



UN-ACT

United Nations Action for Cooperation
against Trafficking in Persons

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2016



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAPTIP	Australia–Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons
AAT	Alliance Anti Traffic
ACTIP	ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children
AICHR	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
Bali Process	Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime
BCC	Behavioral Change Communication
CCPCR	Cambodian Center for the Protection of Child Rights
COMMIT	Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSP	Civil Society Platform
CYF	COMMIT Youth Forum
GAATW	Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women
GMS	Greater Mekong Sub-region
HTWG	Human Trafficking Working Group
IAWG	Inter-Agency Working Group on Counter Trafficking in Persons
ICAT	Inter-Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking in Persons
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMM	Inter-Ministerial Meeting
IOM	International Organization for Migration
Lao PDR	Lao People’s Democratic Republic
LPN	Labour Rights Promotion Network
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	National Plans of Action
NRM	National Referral Mechanism
PoA	Plan of Action
RMO	Regional Management Office
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SeaCAT	Southeast Asia Coordination Group Against Trafficking in Persons
SOM	Senior Officials Meeting
SOMTC	Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPA	Sub-regional Plan of Action
TF	Taskforce
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
ToT	Training of Trainers
TWG	Technical Working Group
UN	United Nations
UN-ACT	United Nations Action for Cooperation Against Trafficking in Persons
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIAP	United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VFI	Village Focus International
VIJUSAP	Viet Nam Justice Support Association for the Poor
WV	World Vision

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations Action for Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons (UN-ACT) is a regional project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with a regional management office in Bangkok and six country offices across the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS: Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam). UN-ACT was launched in 2014 to counter human trafficking in the GMS, and is positioned at the strategic intersection of governance, policy, research, coordination and direct interventions.

UN-ACT provides technical, coordination and financial support to the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking (COMMIT), an inter-governmental body that brings together the six countries in the GMS in a joint undertaking to counter human trafficking. Throughout 2016, the COMMIT governments continued implementing the 4th COMMIT Sub-Regional Plan of Action on trafficking (SPA IV) supported by UN-ACT. Ongoing efforts aim at building national capacities for a more sustainable COMMIT, with related functions being gradually integrated into the countries' own systems and procedures.

UN-ACT provided results-based management (RBM) and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) trainings to the governments of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam, and supported five out of six COMMIT countries to strategically develop their M&E frameworks. This is enabling the governments to improve the measurements and effectiveness of their counter-trafficking responses.

The COMMIT governments made significant progress in implementing their COMMIT work plans in 2016 and all, for the first time, reported back on the estimates of their execution rates (26% Cambodia, 100% China, 83% Lao PDR, 50% Myanmar, 88% Thailand, and 81% Viet Nam).

UN-ACT provided extensive technical assistance to the development of common COMMIT guidelines on victim identification and referrals as well as a set of ASEAN-COMMIT indicators of human trafficking and related phenomena for use in the GMS. COMMIT governments in February 2016 agreed that victim identification frameworks and referral mechanisms were a priority for the COMMIT process. This follows the agreement of victim identification indicators at the ASEAN-COMMIT workshop in Malaysia in December 2015. Prior to this, the COMMIT governments had undertaken a substantial review of victim identification, protection, and (re-) integration efforts in the region, through the 'After Trafficking' research initiative. The guidelines were developed using a human rights-centered approach and with particular consideration for the specific needs of women and children. All countries agreed on

the need for providing access to adequate translation services throughout the identification and referral process. The guidelines emphasize the importance of providing recovery and reflection periods, which marks an important step forward towards meeting international norms. Further, all countries agreed on the relevance of creating a standardized process for formal victim identification and developing a mechanism through which countries can share information about trafficked persons in order to better facilitate their repatriation and subsequent reintegration processes. Both the guidelines and indicators were formally adopted by all the governments.

UN-ACT continued to increase access to evidence-based data on human trafficking by conducting and supporting research initiatives, in accordance with its Research Strategy. It released its new research report, *Human Trafficking Vulnerabilities: A Study on Forced Marriage between Cambodia and China*, whose findings were widely publicized and informed the negotiations for a bilateral agreement between Cambodia and China on countering human trafficking.

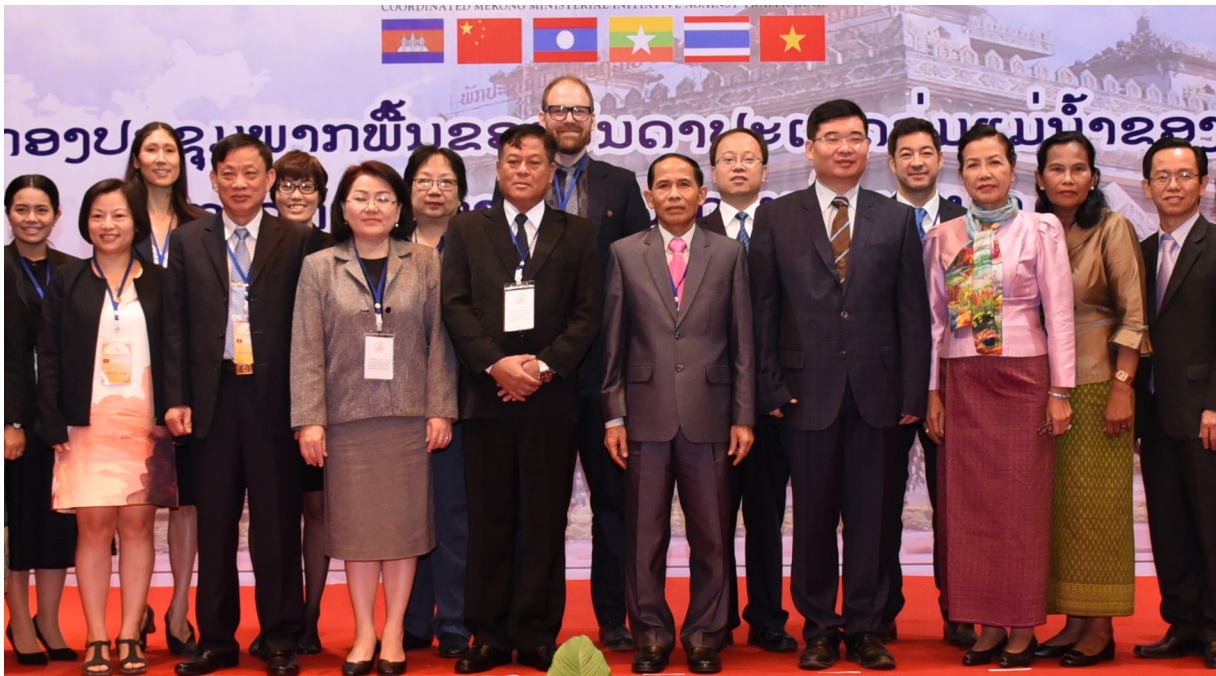
Other examples of knowledge products undertaken in 2016 include a study on regular labor migration channels between Lao PDR and Thailand, a research on the nexus between asylum and human trafficking among urban refugees in Bangkok, and a set of datasheets on the human trafficking situation and responses thereto in the GMS. UN-ACT also began a partnership with the Social Science Division and the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies at Mahidol University for an academic seminar on mixed migration to be held in Bangkok in June 2017. The theme of the event is *Irregular Migrants, Refugees or Victims of Human-Trafficking? Analysis, Advocacy and Assistance between Categorizations and (Self) Identifications*.

