

# **Reconsidering Social Protection for Motorcycle Taxi Drivers: Understanding Precarity in Formalized Informality**

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**ABSTRACT—**: This article's central argument is that as a consequence of ride-hailing applications (apps), formalized informality has emerged among motorcycle taxi drivers (MTDs). The aim is to provide preliminary recommendations for reconsidering social protection (SP) for MTDs. Platformization and practices of precarising formality through formal-informal interaction are reviewed, as well as employment status and other different forms of employment. MTDs are unevenly matched in power relations dominated by the government and non-government officials, insecurity and uncertainty related to job precarity results. Several critical SP issues are discussed including: the distinction between formality and informality and the related inability to divide the two economies, insofar as formality merges with informality through what may be termed formalized informality; in addition, the nature of society dependent on precariousness, through new groups of structural vulnerability in the informal economy due to novel digital platform production; and finally, employment forms; including standard and non-standard work. These pose barriers to formalization approaches, leading to the impossibility of designing a single standard SP system for the future of such work.

Keywords : Social protection, Motorcycle taxi drivers, Formalized informality, Precarity, Ride-hailing applications (apps).

## **Introduction**

The boundary between formality and informality is becoming increasingly blurred and ambiguous. In terms of the future of labor, this affects platform workers, who informalize employment relationships by self-employment. Due to the proliferation of short-term jobs, including precarious employment, referred to as the new augmented workforce from innovative business platform expansion, this type of work is precarious (Arnold & Bongiovi, 2013; ILO, 2016; Lee, Swider & Tilly, 2020; Rani, 2020). Motorcycle taxi drivers (MTDs) are required to register with the government and follow all applicable laws. However, an informal arrangement, not covered by the law, has been created for the selling of unofficially manufactured vests. To resolve such contradictions, this study focuses on approaches using concepts of informality and precarity.

The goal is to examine MTDs who have become informal workers as a result of ride-hailing applications (apps), and to determine if some MTDs are unable to shift to occupational adaptability due to digital capacity gaps and regulatory weakness. Before the emergence of platformization in 2016, MTDs had difficulty in obtaining social protection (SP) in the informal economy. Additionally, the rapidly increasing platform economy creates friction between the Department of Land Transport (DLT), platform corporations, and ride-hailing drivers (RHDs). Most MTDs have a hybrid status, relying on apps or other jobs for access to SP more than any other purpose. SP is a human rights instrument and a mechanism for enhancing social security. Thailand's SP provides assistance schemes based on need, and charity-based approaches ill-adapted to manage the precarious formalities in the life cycle.

SP is required in this situation because it represents a new development paradigm in the context of globalization and neoliberalism. This policy approach was designed in accordance with United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Deacon, 2013; 2016). Since 1999, the International Labor Organization (ILO) has promoted a Decent Work Agenda (ILO,

1999). When the United States of America (USA) was affected by the financial crisis of 2007–2008, SP again played a critical role, expanding to Europe. In 2010, a Social Protection Floor (SPF) framework was designed, based on principles of basic needs, income security, and employment services (ILO, 2010).

Since 2012, Thailand has collaborated with the UN on SP development, as made available to member states through the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) as a framework for domestic social policy development (ILO & United Nations Country Team in Thailand, 2013). In collaboration with the ILO, the Thai government presented SP programs, including universal healthcare and pension coverage (ILO, 2019). During the Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the World Bank studied SP instruments such as social assistance, social insurance, and labor market programs in the context of Thailand's high level of informality. It was concluded that the absence of SP in crisis situations is a top priority for risk management among informal workers (World Bank Thailand, 2021).

## **Motorcycle Taxi Drivers Transitioning from Informality to Precarity**

### **The Motorcycle Taxi Driver Predicament**

Despite the fact that the National Statistical Office (NSO) gathered data on 20.4 million informal workers, or 55% of the labor force, who work in agriculture, fisheries, and farming, MTDs are omitted from Thai research on informal workers. Unprotected by labor laws and unable to obtain adequate social security benefits, informal workers endure unsatisfactory working conditions (National Statistical Office, 2020). Most informal workers are classified by occupational status. HomeNet Thailand, founded in 1999 as a non-governmental organization (NGO) to support home-based workers across the Kingdom, distinguished different groups of workers as domestic, home-based, street vendors, and MTDs. By comparison, other nations exclude MTDs from the

category of informal workers, while including waste pickers. This determination is made according to individual national labor market participation (Orleans Reed et al., 2017).

