



ASEAN-ACT is a
10-year program (2018-2028)
\$A80 million



133 events in the Philippines,
with **3,545** participants
(68% female, 32% male,
0.14% other)



37 capacity development events
conducted in the Philippines
1,269 people trained
(79% female, 21% male, 0.24% other)

ASEAN-ACT's key focal point in the
Philippines is the Inter-Agency
Council Against Trafficking (IACAT).

Other **key partners**:

- Bureau of Immigration
- Department of the Interior and Local Government
- Department of Justice
- Department of Migrant Workers
- Department of Social Welfare and Development
- National Bureau of Investigation
- Blas F. Ople Policy Center and Training Institute
- Philippine Judicial Academy
- Philippine National Police
- Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
- Supreme Court

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THROUGH THE **ASEAN-AUSTRALIA COUNTER TRAFFICKING PROGRAM (ASEAN-ACT)**, AUSTRALIA CONTINUES 19+ YEARS SUPPORTING COUNTER TRAFFICKING IN THE REGION.

WE SUPPORT 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.

Citizens of ASEAN Member States 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 across 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 are projects are currently on hold in Myanmar.

ASEAN-ACT's Regional Program Steering Committee (RPSC) is the regional governance mechanism of the program, with representatives across all 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 and a senior Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) representative.



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.

JUSTICE OUTCOMES

ASEAN-ACT facilitates justice sector cooperation and provides technical support to strengthen justice responses to trafficking in persons in the Philippines. Recent achievements with our partners include:

- The National Prosecution Service in the Department of Justice developed a specialised training course on the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children dimension of trafficking in persons.
- The Supreme Court through a technical working group reviewed the competency enhancement training on trafficking in persons for judges, prosecutors, law enforcement and social workers.
- IACAT conducted multi-sectoral consultations with government and non-government agencies, leading to the development of the 4th National Strategic Action Plan Against Trafficking in Persons.

PARTNERSHIPS

ASEAN-ACT has established partnerships with regional and national counter trafficking actors across government, civil society and the private sector. Highlights with our partners include:

- Our partnership with Ople Centre supported consultation on the drafting of the Department of Migrant Workers Act to ensure legislated protection to vulnerable groups. Through the

Coalition Against Trafficking of Overseas Filipino Workers members lobbied to strengthen the counter-trafficking work of the Department.

- The Philippine National Police's Women and Children Protection Center met with the Royal Malaysia Police's Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Division – to exchange information and cooperate on transnational trafficking in persons cases.

VICTIM RIGHTS, AND GENDER EQUALITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

ASEAN-ACT is working with partners to support groups most vulnerable to trafficking and reduce barriers to accessing protection and support.

Recent achievements have included:

- Commenced work with the Department of Social Welfare and Development in developing a toolkit on recovery and reintegration of trafficked victims.
- Supporting partner government agencies in integrating victim-sensitive and gender-sensitive approaches in the development of the new national strategic action against trafficking.

Basic E-learning Access to Training on Investigation and Prosecution of Trafficking In Persons Cases (BEAT-TIP)

BEAT-TIP is a four-day intensive training program designed to provide prosecutors with the fundamental and innovative techniques in investigating and prosecuting trafficking in persons cases.

In partnership with the Department of Justice's Anti-Trafficking in Persons Task Force, we supported the development and design of the BEAT-TIP case and the core group of Philippine trainer-prosecutors to deliver the course.

Three sets of training, involving a total of 81 prosecutors (53 female and 28 male), were conducted in 2021. The fourth BEAT-TIP training was held in March 2022 for 24 prosecutors (14 female and 10 male).

This course is now offered as one of the online courses in the Department of Justice's National Prosecution Service Learning Management System – the new system launched by the department in March 2022.

More prosecutors will be reached through this online learning system.