UN-ACT continued providing technical and financial support to four civil society organizations (CSOs) in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam under its grants scheme. In 2016, 483 trafficked persons in these countries received direct assistance thanks to this programme. Resulting from continuous support on capacity development including for results-based management and monitoring and evaluation provided by UN-ACT, the CSOs were able to collect and analyze information regarding the total number of trafficked persons they referred and supported. This included age- and sex-disaggregated data to inform future interventions.

UN-ACT also played a strategic role in connecting civil society and youth to work together with COMMIT

governments by providing advocacy opportunities in various forums, such as inter-agency working groups, COMMIT Task Force and Senior Officials Meetings, and others. Importantly, the CSO Platform to COMMIT has been established in the GMS countries to mobilize non-governmental actors that work to counter trafficking in persons, and to strengthen collaboration and coordination with the COMMIT Process. The CSO Platform is composed of community-based organizations, local and international NGOs.

UN-ACT strengthened its collaboration with the private sector in 2016, such as by initiating the development of networks of pro-bono lawyers and clinical legal education programs at universities in Thailand to increase community-level access to justice for migrant workers and trafficked persons. UN-ACT has also been engaging with a major IT company in China to upgrade a mobile phone application UN-ACT developed that helps frontline responders overcome language barriers in victim identification processes. Furthermore, a partnership with Microsoft saw workshops for vulnerable youth conducted in Thailand to increase their understanding of human trafficking and strengthen their IT skills for improved employment opportunities.



COMMIT Senior Officials Meeting 11 in 2016 - COMMIT Government officials and UN-ACT Staff

INTRODUCTION



Trafficking in persons
is an estimated **US\$150
BILLION** industry



One of the world's largest
CRIMINAL INDUSTRIES



20.9 MILLION persons
globally are in forced
labour, according to ILO
estimates



Over **50%** of those in
forced labour are in the
Asia-Pacific region

Figure 1. Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in Numbers

The United Nations Action for Cooperation Against Trafficking in Persons (UN-ACT), a regional project of the United Nations Development Programme, working to counter human trafficking in all its forms. UN-ACT aims to build the capacities of governmental agencies, civil society, academic institutions and the private sector. It also facilitates the coordination and cooperation among relevant stakeholders to work in a mutually supportive manner to effectively combat trafficking.

Key to UN-ACT's work Key to UN-ACT's work is its support to the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT), a government-led, multi-stakeholder process between the GMS countries, established in 2004 to jointly counter human trafficking in the sub-region.

UN-ACT also seeks to address patterns of human trafficking that affect the COMMIT countries but go beyond the GMS, including to Malaysia, Indonesia and even outside of Asia such as the UK, by facilitating constructive relationships and institutionalized forms of cooperation at both government and non-government levels.

Further, through a dedicated research and knowledge transfer portfolio, UN-ACT works to produce and make available the required evidence base for more informed counter-trafficking interventions in the GMS.

UN-ACT also supports civil society organizations (CSOs) and other non-state actors to more meaningfully contribute to counter-trafficking efforts. This includes financial support to CSOs in various countries to provide direct services to trafficked persons.

The four components above are inter-connected, in that UN-ACT's research outputs are channeled into policy-making discussions through its function as COMMIT

Secretariat; its knowledge products also help identify areas of interventions that require additional support, which are then strengthened through the grants programme to civil society stakeholders; and it provides platforms for CSOs to engage with policy-makers and vice-versa, for more coordinated counter-trafficking efforts across the sub-region.



Kaori Kawayabashi, Regional Project Manager of UN-ACT
addresses the audience at the COMMIT Senior Officials
Meeting II in 2016

If anti-trafficking stakeholders in the region are capacitated with knowledge and skills in:



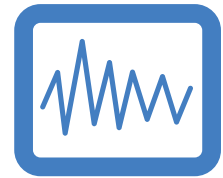
Undertaking institutional reform



Leadership development



Knowledge, training and learning about combating trafficking in persons



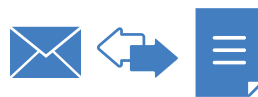
Accountability (planning, monitoring and evaluation)

Then they will be able to effectively coordinate and cooperate to combat trafficking in persons in the region

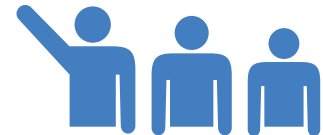
Because



Anti-trafficking institutions will be strengthened



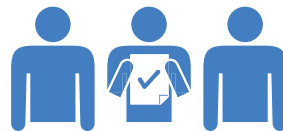
Availability and exchange of information between key institutions in anti-trafficking will increase



Leadership will be enhanced by identifying agents of change at different levels



Knowledge will be enhanced through training and learning that focuses on increasing research capacity in the region



Internal accountability will be ensured through the strategic use of a peer review system (via COMMIT)



External accountability will be ensured by strengthening the role and voice (and opportunity to deploy said voice) of civil society

Assumptions



Political will (+values & attitudes) exists amongst COMMIT members towards ending human trafficking



Anti-trafficking stakeholders operate in an environment in which they are able to use their capacity in an effective manner



