

COUNTER-TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS PROGRAM (CTIP) IN CAMBODIA



Trafficking in persons is one of the most serious human rights issues facing Cambodia today. In a country where the average per capita income is among the lowest in the world, unsuspecting victims are lured with false promises of jobs or marriage and then forced into sex work or exploitative labor situations. Controlled by threats, lies, drugs, and physical force, victims of trafficking are often held in slave-like conditions, unable to escape.

In efforts to combat this problem, with funding provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development, The Asia Foundation is implementing a comprehensive Countering Trafficking in Persons Program (CTIP) in Cambodia. The three-year program aims to strengthen the joint efforts of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and civil society to combat trafficking through concrete, systemic changes in five main areas: coordination, data collection, prevention, protection, and prosecution. Through a series of complementary activities in these five main areas, the CTIP Program will achieve several major results, such as the following:

- Establishment of a National Task Force on Trafficking in Persons to coordinate the more than 200 government ministries, agencies, local and international organizations combating trafficking and exploitation in Cambodia;
- Development and implementation of a nationally-accepted set of indicators for trafficking-related data;
- National prevention and awareness campaign that appeals to Cambodian culture, values, and particularly youth, who are most vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation;
- Establishment of national minimum standards of care for victims; and,
- Standard training for law enforcement and the judiciary.

COORDINATION

In Cambodia, more than 200 government ministries, agencies, local and international organizations address the issue of trafficking in some way. To enhance coordination and foster collective action to combat human trafficking and exploitation, CTIP supported the establishment of the **National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons** (TIP Task Force), which was launched in March 2007. The Asia Foundation programs strive to build coordination among partners, projects, and initiatives, and emphasize shared information and joint action within the community.

The Task Force comprises 11 government ministries, including the ministries of Interior, Justice, Women's Affairs, Social Affairs, Education, Economy and Finance, Foreign Affairs, Defense, Information, Labor, and Tourism, plus three government agencies. To facilitate activities, the TIP Task Force is divided into three main thematic working groups focused on prevention, protection, prosecution; two working groups target implementation of provincial level activities and follow-up action for MOUs and bilateral agreements.

With support from the CTIP Program, the RGC also established a High Level Working Group (HLWG) in August 2007 to provide additional political support to the TIP Task Force. Headed by the Deputy Prime Minister/Minister of Interior, the HLWG unites the ministries of Interior, Defense, Justice, and Women's Affairs to fast-track prosecution of human trafficking, trafficking in drugs, terrorism, and other forms of exploitation. The role of this high-level body is particularly important in ensuring that anti-trafficking efforts make significant inroads at the provincial levels.



CAMBODIA

The Asia Foundation is implementing the Counter-Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) Program — a three-year program to strengthen the joint efforts of the Royal Government of Cambodia and civil society to combat trafficking.

The Foundation is working with the TIP Task Force and NGO partners to establish the first comprehensive data collection mechanism, utilizing 43 data sets covering prevention, protection, and prosecution-related data.

The Foundation supports a scholarship program for children vulnerable to trafficking in northwestern Cambodia.

The Asia Foundation publishes a newsletter for stakeholders detailing CTIP's activities to promote information sharing among anti-trafficking NGOs.

DATA COLLECTION

There is currently no agreed-upon standard for collecting, analyzing, and comparing trafficking data in Cambodia. This lack of standardized data represents a significant challenge in understanding the extent of the trafficking problem, designing and providing legal and other services to victims, and tracking prosecution of cases. Under CTIP, The Asia Foundation is working with the TIP Task Force and NGO partners to establish the first comprehensive data collection mechanism, utilizing 43 data sets covering prevention, protection, and prosecution-related data. These agreed-upon data sets will be important tools for the RGC to develop effective policy interventions and for donors and service providers to map trends and monitor assistance.

PREVENTION

To prevent at-risk groups from falling victim to trafficking and exploitation, The Asia Foundation is working with the TIP Task Force to develop, launch, and implement a multi-stakeholder awareness campaign. The awareness campaign highlights recent achievements in the fight against human trafficking, including TIP Task Force's efforts to unite all counter-trafficking actors around one central and positive message that promotes government and community action against exploitation. Through the awareness campaign, CTIP will enable provincial and community leaders across Cambodia to inform Cambodians of potential risks.

The Foundation also supports a scholarship program for vulnerable children in northwestern Cambodia. Through local NGO partners, CTIP provides support to 310 boys and girls to help them complete ninth grade, thereby qualifying for formal vocational training in the Cambodian school system. These children's parents receive interest-free loans to enable them to subsidize their income through small business ventures, like

pig or chicken breeding, thereby strengthening the families' economic stability.

PROTECTION

The Asia Foundation's research and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including service providers and trafficking victims, revealed significant gaps in victim protection services across Cambodia. Under CTIP, these gaps will be addressed through the establishment of a national standard of care for victims of trafficking and exploitation – from the point of identification through the point of rehabilitation and reintegration. The Foundation is working with the Ministry of Social Affairs, UNICEF, International Organization for Migration, and NGO partner coalitions to develop and pilot-test a national standard protocol and toolkit for assistance providers in five provinces of Cambodia. The standards are being piloted in the main border provinces as well as in Phnom Penh. Feedback from NGO and government social workers will be used to shape a proposed legislative sub-decree that will serve as a benchmark for counter-trafficking agencies and donors in their efforts to provide enhanced services to victims from the moment of rescue, through the interview and intake process, shelter care and rehabilitation, and finally reintegration.

PROSECUTION

In addition to improving the collection of data on the prosecution of trafficking cases, the CTIP Program is undertaking several complementary activities to strengthen judicial and police efforts to combat trafficking and to provide legal assistance to victims. The CTIP Program includes trainings on international protocols addressing human trafficking issues for judges and prosecutors, research into the development of a national police training curriculum, provision of legal aid for victims, and a court monitoring program that further supports the rights of victims by promoting transparency of legal proceedings. These efforts will pave the way for further support to enhance the policing and investigative skills of law enforcement officials and to improve the prosecution of cases and the conviction of traffickers.

The Asia Foundation is a private, non-profit, non-governmental organization. It is funded by contributions from corporations, foundations, individuals, and governmental organizations in the U.S., Australia, Canada, Europe, and Asia, and an annual appropriation from the U.S. Congress. Through its programs, the Foundation builds leadership, improves policies, and strengthens institutions to foster greater openness and shared prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.



HEADQUARTERS

465 California Street,
9th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104 USA
Tel: (415) 982-4640
Fax: (415) 392-8863
info@asiafound.org

WASHINGTON, DC

1779 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Suite 815
Washington, D.C. 20036 USA
Tel: (202) 588-9420
Fax: (202) 588-9409
info@asiafound-dc.org

CAMBODIA

House No. 59, St 242 (Okhna Piech)
Sangkat Chatomuk, Khan Daun Penh
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Tel: (855) 23-210431/ 220 491 Thru 2
Fax: (855) 23-217553
Email: tafcb@asiafoundation.org

www.asiafoundation.org

This information sheet is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of The Asia Foundation and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.