Published statistics indicate that in 2020, there were 84,889 MTDs and 5,564 motorcycle taxi parking spots. (DLT, 2021). Due to the omnipresence of this profession, it behoves researchers to examine related informal occupational characteristics, formalized by motorcycle licensing, service standards, and safety and speed limits (Phun, Kato & Chalermpong, 2019; Kasemsukworarat, 1990). Ride-hailing apps used to connect passengers with drivers prove customer demand from urban dwellers and their impact on professional stakeholders. During the 2000s, former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra limited the establishment of illegal stations and motorcycle taxi vest purchases, but features of the grey economy have since become a source of capital accumulation for influential government and local political stakeholders (Sengers, 2016; Sopranzetti, 2014; 2021).

MTDs register vehicles with the DLT and passenger services with the City Law Enforcement Section, demonstrating informality concealed inside formality, or what might be termed formalized informality. As security officials supervise groups of influential people, unregistered drivers are prevalent at each station and vest purchases have become widespread. As a result, this employment is a hybrid of informality and formality, owing to the precarious nature of life and work, which involves risks, insecurities, and uncertainties. It also contains implications for technological development and occupational adaptability in an age of platformization (Standing, 2018a; 2018b).

### **Interaction of Formality and Informality**

Since the 1960s, in developing nations, the formal-informal distinction has served as a global North-South and urban-rural divider. The histories of Kenya and Ghana provided insight into the background of these difficulties, as well as discourse development by the ILO and other UN organizations (ILO, 1972; Hart, 1973; Singer, 1970; Benanav, 2019). The informal sector is a relatively new con-

cept, introduced by the ILO in the 1970s. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s it remained relatively unfamiliar in Thailand. Only in the late 1990s did Thai academics and practitioners finally begin to acknowledge the urban informal sector and advocate for significant human resource development (National Economic and Social Development Board, 1988).

The International Conference of Labor Statisticians (ICLS), the global standard-setting body of labor statisticians, defines informality as a discourse. For example, the 20th ICLS discussed varied types of work and employment relationships, as well as how using a single standard of classification problematically impacted national statistics administration capacity to cover all forms of work. Along these lines, the independent contractor employment status classification would include employers, own-account workers, and unpaid domestic workers. Delivery services, often referred to as the gig economy, are multi-party employment arrangements in which individuals lacking autonomy are defined as algorithmically managed dependent workers (ILO, 2018). Given that the Ministry of Labor (MOL) must include new types of employment, platform firms have tried to avoid ascribing employee status to subcontractors or part-time workers.

Neoliberal rhetoric has emphasized employment informalization during insecure and uncertain times. Critical considerations for analyzing the Thai context include defining the term informal, as distinct from the term outside the system. This refers to the worker's status as unemployed, with a detrimental effect on access to social insurance as well as labor market exclusion and discrimination (Hewison & Tularak, 2013). Although the labor administration and law categorize workers as informal, this principle was not established by the National Statistical Office or the MOL. Instead, it is a principle for data collection and analysis established by the ICLS, a classification standard including descriptions of categories, employment types, and work relationship statistical variants (ILO, 2018).

### **Transitioning from Informality to Precarity**

Precarious work is a term widely used in varied contexts, although mostly associated with academic interpretations, leaving prac-

titioners unfamiliar with related concepts and approaches (Choonara, 2020). This article argues that MTDs face precarity, sometimes referred to as precarious work, as a result of occupational power dynamic. Precarity and informality are frequently used interchangeably to refer to job characteristics associated with non-standard employment, such as part-time work, temporary agency jobs, multi-party employment, and self-employment, as opposed to standard employment such as permanent contracted labor (Rodgers, 1989; Kalleberg, 2000; ILO, 2016). Precarity is a natural state of society, and terms such as vulnerability and marginality are commonplace in discussing the informal economy (Yadav, 2021).