Sufficient resources available

Figure 2. UN-ACT's Theory of Change

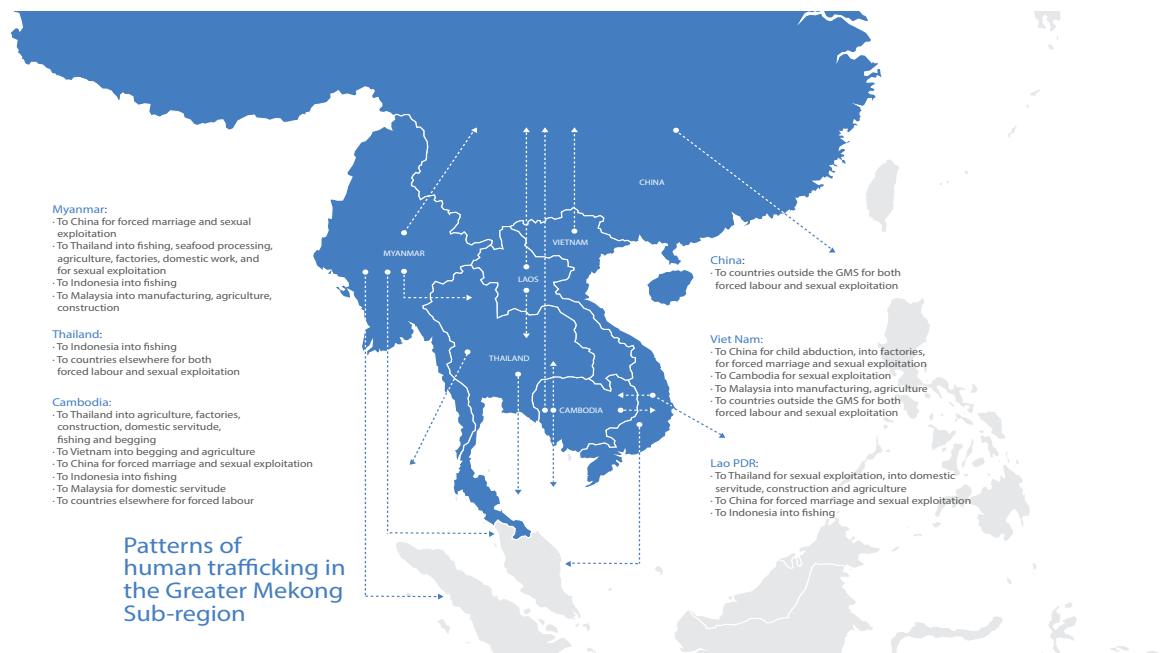


Figure 3. Patterns of human trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE GREATER MEKONG SUB-REGION

Human trafficking is one of the worst forms of human rights abuses, whereby people are exposed to severe forms of exploitation by means of deception and force. Whilst there are no exact figures, estimates suggest that the number of people in conditions of human trafficking globally is in the tens of million, with associated profits generating more than USD 150 billion.

The Greater Mekong Sub-region experiences some of the most extensive and diverse patterns of human trafficking, impacted and compounded by such factors as socio-economic disparities, limited labor rights and migration opportunities, gender inequalities, or weak governance systems.

In 2016, human trafficking in the Southeast Asian fishing and seafood processing industries continued to attract significant attention. The Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation reported that 2,968 fishermen (most of whom were exploited or trafficked) were repatriated from remote Indonesian islands to their countries of origin between 2014 and 2016 (1,818

Thai, 1,000 Myanmar, 100 Cambodian, and 50 Laotian nationals).

Trafficking for forced marriage in China equally remained high on the counter-trafficking agenda. Initially reported primarily from neighboring Myanmar and Viet Nam, cases of forced marriages have increasingly also been reported from Lao PDR and indeed countries further afield, such as Cambodia. Incidents of abuse and exploitation within marriage migration patterns have resulted in restrictive policies being adopted by some governments in the region, raising concerns about discrimination based on gender.

A key reason for forced marriages in China was the country's one-child policy, which, coupled with gender selection, has generated a significant imbalance in sex ratios, with an estimated 30-40 million more men than women of marriageable age in China today. Passport confiscation, isolation, visa regulations and threats of financial penalties are key coercive means applied to force female migrants into marriages. Limited economic opportunities and relative poverty for women coupled with high pressures to contribute financially to family life are often relevant push factors for at times of



Throughout 2016, UN-ACT was planning the International Seminar on Mixed Migration with Mahidol University which will take place in 2017. The photo (a Cambodian female migrant worker who lives in a workers camp beside a construction site) is from Visarut Sankham's photo exhibition that will be featured during the seminar.

risky forms of out-migration in countries of origin. The movement of Rohingya asylum seekers and migrants from western Myanmar and Bangladesh were discussed in political fora at both regional and international levels in 2016, including at the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants. The latter, among other objectives, aimed at generating renewed commitment for concerted efforts to combat human trafficking, and at ensuring that assistance be made available for trafficked persons, victims of abusive people smuggling, and those who have suffered from human rights violations as part of patterns of mass migration.

In Cambodia, the surrogacy industry experienced a significant boom during the reporting period thanks to lax legislation and following crackdowns elsewhere in Southeast and South Asia, including in India, Nepal and Thailand, with concerns about abusive and exploitative practices in this context quickly emerging alongside. The country's brick manufacturing also came under pressure as research suggested the widespread use of debt bondage and child labour in the industry.



Throughout 2016, UN-ACT was planning the International Seminar on Mixed Migration with Mahidol University which will take place in 2017. The photo (a male migrant worker unpacking his belongings from a truck at a workers camp) is from Visarut Sankham's exhibition that will be featured during the seminar.

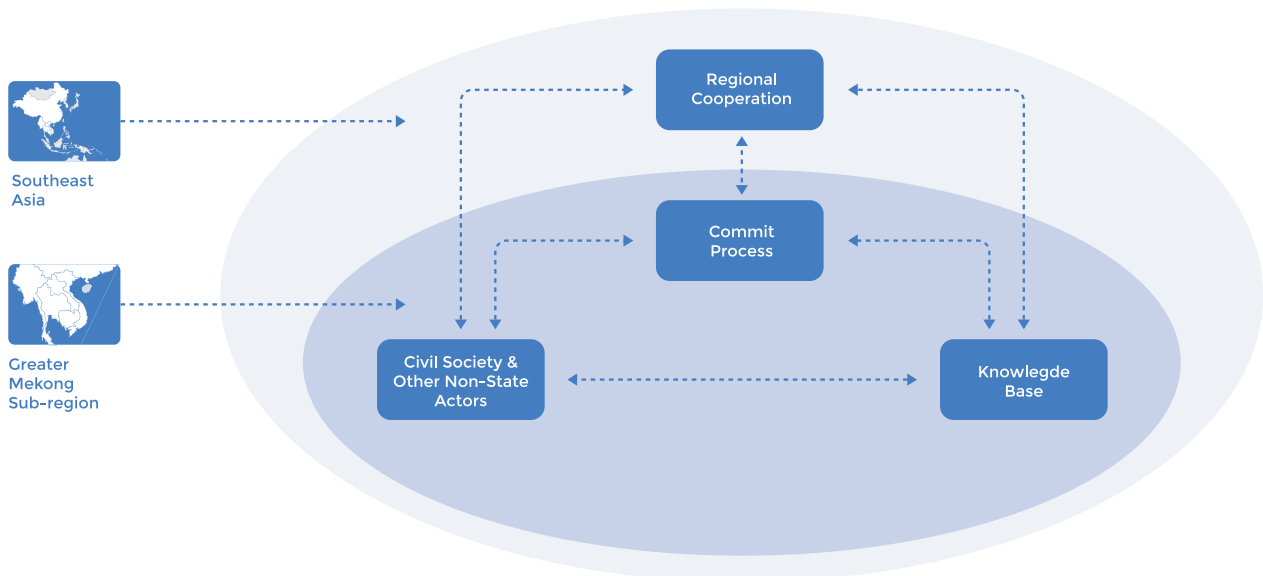


Figure 4. UN-ACT Strategic Framework

OVERVIEW OF UN-ACT ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2016, UN-ACT made significant progress in building the capacity of COMMIT and other anti-trafficking stakeholders in various areas as highlighted below.

