



10-year program (2018-2028)
\$A80 million

SUPPORTING ASEAN MEMBER STATES TO STRENGTHEN JUSTICE RESPONSES TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING, WHILE ADVANCING THE RIGHTS AND PROTECTION OF VICTIMS.

Trafficking in persons has no borders and occurs in many different sectors - its negative impacts are spread across Southeast Asia.

Economic downturn across the region as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with an increase in online activity, has placed more people at risk of being recruited into false or misleading employment opportunities.

Across Southeast Asia, citizens are finding themselves in exploitative conditions that they cannot escape from and the dynamics between countries of origin and countries of destination are changing.

In response to these emerging trends and ongoing vulnerabilities to trafficking in persons, ASEAN-ACT works with government and non-government organisations in ASEAN member states to increase cooperation, strengthen capacity, facilitate dialogue between policymakers and practitioners, and identify innovative ways to prevent and address trafficking in persons.

The partnership supports ASEAN member states to implement and report on their obligations under the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP).

ASEAN-ACT has national-level programming in Cambodia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. We are establishing programming in Indonesia, and our projects are currently on hold in Myanmar.

ASEAN-ACT's Regional Program Steering Committee (RPSC) is the regional governance mechanism of the program, with members drawn from all 10 ASEAN member states and the ASEAN Secretariat.

The RPSC is co-chaired by the Lead Shepherd on Trafficking in Persons from the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) and a senior Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) representative.





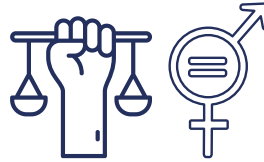
36

multi-year national projects in six countries



7

regional projects supporting implementation of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons



3

projects with direct focus on victim rights and on gender equality, disability and social inclusion



5

projects focusing on inclusive public policy

ASEAN-ACT works through three interrelated pathways:

Enhancing regional-level capacity

We support and partner with the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) and other ASEAN bodies to strengthen victim-sensitive planning, monitoring and reporting processes.

Enhancing national-level capacity

We work with national partners to strengthen their capacity to implement the ACTIP, in particular those that uphold victim rights and advance gender equality, disability and social inclusion.

Developing inclusive public policy and dialogue

We facilitate dialogue and cooperation between government, civil society and the private sector to support improvements in counter-trafficking policies and practices.

Highlights include:

- supported the SOMTC in reviewing the Bohol Trafficking in Persons Work Plan (BWP) – the review report was endorsed and published on ASEAN website
- supported the SOMTC in development of the successor BWP 2.0 – the draft was finalised
- supported the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) in finalising the ASEAN Do No Harm Guide for Frontline Responders.

Highlights include:

- a Memorandum of Understanding between Australia and Thailand on the establishment of the Thailand Counter-Trafficking in Persons Centre of Excellence, signed on 2 November 2022
- trained frontliners in Cambodia on victim identification and protection procedures
- supported the development of the Philippines 4th National Strategic Action Plan Against Trafficking in Persons
- facilitated digital evidence training in Lao and Vietnam, to address new trafficking patterns in the region.

Highlights include:

- commissioned research with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) on the vulnerability of migrant workers to trafficking, with the first thematic brief published on 18 December 2022
- facilitated policy engagement workshops in the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, resulting in ongoing policy dialogue between government and NGOs
- Policy dialogue on victim identification and compensation in Thailand, pursued by Social Responsibility Law Office, resulted in a change to allow irregular migrants equal access to compensation when they are victims of crimes such as human trafficking.



JUSTICE OUTCOMES

ASEAN-ACT facilitates justice sector cooperation and provides technical support to strengthen justice responses to trafficking in persons in the region.

Recent achievements include:

- Strengthening justice sector agencies' responses to counter human trafficking, including training 3,909 in 2022 of whom 55% are women. Participants included state and non-state counter-trafficking actors.
- Supporting the development and implementation of national plans of actions against trafficking in persons.
- Facilitating transnational meetings to increase cross-border cooperation for investigations of trafficking in persons cases and protection of victims.