Following globalization in the 1970s, precarious work became a conceptual topic in the sociology of work alongside traditional informal sector studies, and labor precarity was a critical aspect of economic system structural positioning, with informality and formality indissociable (Siegmann, 2016; Kalleberg, 2009). According to Hewison (2016), the concept of precarious work facilitates understanding of neoliberal policies of the Washington Consensus. Precarity is a concept referring to vulnerability of industrial production in global supply chains, more specifically migrant workers in industry and home-based workers (Hewison & Kalleberg, 2013). Informal employment is a response to external supply chain subcontracting (Vanek, 2020).

For example, whether or not a home-based worker uses an app, subcontracting creates insecure employment relationships between employer and subcontractor (Nirathron, 2022). Likewise, digital labor platforms disrupt traditional subcontracting and create new spaces for high-skill workers to use apps through platforms (Berg, 2022). These are hidden within informal employment in the informal economy, which is exploited through the perspective of precarious formality (Duran & Narbona, 2021). They are specifically defined as precariat, a neologism for a social class formed by people suffering from precarity, in a state of insecurity and uncertainty. This structural vulnerability arises from technological advancements of the fourth industrial revolution, notably informalization of flexible work (Standing, 2014; 2018a).

While SP is effective in alleviating poverty and inequality, it

is not adept at resolving structural problems. The informal economy employs over 61 percent of the world's population. This number comprises 67 percent of inhabitants of developing countries, 18 percent in developed nations, and 55 percent in Thailand (Chen & Carre, 2020); (National Statistical Office, 2020). Informal workers are excluded and vulnerable due to unequal power dynamics. Jeffrey Harrod (1987; 2014) classified work and power relations into eight patterns. According to Harrod, MTDs, like other labor groups, adhere to the self-employed pattern with low degrees of collective bargaining power with governmental authorities and other influential stakeholders. As a result, precarity is part of the essence of MTDs and informal employment. This is why the SP system must be strengthened by following power dynamics supervision.

## **Formalized Informality among Motorcycle Taxi Drivers**

Mechanisms and design pose difficulties for MTD access to SP systems, due to focus on formalized informality, as well as the distinction between formality and informality. This also occurs within the formality of registration and oversight by government authorities. This all-too-familiar scenario is apparently unavoidable because of precarious work and life circumstances. This section divides MTDs into four conditions to facilitate individual determination of SP coverage (Nirathron, 2021; Phun, Kato & Chalermpong, 2019; Tambunlertchai et al., 2018; Sengers, 2016; Sopranzetti, 2014; 2021; Kasemsukworarat, 1990).

First, MTDs become self-employed or independent workers due to occupational status and employment patterns. 84,889 drivers registered with the DLT for public licenses and yellow plates pursuant to the Vehicle Act, B.E. 2522 (1979), and voluntarily registered as insured persons according to Sections 39 and 40 of the Social Security Act (SSA), B.E. 2533 (1990). This has resulted in labor formality, particularly social insurance contributions, but has not attributed any formal working status as defined by the MOL. Nonetheless, internal procedures of motorcycle taxi stations continue to be based on informal norms, such as a set fee for new

members and purchase of motorcycle taxi vests, facilitating corruption outside legal strictures. In addition, government officials indirectly participate in illicit operations such as collecting police protection fees and sanitation fines.

Secondly, MTDs use ride-hailing apps, which exemplify hidden informality within formality. Many drivers opt for delivery apps, acquiring formal status through platform company registration. Yet they retain informal status under the employment agreement and are unable to access Section 33 of the SSA because they are deemed independent contractors. In fact, they should be considered subcontractors performing platform work and considered formal workers according to MOL rules. Because platform providers shun responsibility for employer-employee relationships, boundaries are blurred between a task done as a workpiece through apps and a delivery partner. Disordered labor governance is responsible for resolving such occurrences in innovative labor.

Thirdly, MTDs have other jobs as primary or secondary income sources; some have permanent employee contracts with formal employment under Section 33 of the SSA, a status known as formal workers as an occupational category defined by industrial sector and responsibility (ILO, 2012). They have written contracts and legal protection if they are hired for other jobs. As a result, for some MTDs, motorcycle taxi driving may not be their major source of income. This group has more access to SP programs than the first or second groups, who are covered by social insurance and voluntary insurance through accident insurance corporations.