[COMMIT governments have strengthened and standardized victim identification and referral mechanisms across the region.](#)

The six COMMIT countries formally adopted the ASEAN-COMMIT Indicators of Human Trafficking and Related Forms of Exploitation and Common COMMIT Guidelines on Victim Identification and Referral Mechanisms. The indicators and guidelines were drafted with the technical support of UN-ACT and will greatly facilitate the effective identification of potential trafficked persons, and their efficient referral to the most suitable support services, including across international borders. More coordinated and standardized efforts will also assist with data collection, analysis and monitoring efforts in COMMIT.

[COMMIT governments have increased capacities to counter human trafficking based on systematic collection and tracking of data.](#)

Five out of six COMMIT countries successfully developed their monitoring and evaluation frameworks for COMMIT programming. These strengthen the countries' national systems for counter-trafficking with

measurable indicators and targets to monitor their progress in policy, victim protection, criminal justice and trafficking prevention under SPA IV, thereby facilitating learning around best practices and interventions requiring improvements.

[Policy makers, academics and non-governmental actors and the public have increased access to evidence-based research on forced marriage and other forms of exploitation.](#)

UN-ACT released a report on forced marriages from Cambodia to China in 2016, painting a comprehensive picture of the marriage migration process between the two countries including factors and practices resulting in forced marriages. The findings in the report have helped to identify opportunities for prevention and protection interventions, and have informed a bilateral agreement between the two governments to counter human trafficking. The findings will also be useful for actors in other countries in the region that experience forced marriage patterns with China.

In addition, UN-ACT has finalized a research report on recruitment and employment experiences among regular Laotian migrant workers in Thailand, which will be published in 2017. This follows a study analyzing the experiences of irregular Laotian migrant workers in Thailand, and will hence allow for comparisons to be made between different migration models, including



A presentation by UN-ACT at SOM 11 noted that victim identification, including referral mechanisms and services, has been a key priority for COMMIT governments in 2016 and a significant aspect of the 'protection' area under SPA IV.

recommendations to strengthen regular labor migration systems that help prevent incidences of abuse and exploitation.

[COMMIT governments have increased capacities and engagement with civil society to refer and support trafficked persons.](#)

The six COMMIT governments reported that over 8,100 trafficked persons were referred and supported through national and transnational referral mechanisms as part of the COMMIT process since April 2014 (when the UN-ACT project was established) with 2,718 of those having been assisted in 2016 including 1,094 who were referred from government agencies to CSOs, or vice versa. UN-ACT has been providing capacity development and advocating for results-based management approaches and more concrete mechanisms for collection and tracking of data related to human trafficking. As a result, there has been an increase in improved victim identification and referral mechanisms in the region as well as more systematic collection and tracking of data.

Details of the Achievements for UN-ACT's Four Outputs

Output 1: The COMMIT Process is strengthened to become sustainable and self-reliant

Activity Result 1.1: COMMIT accountability and transparency enhanced

In February 2016, a Regional COMMIT Taskforce meeting was held in Bangkok to review implementation of 2015 COMMIT activities and identify COMMIT priorities for 2016. Key areas of discussion included victim identification frameworks, the draft COMMIT capacity baseline and development strategy, reporting on indicators in SPA IV, COMMIT-ASEAN cooperation, and engagement with civil society stakeholders.

With support from UN-ACT, the agreed 2016 work plans were aligned with SPA IV to streamline the GMS governments' anti-human trafficking efforts in a coordinated manner. In an effort to increase their ownership of the COMMIT Process, governments increasingly contributed funds to their COMMIT activities. They also engaged various stakeholders including civil society and international organizations in their National COMMIT Taskforce meetings to discuss work plans and funding (from national budgets and from partners) to implement activities under SPA IV.

Importantly, China became the first COMMIT country to make a financial contribution to UN-ACT, suggesting a strong recognition of UN-ACT's critical role in coordinating and driving regional anti-trafficking efforts, and China's commitment to help the COMMIT Process become increasingly sustainable going forward.

In November 2016, COMMIT representatives met in Vientiane, Lao PDR for the 11th annual COMMIT Senior Officials Meeting (SOM11). The meeting was hosted and funded by the Lao Government and welcomed over 200 anti-human trafficking stakeholders from across the region, including the six COMMIT Task Forces, civil society, ASEAN, UN agencies, embassies, donors and the private sector. The meeting's theme was Strengthening Unity to Improve Victim-Centered Approaches: Learning from COMMIT Experiences. In line with this, SOM11 adopted the ASEAN-COMMIT Indicators of Human Trafficking and Related Forms of Exploitation and the Common COMMIT Guidelines on Victim Identification and Referral Mechanisms.

The key outcomes of the meeting were:

- All COMMIT countries agreed on and adopted the ASEAN-COMMIT Indicators of Human Trafficking and Related Forms of Exploitation as well as the Common COMMIT Guidelines

on Victim Identification and Referral Mechanisms;

- COMMIT countries agreed to follow up on recommendations from the COMMIT Youth Forum, such as inviting young people to join COMMIT Task Force meetings as appropriate, or making funding available to young people to design and implement human trafficking prevention activities. COMMIT countries also agreed to continue to collaborate with CSOs in 2017 and ensure that they are involved in both work planning and implementation around SPA IV;
- COMMIT countries recognized the importance of further capacity development, and committed to continuing efforts to that effect, with support from UN-ACT and other development partners. Additionally, the introduction of a regional COMMIT chair was agreed that will work alongside UN-ACT as the Secretariat to organize regional-level interventions, ensure follow-up and monitor overall progress. The function will rotate every year, with the COMMIT chair also hosting the annual SOM.

Activity Result 1.2: Sufficient technical and functional capacities developed by governments

Following the COMMIT capacity assessment and development strategy conducted in 2015, UN-ACT supported the governments in strengthening their respective technical and functional counter-trafficking capacities, thereby boosting the sustainability and effectiveness of the COMMIT Process. In a significant step forward, the six governments provided most of the required administrative and operational support as well as technical support for national and regional COMMIT Taskforce meetings and SOM11 in 2016.

