

Ending Child Trafficking in Mongolia



In Mongolia, human trafficking, especially trafficking in children, is becoming increasingly discreet and organized. Effective partnership between government, civil society, and private sector is essential in tackling this crime. Comprehensive knowledge on how to identify and protect child victims and prosecute perpetrators is crucial to prevent and stop child trafficking.



Globally, trafficking in persons continues to be one of the most of lucrative illegal businesses along with drug trafficking and arms smuggling. Approximately 800,000 people are estimated to be trafficked across borders or within their own countries every year. At least, 80 percent of trafficking victims are women and 50 percent of victims are children. Impacts of trafficking are distressing; victims experience emotional and physical violence leaving them dehumanized and suffering from multiple trauma. If their trauma is left unaddressed, child survivors often experience development challenges throughout their lives.

No country is immune to trafficking. Mongolia is known to be a source, destination, and transit country. Women, men, and children are trafficked for a purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labor among many other types of trafficking. Although Mongolia has taken extensive steps to improve its legal environment against trafficking, few cases have been tried, and many perpetrators are not convicted. The circumstances surrounding child trafficking are even worse, with fewer cases having been identified and prosecuted. Law enforcement and

judicial officials often face challenges to investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate human trafficking cases using victim-centered approaches. Professionals who directly work with child victims of trafficking report that the provision of protective care and rehabilitation services have been insufficient. They also report that interagency coordination is essential to rehabilitating survivors while investigating and prosecuting cases.

U.S. MONGOLIA CHILD PROTECTION COMPACT

The United States and Mongolia signed the U.S.-Mongolia Child Protection Compact Partnership, a four-year plan to end child trafficking. This project aims to increase capacity and collaboration of the government, civil society, and private sector stakeholders to strengthen Mongolia's efforts to effectively prosecute and convict child traffickers with a victim-centered approach, to provide comprehensive trauma-informed care for child victims of trafficking, and to prevent child trafficking in all its forms. The Mongolia Child Protection

Compact Project is implemented by World Vision and The Asia Foundation.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

The Asia Foundation is working closely with the Mongolian government to establish a multidisciplinary task force (MDTF), one of the most effective approaches to combat a multifaceted crime like trafficking in persons. The main purpose of the MDTF is to support collaborative efforts against trafficking and ensure that immediate actions are taken to identify and prosecute trafficking cases, and comprehensive support services are provided to victims, prioritizing child victims. The MDTF members represent diverse government and non-government organizations including law enforcement, judiciary, social protection, labor, foreign affairs, health, and education service providers among many others.

Specific activities include development of MDTF's standard operating procedures and action plans to establish internal mechanisms for its effective operation. The Foundation is providing trainings on human trafficking and organizing study visits for MDTF members. Members and key actors that combat trafficking are given an opportunity to enroll in an online mentorship program specifically designed for them. In order to inform further interventions, the Foundation will undertake series of assessments on current procedures for collecting, sharing, analyzing, and reporting relevant data for combatting child trafficking.

VICTIM-CENTERED APPROACHES

The needs and concerns of trafficking victims must be considered when delivering services, and they should be treated in a non-judgmental manner. Professionals, especially law enforcement officials, prosecutors and judiciary, need to

apply victim-centered and child-friendly approaches while working on trafficking cases of minors. Therefore, the Foundation is developing a comprehensive training curriculum on victim-centered and child-friendly approaches to investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases with a focus on child trafficking cases. In addition to capacity building trainings for government officials, the Foundation is building a training program for cyber-facilitated human trafficking investigations and prosecutions for police, prosecutors, and judges.

The Foundation is assessing existing policies and procedures of relevant agencies to develop a comprehensive victim services plan. Additionally, the Foundation is conducting a case diagnostic assessment on child trafficking cases that examines case frequency and the speed of prosecutions. These efforts aim to develop specific interventions to improve data integration and sharing between relevant agencies.

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through a network of offices in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.



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