Fourthly, MTDs work in a variety of informal economy jobs, including maintenance, street vending, online marketing, informal wage labor, and self-owned enterprises. These individuals would be disqualified from Section 33 of the SSA if they could access Section 39 or 40 due to classification as informal workers under Section 5 of the Labor Protection Act, B.E. 2541 (1998). Due to the fact that hybrid occupations are unprotected by minimum wage laws and other labor regulations, they are more vulnerable than the aforementioned first, second, and third conditions

**Table 1** Diverse additional jobs done by MTDs and social protection coverage obstacles.

Diverse job alternatives and income sources		Formalization dimensions			Formalized informality*
Primary	Second	Labor	Financial	Legal	
MTDs	None	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes	(1)(3)(5)
MTDs	Ride-hailing apps	Yes/No	Yes	No	(1)(2)(3)(5)
MTDs	Permanent/temporary contract	Yes	Yes	Yes/No	(1)(4)(5)
MTDs	Other informal jobs	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	(1)(3)(5)

Source: Adapt from Nielsen, Marusic, Ghossein and Solf (2020)

\*Note: In Table 1, formalized informality is denoted as follows:

(1) Legal formalization - register with the public sector, but pay bribes or and other informal payments.

(2) Labor formalization - informal worker status was achieved as a result of platform work misclassification.

(3) Labor formalization - Section 40 of the SSA is a kind of formalization, although informal workers retain their status.

(4) Labor formalization - Section 33 of the SSA established formal worker status, but provided for non-standard types of employment, such as the so-called temporary contract.

(5) Financial formalization - compulsory registration with e-payment, but with the requirement to obtain short-term measures.

SP offered by state provisions is unable to cover numer-

ous additional jobs of MTDs listed in Table 1. Distinguishing between informality and formality is challenging, because they are inextricably linked and mutually disguised within one another. This is a primary reason for establishing SP for all types of informal workers, insofar as several MTDs work in multiple jobs and generate income in different ways. Initial recommendations should seek to provide SP and eliminate economic inequalities as ultimate goals.

## **Reconsidering Social Protection for MTDs**

Table 1 illustrates three dimensions of formality: labor, financial, and legal. Financial formalities of MTDs, in particular, are referred to, including bank account registration and e-payment (Nielsen, Marusic, Ghossein & Solf, 2020). Ride-hailing apps impede labor formalization due to employment status misclassification. This contradiction between formality-informality and labor governance practices can be termed precarising formality (Duran & Narbona, 2021). Therefore, the SP system becomes critical for social policy and governance in terms of managing precarity based on formalized informality. Three considerations below concerning precarity merit careful study to formulate improvements in the SP system.

First, distinguishing between formal and informal economies emphasizes risks associated with economic inequality, poor working conditions, and lack of social assistance programs. This implies that formal and informal economies should be combined to establish a hybrid economy, underlining the critical contrast between formality and informality in social and economic governance. Moreover, informal economic issues in the Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) network were analyzed from a formal-informal perspective, focusing on specific groups of informal workers as part of supply chains (Chen, 2016). This contrasts with understanding how informality in the global South differs from precarity in the global North

(Rogan et al., 2017). For instance, MTDs construct stations in alleys and street paths, constituting informal governance within formality for motorcycle taxi station owners, but in violation of state law. Indirectly, these practices represent unstable aspects of precarious life and employment through interplay of formality and informality.

Secondly, precarity appears in standard and non-standard forms of employment. For example, MTDs have shifted to digital transportation for passengers through app-based services, creating conditions for formalized informal subcontracting in a well-known business language for delivery partners. Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam are all impacted similarly (Fathurrahman, 2020; Turner, 2020; Peters, 2020). Conflict resolution may include adhering to traditional business tactics, enforcing legislation requiring platform companies to pay more than MTDs, or discontinuing operations in certain nations (Wijayanto et al., 2018). As a result, RHDs confront harmful risks independently, as opposed to MTDs, who benefit from protection from government officials and other influential stakeholders.

Thirdly, precarious work and living conditions for MTDs produce an unstable environment within the political system. Employment rights and collective bargaining power were lost due to control by motorcycle taxi station owners and city law enforcement officials acting under authority of Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) edicts. This demonstrates how bureaucratic profiteering and MTDs have become income sources for new marginal groups within the informal economy. Due to unequal power relations in district subsystems, illegality of unregistered drivers exposed to structural vulnerability results in payment of protection fees and other fines to street-level officials and exploitation groups, including police officers, soldiers, civil servants, local politicians, and businesspeople (Soprizzetti, 2021; Phun, Kato & Chalermpong, 2019; Kasemsukworarat, 1990; Oshima, Fukuda, Fukuda & Satiennam, 2007).