In 2016, UN-ACT made significant progress in the field of monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and supported governments in developing their national M&E reporting mechanisms for a more results-oriented COMMIT Process. This included identifying dedicated M&E focal points in each of the six countries and training them up in M&E and Results-Based Management (RBM). By the end of the year, sessions of this kind had been conducted in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam (with Myanmar's session planned for 2017), enabling governments to better monitor their own effectiveness of the implementation of the SPA IV.

With support from UN-ACT, a new COMMIT website



2016 Results at a Glance

2,718 Victims Referred and Supported Through National and Transnational Mechanisms

Cambodia: 815

Thailand: 824

China: 348

Lao PDR: 99

Myanmar: 316

Viet Nam: 316

20 Improvements to Anti-Trafficking Policies in the GMS

Civil society (CS) plays a key role in influencing trafficking interventions at the policy level and these improvements to policies were developed following advocacy from CS.

COMMIT governments (6) : Developed and adopted the Common COMMIT Guidelines on Victim Identification and Referral Mechanisms.

Cambodia (2): Published and launched national Guidelines on Victim Identification and Referral Services after about 5 years of advocacy efforts and technical support provided by UN-ACT Cambodia and civil society; Issued a proclamation on the arrangement and functioning of the Poipet Transit Center as part of the implementation of the Sub-decree on the Management of Residential Care Institutions for (presumed) trafficked persons.

China (3) : Promulgated the opinions by China's State Council on reinforcing the protection of unaccompanied children in rural areas which will help prevent and protect vulnerable children from being abused and exploited; Promulgated the Enterprise Labor Protection and Credit Ranking System classifying enterprises based on their compliance with labor laws and policies; Enacted a new judicial interpretation by the Supreme People's Court on trafficking in women and children, which defines the means of trafficking to include coercive measures such as withholding of passports, restriction of freedom of movement, taking advantage of vulnerabilities such as language barriers and other measures.

Lao PDR (3) : Developed and adopted national Victim Identification law on Trafficking in Persons; Enacted the Decree of the President on the Promulgation of the Law on Anti-Trafficking in Persons; Set up the government's first database system as stipulated in the National Plan of Action to address the lack of data and information sharing following the approval of the National Action Plan on Trafficking (2016-2020); Developed a policy that requires trafficking to be incorporated into the police academy- this was followed by the first formal trafficking curriculum for the police academy being developed.

Viet Nam (5) : Approved National Plan of Action on Anti-Trafficking 2016-2020; Developed three sub-components on i) communication on human trafficking prevention and suppression in communities, ii) reception, identification, support and protection of trafficked victims, and iii) international cooperation in combating human trafficking; Amended Articles 119-120 of the Vietnam Penal Code to cover all forms of trafficking.

Figure 5. UN-ACT Results at a glance table 2016



UN-ACT received a token of appreciation for its long-time partnership and support to Cambodia's National Committee for Counter Trafficking (NCCT). The token was given by H.E. Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Chair of the NCCT at the NCCT's annual meeting to review progress in anti-human trafficking. During the meeting, Cambodia also launched its new victim identification guidelines in line with the COMMIT Guidelines on Victim Identification.

was created serving as an online resource center for the COMMIT Process, its interventions and collaborations across the region. COMMIT governments also identified their website focal points, which will be trained in website management by UN-ACT in 2017.

A selection of important results in 2016:

- COMMIT governments have increased capacities to combat human trafficking based on the systematic collection and tracking of data. Five out of six COMMIT countries have successfully developed their M&E frameworks. This is the first time that governments, with support from UN-ACT, were able to build systems for counter-trafficking with measurable indicators and targets to monitor their progress under a COMMIT Sub-regional Plan of Action.
- COMMIT Task Forces engaged national stakeholders on best practices for national standards on victim identification and referral. Following this, COMMIT representatives attending a regional workshop facilitated by UN-ACT entitled 'COMMIT Workshop on Victim Identification and Referral Mechanisms' discussed their national victim identification frameworks and referral mechanisms in existence or development with the aim of improving their identification and referral systems.

- The Government of Lao PDR managed all logistics and administrative tasks in organizing SOM11, allowing UN-ACT to assume a mainly technical and coordinating role. This is the first time that a government provided full financial support to hosting a COMMIT SOM.
- At SOM11, China pledged to annually support COMMIT financially. China is the first COMMIT country to provide financial support to UN-ACT.

Activity Result 1.3: Effective implementation of SPA IV

The six COMMIT governments have been implementing SPA IV, with support from UN-ACT and other development partners. In line with the SPA IV results framework, the governments have continued to strengthen their national systems for counter-trafficking with measurable indicators and targets to monitor progress in policy, victim protection, criminal justice and trafficking prevention.

In 2016, COMMIT governments were able to implement 71% of all planned COMMIT activities. In addition, COMMIT countries allocated more resources, compared to previous years, from their national budgets or fundraised from partners for the implementation of their national COMMIT activities. This development shows commitment towards increasing sustainability

and national ownership and decreasing financial dependence on UN-ACT. UN-ACT is decreasing its financial support and increasing its technical advisory and convening role for COMMIT.

Bilateral and trilateral cooperation between COMMIT countries remained a key priority in 2016, with UN-ACT ensuring that the voices of civil society and trafficked persons were represented and considered in this cooperation. Examples of bi- and multi-lateral agreements reached in 2016 include: the Agreement on Strengthening Cooperation in Counter Trafficking in Persons between Cambodia and China; the Joint Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Agreements Between Vietnam and Cambodia on Anti-human Trafficking and Assisting Victims for 2017-2018; the Plan of Action Phase I (2016-2018) for the 2nd Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Cambodia and Thailand on Bilateral Cooperation for Eliminating Trafficking in Persons and Protecting Victims of Trafficking; the MoU between Lao PDR and Thailand on Cooperation to Combat Trafficking in Persons; and a set of new Annexes for the Myanmar-Thailand Bilateral Standard of Operating Procedures.

Further, various improvements to anti-trafficking policies and systems were made across the six COMMIT countries with support from UN-ACT during 2016 as noted below.



