brokers should they face any problems once they reach the destination country. Although the government warns against the use of brokers to migrate, jobseekers turn to them because the processes of finding work, getting a passport and work permits, and negotiating salaries are poorly understood.

The majority of migrant workers, as Jacqueline Pollack of the International Labour Organization (ILO) told us, simply cross over the border by themselves. This is especially common for jobseekers who live in border towns or whose family members or friends have gone to Thailand previously. In these cases, jobseekers plan to stay with friends or family and look for employment opportunities through these contacts. Because cross-border migration has taken place for decades and some Burmese workers have lived in Thailand for over 10 years, migrant workers have created their own support systems—schools, clinics, and cultural events—and those migrating to more populous migrant areas in Thailand stand to benefit from these support systems even if they are not protected by official channels. In fact, workers

⁶ A Memorandum of Understanding is a non-binding document detailing a mutual understanding and intended common line of action between two parties; in this case, between two countries.

who go through official channels are sometimes more isolated because they are sent to factories and areas that may not already have a thriving migrant worker population.⁷

Though the Golden Dreams app is primarily intended to provide information on formal and official modes of migration, the app is still relevant to migration for all three channels. The app implicitly encourages migrants to seek formal channels by providing valuable information and resources. However, Golden Dreams also serves as a complementary tool for informal migrants who can still access its benefits without fully utilizing official channels. Migrant workers are officially meant to return to Myanmar after two years of working to renew their documents and apply for new work permits. However, this is not usually the case; workers stay on or switch jobs, having achieved some level of familiarity with other workers and other places of potential employment.

⁷ Interview with Jacqueline Pollack.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 USEFUL INFORMATION, BUT (S)LOW UPTAKE

The workers we spoke to found out about the Golden Dreams platform primarily through Facebook, a very popular social media platform in Myanmar. Some had seen it on the Issara Institute Facebook page, while others had seen ads for the platform on Facebook and downloaded the app to access potential leads for jobs abroad. The app contains five broad categories of information: a list of approved recruitment agencies and employers that workers can rate; job postings; information about workers' rights, entitlements, policies, and resources like local NGOs and clinics; a helpline number; and current affairs news from Myanmar.

We found that respondents engaged with the different categories of information at different capacities, using some parts of the app more than others. Respondents reported finding posts about job opportunities the most useful. This was the section of the app that respondents engaged with most frequently. This feature eased the process for jobseekers, especially first-time jobseekers who were unsure of the process or resources to look for jobs.

Although respondents found the section with details of recruitment agencies useful, they admitted that they rarely left reviews or engaged with other users in the comment section. The Issara Institute team members supported this observation, noting that workers tend not to review recruitment agencies unless they've had a particularly bad experience, and even in such cases they prefer to call the helpline to leave feedback.

"I've never left a comment or a review. I haven't faced any issue with recruiters or employers so I have nothing to say."

The Issara Institute team reported that workers frequently use the "helpline" and that it provides a sense of security. None of the workers we spoke to had experience with the helpline, but they did acknowledge it as an important resource.

"I've shared the helpline number with people in my village so they can call someone in case of an emergency."

Overarching challenges such as poor connectivity and low levels of digital literacy as well as specific problems with the app have made the uptake of Golden Dreams quite slow among jobseekers and migrant workers. Users complained that Golden Dreams was slow to load and sometimes difficult to access. Although internet penetration in the country stands at 33.1 percent, 29 percent of which are Facebook users,⁸ rural areas in Myanmar still have poor connectivity. Some users had difficulty signing up to the app and navigating the different pages. Facebook has a special version for feature phones that is easier to download and use. Issara Institute similarly plans to update the app to make it easier for workers to access, with an option for offline use.

⁸ Internet World Stats. (2019). Asia marketing research, internet usage, population statistics and Facebook subscribers. Retrieved September 18, 2019, from <https://www.internetworldstats.com/asia.htm>.

CSO representatives mentioned that they usually include a segment in their workshops in which they download and operate the app in order to demonstrate its functionality to workshop attendees. However, they are sometimes hard-pressed to find users with a proper phone and internet connectivity. This is because, they explained, many people in Myanmar use cloned phones—phones assembled with sometimes duplicate parts—that do not have full functionality. Apps are transferred through third party software, which sometimes results in faulty installation. This may explain why the number of users stated by Issara Institute (14,000) does not match the number of downloads on Google Play (5,000).