VICTIM RIGHTS, AND GENDER EQUALITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OUTCOMES

ASEAN-ACT works with partners to support groups most vulnerable to trafficking and reduce barriers to accessing justice, protection and support.

Recent achievements include:

- Facilitating workshops for judges and prosecutors, and supporting government agencies with the inclusion of gender equality, disability and victim rights in national action plans and in guidelines.
- Developing victim sensitive court indicators and a toolkit to strengthen data collection and promote evidence-based policy.
- Analysis of Trafficking in Persons Annual Reports that ASEAN Member States have published in 2020, and developed a Trafficking in Persons Data Toolkit to explain how to improve the collection, analysis and publication of trafficking data.

RESEARCH

ASEAN-ACT conducts research and studies that contribute to evidence, specific to the ASEAN region.

We supported a study examining shelter practices and the freedom of movement for victims or presumed victims of trafficking, and offered recommendations for law, policy and practice to ASEAN member states.

Through our webinar series, we bring together international and regional experts to discuss emerging issues and innovative counter-trafficking responses.

PARTNERSHIPS

ASEAN-ACT recognises that effective counter trafficking responses require multi-sectoral, collaborative approaches.

We pursue partnerships with a broad range of regional and national actors, including organisations that directly support and advocate for the rights of trafficked victims and contribute valuable evidence to inform policy reform.

ASEAN-ACT has provided nine grants to organisations supporting victims' rights and empowerment, to enhance evidence base in the region and contribute to policy engagement within and amongst ASEAN member states.

Legal Support for Children and Women (*Cambodia*)
Village Focus International (*Lao PDR*)
Blas F. Ople Policy Center and Training Institute (*Philippines*)
Social Responsibility Law Office (*Thailand*)
Human Rights and Development Foundation (*Thailand*)
Labour Protection Network (*Thailand*)
Blue Dragon Children's Foundation (*Vietnam*)
Verite Southeast Asia (*regional*)
Migrant Forum in Asia (*regional*)



2022 Highlights



CAMBODIA

- Trained 594 government and non-government officials in 2022 (33% female).
- Supported a workshop with Ministry of Justice on anti-money laundering using national and international frameworks for trafficking in persons cases.
- Conducted 2 training events for frontline officials on policy and minimum standards to protect victims of trafficking, with Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation.



PHILIPPINES

- Trained 1,269 government and non-government officials in 2022 (79% female).
- Supported IACAT to lead the development of Philippines 4th National Strategic Action Plan against TIP (2023-2027).
- Supported 11 technical working group meetings to review training on TIP for judges.
- Supported delivery of BEAT-TIP training, now included in National Prosecution Service eLearning.



INDONESIA

- Trained 305 government and non-government officials through regional activities in 2022 (59% female).
- Completed a detailed analysis of Indonesia's trafficking in persons decisions (from 435 cases) made by courts from 2019-2021, and presented summary of analysis and 16 key findings to the Supreme Court of Indonesia.



THAILAND

- Trained 852 government and non-government officials in 2022 (43% female).
- Commissioned a scoping study on the establishment of a CTIP Centre of Excellence.
- Organised seminars for 36 judges on trauma-informed care, with International Justice Mission.
- Supported Office of Attorney General with workshops on role of prosecutors in trafficking in persons cases.



LAO PDR

- Trained 312 government and non-government officials in 2022 (37% female).
- Supported first workshop on digital evidence of trafficking in persons with Ministry of Public Security, Office of the Supreme People's Prosecutor, People's Supreme Court and Ministry of Justice.
- Facilitated the People's Supreme Court's development of guidelines for victim-sensitive courts – submitted to the Council of Judges in February 2022 and accepted 'in principle'.



VIETNAM

- Trained 473 government and non-government officials in 2022 (50% female).
- Completed handbooks on mutual legal assistance for handling trafficking in persons cases, endorsed by the Supreme People's Procuracy (SPP). And a handbook on victim protection for judges and court staff, for SPP endorsement.
- Developed various training materials for People's Police Academy and Police College No. 1, and for prosecutor students at the Hanoi Procuratorate University.