## **A Guide to Improving the Social Protection System**

In Thailand, MTDs are required to have driver's licences and a yellow taxi service plate. Their employment patterns continue to be informal. In addition to MTDs, registering app-based ride-hailing services such as RHDs, categorized as informal workers by the MOL, creates a new form of subcontracting. Teerakowikajorn and Tularak (2020) described the effect of precarity on interactions between platform providers and RHDs as a new precarious work regime. Meanwhile, MTDs, RHDs, and hybrid drivers confront insecurity and uncertainty. MTDs, in particular, rely on app-based passenger delivery, violating DLT rules and regulations; platform firms operate by certifying driver-partner status, a form of informalization resembling formalized informality (Frey, 2020; ITF, 2020).

In Thailand, the SP system excludes informal workers; no legislation safeguards or promotes MTDs. Certain MTDs require additional occupational welfare schemes, such as fuel subsidies, loan funds for occupational capital, and compensation for work-related injuries and illnesses. Similarly, employment pattern of RHDs through apps is blurry and ambiguous, while SP prioritizes social assistance over social insurance and active labor market programs, because the MOL and Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS) are not key actors in coordinating and directing SP policymaking. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates that the Ministry of Finance spearheads implementation of short-term measures such as the Rao Chana (We Win) and Rao Rak Kan (We Love Each Other) financial aid schemes, and the 50:50 co-payment scheme.

These findings suggest that SP guidelines for MTDs should be formulated in the complex context of the platform economy and COVID-19 pandemic (see Table 2) following World Bank SP recommendations (2018). This would strengthen the SP system of Thailand from the perspective of needs, rights, and risks (Munro, 2008).

Table 2 Guidelines for improving MTD social protection

SP	Programmes or schemes
Social assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Subsidize fuel coupons for low-income drivers through the public welfare card or create e-coupons for all.</li> <li>- Create a risk management fund to cover income replacement, debt forgiveness, and vehicle maintenance when traffic accidents occur.</li> <li>- Develop short-term measures for formalization and constant DLT checks for registered drivers during regular and emergency situations.</li> </ul>
Social insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote voluntary registration under Section 40 of the SSA and improve social insurance schemes for off-the-books benefits.</li> <li>- Determine contribution from different social insurance packages to occupational risks and dangerous jobs.</li> </ul>

L a b o r m a r k e t p r o g r a m s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Low interest rate funds for MTDs to purchase new motorcycles or for performing routine maintenance.</li><li>- Provide digital skills and ride-hailing app capacity, but platform businesses must adhere to fair employment practices.</li><li>- Create a national app coordinating with platform corporations and ensuring universal equal access to sales and services.</li><li>- Foster collaboration between public and private sectors to increase access to accident insurance for MTDs, who face a high risk of job loss.</li><li>- Collaborate with other government agencies regionally to provide specific services such as parcel and food delivery.</li></ul>
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State regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct a review of the role of government agencies in the Vehicle Act, including driver's license and yellow plate. MTDs are registered as a formality, yet are threatened by government authorities, reflecting the precarising formality of practices.</li> <li>- Gain insight into the transition from unregistered to registered motorcycle taxi stations and drivers to provide flexibility for part-time workers, while reducing unlawful operations.</li> <li>- Promote the role of informal SP in the form of group activities within stations or other areas aimed at achieving occupational objectives to boost job promotion and protection.</li> </ul>
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Source: author's recommendations.

### **Formalization Driven by MTDs using Ride-hailing Apps**

It should be reemphasized that ILO Recommendation No. 204 on the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy noted that formalization should entail promoting access to public services in addition to employment, SP, and labor rights (ILO, 2014 ;2013). The COVID19- pandemic inspired several governments to try to promote digital skills for occupational adaptation and technology-enhanced formalization through SP for marginalized groups (Kring & Leung, 2021). One example in Thailand is the PromptPay cashless society system linked to short-term cash transfer programs. Apart from government-provided SP, most MTDs have indirectly adapted to using e-payment and ride-hailing apps as labor and financial formalizations.