“Most people in villages use cloned phones so it’s hard for them to download the app. And also, the app takes a long time to load so people get frustrated.”

However, CSOs and ambassadors did note that even if only one member of the community is able to access the app, that person shares the information with other community members. Rende Taylor informed us that the updated app will operate on as many operating systems and phone models as possible.

4.2 LESS CHEATING, MORE RELIABLE AND INTEGRATED INFORMATION

Jobseekers found the app useful for two main reasons: 1) the job opportunities posted on the platform, and 2) the information on government-approved recruitment agencies. With this information available on an app, workers save the time and resources they would have to otherwise spend travelling to Yangon to gain access to verified and reliable information.

“The app tells me about job opportunities, and I don’t have to come to Yangon and waste a day looking for brokers and agencies. I can just apply for the job or go straight to the official agency.”

Currently, jobseekers are only shown opportunities, and they must contact either the employers or the recruitment agency to apply for the job. The Issara Institute team informed us that, in response to user feedback, an update to the app will allow jobseekers to apply for job opportunities directly from the app.

Unlike some brokers who charge exorbitant fees, workers were happy to connect to reliable recruitment agencies that charge less and are more reliable.

“Before, the broker was charging me more than double, but when I went to the agency they asked for much less.”

However, jobseekers have become so normalized to scams by brokers and untrustworthy agencies that there were some jobseekers who were suspicious of the lower official price charged by recruitment agencies to help workers obtain the necessary documentation. Recruitment agencies that are on the official list charge rates set by the government. One CSO representative relayed an incident where some jobseekers approached an official recruitment agency and were surprised that their rates were much lower than what some brokers had quoted. Convinced that the official recruitment agencies were running a scam, they decided to go with the brokers instead, whom they felt were charging a more appropriate rate.

“The jobseekers were charged much less than what the brokers were asking for, so they thought that was a scam. They left and went with the broker instead because they did not realize what the official rates really are.”

4.3 ENCOURAGING SAFE AND OFFICIAL MIGRATION; INFORMING IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Because the platform only has information about official channels of migration, it invariably encourages migration through official channels. The feature where job opportunities are posted is particularly useful for jobseekers planning to migrate because the jobs posted there are from verified sources, thereby prompting jobseekers to use official channels. The app encourages jobseekers to approach recruitment agencies that are on the official list published by the government.

However, as noted earlier, most workers still prefer irregular migration channels, as these may be cheaper and take less time. This was corroborated by the labor market and migration experts we spoke with in Myanmar. A jobseeker crossing the border irregularly to stay with family will not have to pay fees to a broker or recruitment agency or wait for paperwork to be processed. The jobseekers we spoke to seemed well aware of the perils and risks of irregular migration. However, having family members or friends from the village already settled in the destination country seemed to soothe their worries. Because the app provides some basic information around safe migration, such as how to apply for a work permit or the availability of a hotline number, it can make the migration a better-informed process even for jobseekers using irregular channels. One jobseeker we spoke to was planning to stay with his family members once he got to Thailand. He was confident he'd be introduced by his relatives to a suitable workplace. He used the app to get information on the process of migration and the documents he would need, like applying for a passport and a work permit once he got there.

“I have family and I will go stay with them on a tourist visa. Once I find a job I'll get a work permit and whatever else I need.”

However, some jobseekers did note that the contact information for agencies was not up-to-date and the addresses published sometimes did not match the actual locations, which wasted their time.

“The only problem is sometimes that address on the app is not accurate. We come to Yang on for one day to look for the agency and then we spend the whole time looking for the agency's office because it is wrong. This needs to be checked.”

Inaccurate information on Golden Dreams was one of the shortcomings that users reported. This could possibly be because information posted by the recruitment agencies either on the official list or publicly has not been updated to reflect changes. When asked about changes or improvements to the app that they would find helpful, all of them stated they would like to see accurate information about employers and recruitment agencies and more job opportunities.