Key results by COMMIT countries supported by UN-ACT under SPA IV in 2016:

- Cambodia, led by its National Committee on Counter Trafficking, developed a National Behavioral Change Communication Strategy for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons in Cambodia, in alignment with SPA IV.
- Cambodia launched its Guidelines on Forms and Procedures for the Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking and Referrals for Appropriate Support Services, strengthening protection interventions for trafficked persons in Cambodia.
- China promulgated its Enterprise Labor Protection regulation.
- The Supreme People's Court of China enacted a new judicial interpretation on trafficking in women and children, which will enter into effect in January 2017.
- Lao PDR developed its second National Plan of Action for 2016-2020, in line with SPA IV. The country also introduced its first Law on Anti-Trafficking in Persons.
- Myanmar's National COMMIT Task Force developed its National Plan of Action (2017-2021) in line with SPA IV, including by realigning its structure to have a more results-based programming approach. Further, the country adopted national Standard Operating Procedures on Return and Reintegration to guide protection interventions for trafficked persons.
- Thailand further enhanced its collaboration with all COMMIT countries through bilateral agreements. All consultations with other COMMIT countries were financed by Thailand including from its anti-trafficking trust fund. The agreements have increased the effectiveness of cross-border anti-trafficking interventions.

PhotoVoice Exhibition, Ha Tinh, Vietnam: UN-ACT implemented a Behaviour Change Communication campaign in a key source province to engage local communities and local authorities in increasing awareness and understanding of unsafe migration and trafficking. Almost 1,000 people visited the exhibition.

Output 2: COMMIT countries increase their cooperation with other countries and regional actors to effectively counter human trafficking

Activity Result 2.1: Joint anti-trafficking efforts of COMMIT countries with key destination countries elsewhere increased

UN-ACT worked to enable stronger relationships between COMMIT and other ASEAN countries, especially Indonesia and Malaysia which are two major destination countries for trafficked persons from the GMS. For example, UN-ACT facilitated the participation of representatives in SOM11 from Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States, who held consultations with COMMIT members at the sidelines of the meeting about strengthened cooperation against human trafficking.

At the bilateral level, Thailand and Malaysia laid the groundwork for the development of an Agreed Cooperation Principle for cooperation in preventing and suppressing trafficking in persons, such as by identifying communication focal points and exchanging information between law enforcement agencies. Elsewhere, Viet Nam and Malaysia signed an MoU on anti-crime co-operation, which serves as the overall framework within which a bilateral agreement on counter-human trafficking can be negotiated. In fact, steps towards such an MoU have already been initiated.

At the regional level, the governments of Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar and Viet Nam respectively ratified the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP). These ratifications demonstrate the commitment of COMMIT governments to collaborate with other countries in the region and to further strengthen regional cooperation against trafficking in persons.

Activity Results 2.2: Institutionalized engagement between COMMIT and ASEAN

The joint development of the ASEAN-COMMIT Indicators of Human Trafficking and Related Forms of Exploitation in late 2015 marked a new dimension of cooperation between the two (sub-)regional bodies against human trafficking, which both sides have built upon during 2016.

The ASEAN Secretariat participated in the Regional COMMIT Task Force in early 2016 for discussions on further developing ASEAN-COMMIT collaboration. Having recognized challenges in victim identification

as a central issue in their counter-trafficking response since 2015, both sides agreed to prioritize the operationalization of the common indicators of human trafficking at national levels, partly to facilitate cross-border cooperation in case referrals.

In 2016, the ASEAN-COMMIT Indicators of Human Trafficking and Related Forms of Exploitation were officially adopted by ASEAN and COMMIT respectively, in the latter case at SOM11. The indicators will assist frontline officials and responders to understand where trafficking may be occurring, including in situations not previously recognized. Ultimately the expectation and design is such that more trafficked persons will be identified and removed from situations of exploitation, leading to an overall increase in the effectiveness of responses.

Further, UN-ACT has continuously supported ASEAN bodies with technical inputs in different fora, including by making interventions on effective communication strategies to prevent human trafficking and about strategies to address exploitation in the region's fisheries sector.

At the national level, cooperation between focal points related to human trafficking in ASEAN and COMMIT is also on the increase, with COMMIT Task Forces now routinely involving their counterparts working with ASEAN in their meetings for improved coordination.

Activity Result 2.3: Coordination and cooperation among relevant regional actors for anti-trafficking increased

UN-ACT organized three regional network meetings in 2016, which brought together civil society, UN agencies, other international organizations and academic stakeholders from across Southeast and East Asia to discuss coordination, joint programming and the latest developments in the sector. The meetings are open to all actors that deal with counter-trafficking at bi- or multilateral levels. Aside from partners updating each other on their programming, each network gathering has a thematic focus that is explored through different formats, such as group work, panel discussions or otherwise. The themes in 2016 were 1) Legal support and the rights of victims in the criminal justice response to human trafficking, 2) Return, repatriation and potential alternatives for human trafficking survivors, and 3) Shifting attitudes as part of a comprehensive behaviour change approach to counter-trafficking.

Further, there have been a number of initiatives to coordinate counter-trafficking efforts amongst relevant UN agencies with the active participation of UN-ACT.



CASE STUDY 1 : SECURING JUSTICE FOR TRAFFICKED FISHERMEN: *“We need to build trust”*

The long and arduous road to securing justice and compensation for trafficked fishermen starts with building trust. For Patima Tungpuchayakul, manager of the Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation (LPN), this includes buying the fishermen new underwear.

“Right after you rescue somebody off the boat, you have to buy everything for them. They have nothing on them,” Patima said.

In between coordinating efforts to identify, rescue and refer potential victims of human trafficking to local enforcement authorities, Patima has been making frequent trips to local markets on the Indonesian island of Benjina. It was there that she has been buying essential goods such as toiletries, T-shirts, shoes, and even underwear, in order to assist the men and help build relationships and trust with those who were rescued from fishing vessels after being slaves on the high seas in highly abusive situations.

Amnaj* from Thailand is one of more than 2,900 fishermen who were rescued off the Indonesian Islands since 2014. The high-profile operations were reported by the Associated Press in a series of Pulitzer Prize winning media stories that brought international attention to the issue of indentured servitude in the seafood industry. The rescue efforts were largely coordinated by LPN: Patima played an instrumental role in the process. Between August 2014 and October 2016, she made 12 trips to the Indonesian islands of Benjina, Ambon, and Tual to participate in rescue operations.

The work, however, does not end with the rescue operations but instead marks the beginning of a comprehensive process of providing support. In the words of Patima, trafficked persons are so traumatized from their experience that *“they are not ready to be normal human beings.”*

“The first few days after we rescue somebody, the person does not even want to talk to us. They have been away from home for years- they have no money, no family, no way of understanding how society works now. It was a lot for them to take in, so they are not yet ready to integrate with society,” Patima continued.

This is why support - whether psychological or administrative - is so critical for trafficked persons like Amnaj, especially if they wish to access justice and compensation for suffering endured. After Amnaj was psychologically ready to talk about compensation, he told Patima he did not *“want his case to be complicated”* due to fear of retaliation from the perpetrators

As a result, LPN decided to pursue wage compensation for him through filing a case with the Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW) in Thailand. LPN helped Amnaj to reconstruct his narrative of being trafficked, and provided him with financial assistance so that he could pay for his accommodation in Bangkok where DLPW is located, and transport to and from Samut Sakhon province where he was being sheltered by LPN.



