

Addressing Human Trafficking Across Asia and the Pacific



The Asia Foundation's sustained engagement across Asia and the Pacific for 70 years has positioned us to support effective, locally driven, trauma-informed, survivor-centered strategies to prevent and respond to human trafficking within and across borders.



OUR APPROACH

The Asia Foundation partners with governments, law enforcement, justice officials, policymakers, service providers, community leaders, and survivors to effectively prevent and respond to trafficking. Our approach recognizes that women, men, girls, and boys experience different forms of discrimination and trafficking; as a result, the Foundation promotes policies that address the needs of structurally excluded populations, including those who identify as LGBTQI+ and/or living with a disability. The Foundation makes long-term strategic investments that promote legal and structural reform, strengthen anti-trafficking leadership and coordination among all stakeholders, reduce vulnerability to trafficking, and address the needs of trafficking survivors.

PREVENTION

In Cambodia, with support from USAID, the Foundation collaborated with the National Committee for Counter-Trafficking, the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, and the Khmer Youth Association to educate and empower communities to address trafficking and promote the protection of women and girls.

Foundation partners distributed 3,000 booklets on safe migration, conducted 18 school campaigns on safe migration that reached 5,688 students and encouraged them to stay in school, held four career forums with a total of 1,748 attendees, and led campaigns through mobile devices reaching more than 5,000 people across 33 villages.

PROTECTION

In the Pacific, the Foundation is implementing the Pacific Regional Initiative and Support for More Effective Counter Trafficking in Persons (Pacific-RISE) program in Fiji, the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, and Palau, funded by USAID. Pacific-RISE is using a holistic, multi-sectoral approach that engages an inclusive cross-section of stakeholders from government, civil society and the private sector in Pacific Island countries. The project is taking a gender equality and social inclusion lens to 1) improve prevention through enhanced local and community-based mechanisms and strategies to prevent TIP; 2) strengthen protection and sustainable durable solutions and services for TIP victims; and 3) build capacity to prosecute traffickers and increase access to legal services by TIP victims.

In India, Sri Lanka and Nepal, supported by J/TIP, the Foundation conducted research to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of screening and service provision to trafficking in persons (TIP) and gender-based violence (GBV) victims. GBV and TIP victims often suffer similar and intersecting forms of abuse; however, these multiple vulnerabilities are usually not identified during the screening process, delaying critical care. In 2020, the Foundation incorporated a Covid-19 lens to address the impacts of the pandemic and to guide resources toward screening and service provision. Since inadequate funding and resource constraints are major challenges to efficient delivery of services, integrating the services provided to TIP and GBV victims should be considered.

In Mongolia, the Foundation mapped the national referral mechanism for victims and survivors of human trafficking and GBV to improve coordination among service providers. To conduct this extensive analysis, the Foundation's team first identified existing services for GBV and TIP survivors and then worked with providers and the government to create a map demonstrating linkages and types of care provided. In collaboration with the Mongolian Gender Equality Center, the Foundation also provided direct and emergency support for TIP victims and survivors during the Covid-19 lockdown and border closure associated with the pandemic.

PROSECUTION

In Laos, the Foundation is implementing the National Networks to Combat Trafficking and Strengthen Access to Justice project, funded by J/TIP, which aims to improve local identification of TIP victims, link TIP victims to legal aid, and provide support for TIP victims through the prosecution process. The project leverages the Foundation's network of over 90 legal aid offices established at the district and provincial levels across Laos in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and builds on our extensive work on supporting TIP victims and increasing access to justice in the country.

The project also raises awareness of TIP laws and options for assistance and legal redress available to TIP victims and their families in at-risk communities.

In Sri Lanka, in partnership with the Nielsen Company and Women and Media Collective, and with support from J/TIP, the Foundation created a reporting system with trafficking data to strengthen victim protection and increase trafficking prosecutions. This project built the capacity of stakeholders to collect and report data, while supporting the dissemination of collected information to relevant stakeholders. In collaboration with the International Labour Organization and Helvetas, the Foundation aimed to respond to the multi-dimensional labor migration and human trafficking nexus. The project is supporting research to inform policy and practice; building capacity of recruitment agents and government officers, counselors, and legal advisors; adapting new technologies to inform the public on fair migration practices; and strengthening the prosecution and investigation systems.

PARTNERSHIP

The Asia Foundation coordinated the Australian Government's initiative to support the implementation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children (ACTIP). The project supports ASEAN-led counter-trafficking efforts, with a focus on cross-sectoral initiatives that involve more than one ASEAN sectoral body. The project was designed to provide flexible, cross-sectoral support to the implementation of ACTIP and specific activities contained in the ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Bohol TIP Work Plan 2017-2020. Outcomes included increased cross-sectoral engagement on counter-trafficking work, progressing ASEAN implementation of the Bohol Work Plan, and analytical work on improving the effectiveness of support to ASEAN sectoral bodies.

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives and expanding opportunities across Asia and the Pacific. Informed by decades of experience and deep local expertise, our work across the region is focused on good governance, women's empowerment and gender equality, inclusive economic growth, environment and climate action, and regional and international relations.

Headquartered in San Francisco, with an office in Washington, DC, The Asia Foundation works through its network of 19 country offices across Asia and the Pacific. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals. In 2022, we provided \$86.7 million in direct program support and distributed textbooks and other educational materials valued at \$2.4 million.



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