4.4 FAMILIARITY MATTERS—SUPPLEMENTING EXISTING INFORMATION CHANNELS

According to the jobseekers, CSO representatives, and ambassadors we interviewed, jobseekers and migrant workers rarely use one single platform. Various Facebook pages were popular among workers

and jobseekers. Among these, Issara Institute’s Myanmar Facebook page and Safe Migration, the Myanmar government’s official page, were among the most widely used by jobseekers and migrant workers alike. Both pages post similar content: job opportunities; rights and entitlements of workers in different countries; resources for hospitals, clinics, local NGOs, and childcare; and dos and don’ts for migrating safely. The two pages also share each other’s posts, amplifying the message about safe migration and workers’ rights.

“I use Facebook to find information. I read the posts and the comments. Sometimes people comment about their experience, so I find this helpful.”

Jobseekers and migrant workers access information on the Golden Dreams platform in addition to information shared on other Facebook pages. One CSO representative shared with us:

“There are many Facebook pages and platforms that share information for safe migration, about recruitment agencies, and brokers, but Golden Dreams is just one of the better ones. Workers use multiple channels and after a while they realize where they are getting accurate information from.”

The jobseekers and migrant workers we interviewed stated that they find Facebook an easier platform to access than the Golden Dreams app. This is probably because users are already familiar with the Facebook interface, and for people with low levels of digital literacy, Facebook is easier to navigate than a whole new app with a different interface. The multiple problems jobseekers face in accessing the Golden Dreams app also informed their preference for Facebook. Jobseekers are likely to continue using Facebook as one of their primary sources of information because they are already using this platform and familiar with the interface. However, this may not be the best option, as Facebook faces growing criticism for compromising user privacy and amplifying misinformation.

CSOs also conduct information-sharing workshops and training sessions about safe migration within villages. Issara Institute depends on these CSOs to build awareness of the app and its usage. Even in cases of conflict with employers, the CSO representatives we interviewed stated that workers prefer reaching out to a local CSO rather than an official government channel. Workers are likely to feel more comfortable and trusting of local organizations that cater to their needs and are embedded within their communities.

Offline and online initiatives are thus used in combination. Digital interventions like Golden Dreams and Facebook pages coupled with traditional methods of information sharing—through workshops, trainings, and word-of-mouth—are used to teach jobseekers about safe migration, job opportunities, and their rights and entitlements.

5. CONCLUSION

This case study sought to understand if and how information-sharing platforms such as Golden Dreams can improve worker agency, rights, and employment conditions. The small sample of interviews poses obvious limitations to conclusively answering these questions.⁹ Nonetheless, the aim of the study was to generate a set of initial hypotheses for policy research and action, rather than an in-depth analysis. Toward this end, even the small number of interviews we were able to conduct were deeply informative and valuable.

Golden Dreams has been helpful in encouraging safe migration among Burmese workers by collecting and publishing reliable information from official sources to the platform. By virtue of publishing only verified information, jobseekers using the app are prompted to go through official channels. Even for workers who continue to use irregular migration channels, the app can act as an important source of information. The community of support and information provided by Golden Dreams is an important tool. While local CSOs have traditionally addressed some of these needs, the availability of a digital tool that is remotely accessible, reliable, and updated is an added and valuable benefit. As migration experts interviewed for this study have noted, exploitation of migrant workers by brokers, recruitment agencies, and employers is extremely underreported.¹⁰ There exists a major information gap that leaves migrant workers with little agency. Information provided on Golden Dreams helps to fill the gap and is a good start to effecting change in the migrant worker ecosystem. Issara Institute's theory of change is to put pressure on global chains from the top. Businesses, eager to comply with global norms and standards, have put pressure on factories, who in turn are forcing recruitment agencies to change their method of functioning. Rende Taylor was hopeful that this would cause behavioral change among players in the supply chain.

While Facebook pages deliver similar information, Golden Dreams attempts to consolidate information related to migration from official sources, CSOs on the ground, their own verified content, and a direct hotline to help those in distress. Facebook is still the more used platform, but this might change as Issara Institute rolls out a newer version of the app. Issara Institute is assembling greater safeguards for user privacy and information verification, which will be critical in making the app a safer and more reliable conduit than Facebook.

