



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



68 events in Thailand, with
1,472 participants
(44% female, 55% male,
1.% other)



15 capacity development events
conducted in Thailand
852 people trained
(43% female, 57% male, 0.5% other)

ASEAN-ACT's focal point in
Thailand is the Ministry of Justice.

Other key partners:

- Court of Justice
- Department of Special Investigation, Ministry of Justice
- Department of Trafficking in Persons Litigation, Office of the Attorney General
- Human Rights and Development Foundation
- Labour Protection Network
- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
- Royal Thai Police
- SR Law Office
- The Office of the Judiciary

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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 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.



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 promote and 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 Thailand. Recent achievements with our partners include:

- Department of Trafficking in Persons Litigation in the Office of the Attorney General organised a series of workshops on the role of prosecutors in Trafficking in Persons cases, attended by prosecutors, investigators, social workers and NGOs from central and provincial areas.
- Department of Special Investigation (DSI) conducted an annual work planning process using problem-driven iterative approach – leading to DSI's annual work plan.
- The Office of the Judiciary conducted 'writeshops' and meetings to update their judicial handbook on Trafficking in Persons, including a chapter on victim-sensitive courts.
- ASEAN-ACT and [International Justice Mission Thailand](#) organised a seminar for 36 judges (12 female and 24 male) on trauma-informed care.

PARTNERSHIPS

ASEAN-ACT has established partnerships with regional and national actors, as effective counter trafficking responses require multi-sectoral approaches. Highlights with our partners include:

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, trained 40 judges (15 female and 25 male) on evidential issues in Trafficking in Persons cases.
- [Social Responsibility Law](#) (SR Law), [Labour Protection Network](#) (LPN), [Human Rights and Development Foundation](#) (HRDF) and [Verité Southeast Asia](#) are conducting research and advocacy on the vulnerabilities of migrant workers to trafficking, and providing direct assistance to victims of trafficking.

VICTIM RIGHTS, AND GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OUTCOMES

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:

- Participated in the national working group and supported the study on reflection period for victims of trafficking – leading to the roadmap for the implementation of the national referral mechanism (NRM) plan. The NRM plan was endorsed by the Deputy Prime Minister on 8 April 2022.
- The [President of the Supreme Court](#) issued a recommendation to develop guidelines for the treatment of victims of human trafficking.

Australia and Thailand partner to establish new training facility to combat human trafficking

Australia's Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Thailand's Justice Minister, Somsak Thepsuthin, entered into a new bilateral partnership to establish the Counter Trafficking in Persons Centre of Excellence on 2 November 2022 – the first training facility in the region with a dedicated focus on combatting human trafficking.

[ASEAN-ACT support commenced with a scoping study](#) to review existing counter trafficking training programs and provide options for establishing the Centre. As part of the study, a training needs assessment was conducted at the national level and in the sample provinces of Ranong and Chiang Mai. The two provinces were selected because of their sizeable migrant communities, and industries where trafficking or forced labour is known or suspected to occur.

The study will inform the development of a new, consolidated curriculum for counter trafficking agencies in Thailand. The primary focus of the curriculum will be to increase gender-sensitive and victim-centred approaches when handling trafficking in persons cases, in line with the ACTIP.