A Thai fisherman, recognized as a trafficking victim, reunited with mother after being rescued by LPN in Indonesia. His mother reports that he has ongoing mental-health issues and symptoms of paranoia.

“Its a long process because most of the fishermen can’t remember much. You have to revisit the events with them several times and help them construct the timeline several times until they get it right. Said Patima.

Through LPN’s assistance, Amnaj received more than 180,000 THB (about 5,400 USD) in wage compensation, which he gave to his mother for medical expenses.

As of December 2016, LPN had helped 184 trafficked persons from Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia and Lao access justice and secure compensation. UN-ACT has been providing financial and technical support to LPN to assist the trafficked fishermen. UN-ACT also helped LPN to bring international attention to the issue of trafficked fisherman at sea through providing a platform for fishermen to share their experiences and advocate for more action on addressing anti-trafficking in the fishing industry. This included engaging the fishermen in regional fora such as the Inter-Agency Working Group on Counter Trafficking in Persons (IAWG) facilitated by UN-ACT. The fora provided opportunities for stakeholders (government agencies, civil society organizations, international organizations and private sector entities) to share information, discuss challenges, lessons learned and coordinate joint efforts on anti trafficking in the fishing industry and other sectors.

*A pseudonym is used to protect the identity of the individual affected.

This includes the South East Asia Coordination Group Against Trafficking in Persons (SEACAT), for which UN-ACT serves as one of the rotating chairs. SEACAT is designed to serve as a regional arm of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) at the global level. SEACAT serves to help UN agencies to identify synergies in their approaches and interventions, drawing on and benefitting from each other's mandates and expertise, and identifying and upscaling best practices in the sector. SEACAT has been developing an initiative to evaluate development partners' anti-trafficking responses in order to identify best practices and lessons learned and to assess what kind of interventions are the most effective.

UN-ACT continued to provide extensive technical support and strategic inputs to initiatives by partners during 2016. This included contributions to the UN Migration and SDG Concept Paper in collaboration with other UN agencies. Further, UN-ACT has been an active member of the UN Technical Working Group on Sustainable Societies which covers issues including migration and human trafficking and has been supporting the development of the Global Compact on Migration, mandated by the UN General Assembly. The project also gave numerous presentations in 2016 to support partners' events, including on the labor migration-human trafficking nexus at a conference to commemorate International Migrants Day at Chulalongkorn University, and on profiling traffickers at USAID's Counter-Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) Evidence Summit.

UN-ACT continued to be involved in the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime in 2016 and provided technical support to several events including a workshop on financial flows underpinning criminal activities. UN-ACT also presented at a Bali Process session on research and M&E at their bi-annual training on victim-centered approaches. UN-ACT also provided technical inputs to the Bali Process' event on Pathways to Employment, exploring opportunities for refugees to be incorporated in labor markets of host countries.

Further, UN-ACT engaged with actors outside the GMS including contributing to an ILO-convened working group at the global level that is developing research tools and measurement frameworks for prevalence estimates of modern slavery including human trafficking. A resolution is being prepared for adoption by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 2018, which would provide a standard for measurement at the national level for decades to come.

UN-ACT staff serve as the Asia-Pacific focal point for UNDP's global work on migration and displacement and is regularly called upon to support UNDP and provide inputs in high-level regional meetings related to these phenomena. UN-ACT has provided technical inputs into a number of policy papers for UNDP's global work on migration and displacement including through the SDGs. The project has helped shape UNDP's global approach to migration and displacement including human trafficking, and has assisted in ensuring that the organization played a key role at the 19 September global UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants convened by the Secretary General, as well as the Global Forum on Migration and Development in Dhaka in 2016. The forum focused primarily on supporting the development of two Global Compacts, the one on migration noted above and one on refugees that were initiated by the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. By participating in this forum, UN-ACT contributed to high-level political discussions involving the Bangladeshi Prime Minister, ministers from other countries, Director-Generals from ILO and IOM as well as UN Under-Secretary Generals around the development of right-based compacts related to different manifestations of migratory patterns.

Output 3: Policy makers, academia, non-state actors and the public have increased access to evidence-based research and knowledge on human trafficking

Activity Result 3.1: Evidence-base for anti-trafficking interventions enhanced and accessible

In 2016, UN-ACT published an in-house research report titled 'Human Trafficking Vulnerabilities in Asia: A Study on Forced Marriage between Cambodia and China', in partnership with Ratanak International and other organizations. The report analyzes recruitment, brokering, transportation and exploitation patterns, and the activities that link these processes together. Further, the research provides an overview of the service needs among Cambodians trafficked to China for forced marriage, in China, during the repatriation process, and upon return to Cambodia. Opportunities for interventions to help prevent forced marriages from occurring, and to extend protective services at policy and programming levels are also identified. The study was requested by the Cambodian and Chinese governments in support of their negotiations of a bilateral agreement to counter trafficking in persons, which the report helped inform.

COMMIT countries defined establishing and strengthening (trans-)national referral mechanisms

(NRMs/TRMs) as a joint priority for 2016. As such, in China, UN-ACT, in collaboration with World Vision, supported a study on different models of NRMs at the global level, their comparison with existent systems in a Chinese context, and recommendations to introduce a comprehensive NRM in China in line with international standards. The initial findings, which included an analysis of legal and procedural gaps in the current referral practices, were shared with the Chinese COMMIT Task Force, with a final report expected for 2017.

UN-ACT, in collaboration with the Thailand Institute of Justice (TIJ), the Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation and the Social Responsibility Law Office, published the report Prosecuting a forced labor and human trafficking case in the agricultural sector: challenges, lessons learned and best practices from a multidisciplinary team approach in Thailand. The study is an in-depth analysis of the prosecution of a prominent and complicated human trafficking case in the agricultural sector in Thailand, covering the existent legal framework, protection mechanisms for trafficked persons as well as the role of multidisciplinary teams including recommendations for improvements across these areas going forward.

UN-ACT was also working on other research projects that were still ongoing by the end of the reporting period. One, conducted in partnership with the ILO, looks into the recruitment and employment experiences of Laotian migrant workers who went through the bilateral MoU mechanism to take up work in Thailand, with a view to help strengthen regular labor migration channels. The second project, in collaboration with the People Serving People Foundation, examines recruitment and employment experiences among urban asylum-seekers and refugees in Bangkok, analyzing status-related vulnerabilities towards abuse and exploitation. Additionally, the 'Reintegration Practitioners Guidebook' (with World Vision and Nexus) was developed in 2016 based on the "After Trafficking" research report (UNIAP/UN-ACT with Nexus) of 2013. These three reports are expected to be published in 2017.