However, the app is still in its early stages and uptake is currently limited. For the time being, most workers continue to rely on informal networks of support. Those with family or friends are more likely to cross the border through irregular channels and depend on existing networks for social support. Regions with a large and mature population of migrant workers have created support systems like clinics, childcare centers, and cultural events to offer maximum support to new migrants. Jobseekers who go through official channels can end up in isolated places with little access to these support networks. These practices will take a long time to transform.

However, the Golden Dreams example does nonetheless illustrate how digital platforms can be used to aggregate not just labor demand and supply, but also information for workers. This is particularly

⁹ A large enough sample size to draw definitive conclusions would require interviewing many more workers, perhaps even employing a survey method, and a longer frame of fieldwork to accomplish.

¹⁰ Interview with Jacqueline Pollack of ILO and Stephen Campbell.

important for low-wage workers, for whom accessing and verifying information is both time-consuming and costly. In this sense, Golden Dreams is a story of potential and promise, one that is leveraging the spread of basic mobile and internet technologies to improve conditions for workers. The Issara Institute is working to develop a newer version of the app that is better suited to worker needs and usage patterns. The updated version of the app will have offline functionality and allow recruitment agencies to post verified job opportunities to the platform. Workers will be able to apply to these jobs directly and securely. There are also plans to include other Southeast Asian countries in the updated app.

Three further points are worth noting. First, the Golden Dreams case highlights how offline and online strategies are both necessary. Poor connectivity, low digital literacy skills, and the lack of access to reliable devices makes it unlikely that a digital-only approach to information sharing will be adequate. Golden Dreams works with trusted CSOs, many of whom are members of the community, to spread the word about Golden Dreams and build the trust of workers. With in-person demonstrations of the app during trainings and workshops, ambassadors and CSO partners can encourage users to download and use the app, thereby ensuring organic uptake.

Second, Golden Dreams highlights the importance of local embeddedness. Golden Dreams' relevance to workers and its adoption and growth are factors of understanding the local context and having deep ties within the local community. It suggests that technology interventions are likely to be appropriate and successful when they are motivated by an understanding of local context and work alongside other local actors. This embeddedness within local contexts is necessary for appropriate solutions, but also suggests that the Golden Dreams model cannot be simply duplicated by other platforms or contexts and that strong local ties will be important for success.

Third, the Golden Dreams example demonstrates how technological interventions must be problem-led rather than technology-led. In other words, a careful and appropriate diagnosis of the problem or issue at hand should determine the choice of technological intervention, not the other way around. The application of the latest or most advanced technology is unlikely to yield desired results unless there is a good match between the problem and the technological solution.

But will interventions like Golden Dreams improve worker rights or bargaining power? Rights need corresponding duty bearers; while an app like Golden Dreams can inform workers of their rights, the path to ensuring the fulfilment of those rights is far more complicated. Issues faced by workers are systemic, and improving working conditions will require the coordinated efforts of a wide range of stakeholders and actors. Yet, an app like Golden Dream can nonetheless increase worker access to information about their rights and opportunities for safer work. This is critical in the context of the current information asymmetry. The question of their bargaining power is somewhat more complicated because it also depends on the extent to which companies and governments are susceptible to pressure from workers. Here, the Issara Institute's theory of change becomes relevant—collecting worker experiences and information could be used to exert supply chain pressure and bring about behavioral change in companies. Workers need the support of organizations like Issara Institute to bring about this change, amplify their voices and concerns, and put pressure on businesses.

Finally, regarding the comparison with other social media platforms, it is important to have non-commercial spaces or platforms that are safe and fundamentally aligned with worker needs rather than commercial interests. While most workers currently use Facebook, this does raise questions about user privacy, data use, and algorithmic amplification on social media platforms. This is particularly a concern

in a country like Myanmar where institutional capacities for regulating data use and manipulation are weakly developed and can be used to the disadvantage of the community, as witnessed by the recent controversy over the role of Facebook in the Rohingya persecution.¹¹

¹¹ Wong, J. (2019, February 7). 'Overreacting to failure': Facebook's new Myanmar strategy baffles local activists. Retrieved October 10, 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2019/feb/07/facebook-myanmar-genocide-violence-hate-speech>.

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