The blurring border between formality and informality is merely one of several concerns and challenges currently faced by MTDs. Internationally, different governments have

heavily promoted ride-hailing services as critical for worker-led formalization of informal passenger transport, including MTDs, into platform registration during the COVID19- pandemic. However, governments also recognize the importance of digital literacy and cashless payment (Spooner, 2019). Despite the precarious nature of work and employment, corporations are helped to reduce costs through lack of government regulation (ITF, 2020; Frey, 2020). To compound matters, MTDs lack SP equivalent to that of platform workers. Operating platform firms through algorithmic management affects flexibility and self-governance. RHDs influence the categorization of MTDs as independent contractors, contributing to gig economy stigma with low-wage, no-benefits contracts.

MTD registration with platform companies formalizes informal employment, but does not make workers self-sufficient in the face of precarity. A review of appropriate rules and regulations on using ride-hailing apps for passenger services is essential to guarantee fairness to MTDs and include access to information through digital skills. Ride-hailing services should be rethought from a collaborative governance perspective rather than solely through the lens of legal enforcement, by focusing on social dialogue, public disclosure of reports to demonstrate fairness and transparency, and adopting a code of conduct to govern platform business operations (Randolph & Galperin, 2019; Hauben, Lenaerts & Wayaert, 2020).

## **5. Conclusion**

MTD formalized informality underlines the critical importance of appropriate and complete SP. A three-year action plan (2022–2020) for SP development should recognize social assistance and social services as cost-benefit investments and, like public welfare cards, be used as targeting to determine eligibility (Office of the Permanent Secretary, 2019). It establishes low income and asset ownership thresholds predicated on meeting essential needs, while recognizing the urgent need for universal

welfare. Thailand, for example, provides free basic education to all children for 15 years, adults over age 60 receive a progressive living allowance, and there is universal access to healthcare.

The SP, as defined by UN SDGs, helps reduce inequality but cannot alleviate poverty. The ILO and World Bank have promoted Universal Social Protection as a component of SDGs (ILO, 2019). Platformization should be considered while constructing the SP system, which must include MTDs, who employ over 84,889 workers in the informal economy and over 50,000 in the hidden economy, but are unregistered. The following are initial recommendations for reconsidering the public sector role.

First, the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and MOL are essential for defining national SP strategy and policy, as well as integrating informal economy databases with other government agencies to expand SP programs. They will also assist in formulating well-defined plans and associated duties. SP concepts based on rights, needs, and risk will be introduced, covering MTDs and ambiguous employment status of platform workers, ensuring: 1) universal welfare for all types of informal workers through social assistance mechanisms; and 2) occupational welfare for MTDs and hybrid drivers, especially in the public sector, should integrate non-standard employment arrangements and diverse job characteristics associated with digital work.

Secondly, the responsibility of the MOL and MSDHS should be broadened to include MTDs with multiple jobs and a major source of income as well as vulnerable groups and the unemployed. Some MTDs earn primary incomes from ride-hailing apps as independent contractors. Government authorities should properly define employment status while examining transportation and labor legislation to eliminate informality and illegality within occupations. Two DLT and City Law Enforcement Section concerns follow: (1) clearly defining employment status to eliminate informality and illegality among MTDs, especially power relations among influential stakeholders and the impossibility of bargaining collectively with them; and (2) taking into account the Vehicle Act and BMA Announcement, certifying formal status

through a driver's license but informal status with employment agreements. Consequently, developing an SP system cannot ensure diversity of employment characteristics associated with MTDs and hybrids.

To recapitulate, embracing SP goes beyond data and understanding. Some nations have developed a national SP strategy and policy shaping unique SP designs. Theoretically, welfare programs should be based on rights and needs. Informal workers endure comparable precarious living and working circumstances as formal workers in supply chains, such as home-based workers who are location-based and perform crowdwork. Thus, formalization is a pathway to legal protection and social security, but labor formality under Section 40 of the SSA excludes, and discriminates against, certain working groups and exposes MTDs to risks and vulnerabilities from powerful stakeholders. This problem epitomizes the precarising formality of formalized informality, typical of the nature of this occupation.

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