In addition to these research reports, UN-ACT provided technical support to the following research reports in 2016:

- The 2016 Global Slavery Index by Walk Free
- A Thai Legal Gap Analysis by Liberty Asia
- A Justice Center Hong Kong study analyzing the overlaps between human trafficking and asylum based on their case database

- Two ILO studies, one on working conditions and attitudes experienced by migrant domestic workers in Thailand and Malaysia and another on experiences of migrant women in the Thai construction sector
- A study on trafficking in persons' patterns across Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand by UNODC
- A victim identification survey among Cambodian deportees from Thailand by Samaritan's Purse in Cambodia

Activity Result 3.2: Strategic dissemination and advocacy on research findings to influence policy and programming strengthened

UN-ACT's research including findings and recommendations informed workshops and trainings in several COMMIT countries.

In China, UN-ACT's study on forced marriage between Cambodia and China provided important inputs for a training workshop for service providers and police. The study also led to a visit between shelter managers and Cambodian officials as part of an effort between the two countries to address forced marriages. China and Cambodia also developed a bilateral agreement to counter human trafficking that was informed by the research report.

Following the publication of Prosecuting a forced labor and human trafficking case in the agricultural sector: challenges, lessons learned and best practices from a multidisciplinary team approach in Thailand that UN-ACT and partners published, UN-ACT co-facilitated a workshop with TIJ bringing together the public prosecutor, police, civil society representatives and social workers to reflect on the research findings and recommendations. Participants highlighted that the high levels of cooperation between relevant stakeholders was a key factor for prosecutorial success, paving the way for more institutionalized, multi-disciplinary approaches going forward.

In Viet Nam, the findings of the MOLISA study (that UN-ACT contributed to), General Assessment of Facilities and Supporting Service for Trafficked Victims in Viet Nam, informed the development of the country's National Plan of Action (2016-2020). Important areas that UN-ACT advocated for were incorporated, such as strengthening legislation on victim protection during the procedural process, standardizing victim support services, and improving service facilities.

Further, UN-ACT maintains a comprehensive resource



CASE STUDY 2: PHUONG, 22 SOLD BY BOYFRIEND TO CHINA FOR 2 YEARS

Phuong* was born as a Nung, an ethnic minority, in one of the poorest areas in Phin Ung village in Vietnam near the Chinese border. Being the eldest daughter in a large family, she quit school during her 11th grade to look for a job to share the burden of her parents and support her younger siblings' education. Her boyfriend and classmate Lanh* took Phuong to meet a woman named Dung* who took her to China through Dong Van District. The next morning, Lanh and Dung had disappeared. A Chinese man paid for Phuong and brought her to Jangxi province to become his wife.

Phuong always followed her husband's commands in order to not be beaten or treated too harshly compared to other women in similar forced marriage situations. In time, Phuong gave birth to a boy and when her son was two months old, her husband's family forced Phuong to work in a factory. Her husband kept all of her income so she had been unable to leave her situation and return to Vietnam.

However, she found out that the factory owner was withholding two months of her salary so she persuaded him to give her this salary without letting her husband know. She escaped and traveled to the Nghia Thuan border-guard office where she reported Lanh and Dung's involvement in her human trafficking / forced marriage situation.

The Ha Giang Legal Aid and Consulting Center provided support to Phuong. Since all of Phuong's identification papers had been confiscated by the family of her husband, she had been removed from the family registration book.

The Center collaborated with local authorities and the police on re-instating her registration. The Center also provided counselling and secured a lawyer to represent Phuong in the court proceedings. The case was brought to court on 20 September 2016 and Phuong was compensated with 21,360,000 VND (approximately USD 940).

Phuong has become an advocate in the fight against human trafficking to prevent other young girls going through experiences like hers. Currently, Phuong is married to a loving and caring husband, with whom she has a child, and lives with her new family.

The Ha Giang Legal Aid and Consulting Center belongs to the Viet Nam Justice Support Association for the Poor (VIJUSAP) which receives financial and technical support from UN-ACT. UN-ACT also supports VIJUSAP's collaboration efforts with relevant actors at the provincial level to provide legal aid assistance to victims of trafficking. In the case of Phuong, UN-ACT supported the efforts to hire the lawyer to represent Phuong in court.

*Pseudonyms are used to protect identities of individuals affected.

center related to human trafficking in the region on its website covering research, tools & guidelines, laws & agreements, and other publications. During the reporting period, the UN-ACT website saw 20,739 sessions (6,547 from returning visitors and 14,192 from new visitors) involving 39,228 page views from 14,363 users. It is worth noting that UN-ACT China maintains a separate Chinese-language website, however the tracking of website traffic appears to be blocked.

UN-ACT also communicates through Facebook, Twitter, and an online newsletter, where regular, up-to-date information related to human trafficking is shared with interested audiences. In 2016, 16,636 people followed the UN-ACT Facebook page; the UN-ACT twitter profile is tracked by some 400 individuals and organizations; and over 1,686 people are subscribers to the UN-ACT quarterly newsletter.

Output 4: Civil society and other non-governmental actors are able to contribute more effectively to anti-trafficking efforts

Activity Result 4.1: Increased engagement between government and civil society

Building on the direct engagement between governments and CSOs during SOM10 and SOM11 and the 4th Inter-Ministerial Meeting in 2015, there was a considerable increase in civil society engagement with COMMIT as facilitated by UN-ACT during 2016.

Of the 2,718 trafficked persons supported through COMMIT's (trans-)national referral mechanisms in 2016, 1,094 were reportedly referred either from civil society organizations to government entities, or vice versa. Amongst these were 815 trafficked persons referred in Cambodia, 42 in China, 133 in Lao PDR, and 104 in Myanmar.

At the regional level, CSOs participated in the Regional COMMIT Task Force meetings in February and November 2016. At the national level, key examples of CSO-government cooperation in the COMMIT framework are outlined below:

- Government officials and NGO service providers worked together in a training on victim

identification, repatriation and reintegration in Thailand (390 participants) and Viet Nam (197).

- 92 trafficked persons in Cambodia, 19 in Lao PDR, 12 in Myanmar, and 9 in Viet Nam received individualized support from government and NGO caseworkers who helped survivors with identifying needs and financial aid, and regularly monitored their progress.
- World Vision and Save the Children supported national efforts in the development and implementation of prevention activities across the GMS countries. World Vision also organized fora in Myanmar and Viet Nam to facilitate dialogues between trafficked persons and government officials around their experiences in Thai shelters and the repatriation process.
- In Lao PDR, Terre des Hommes supported a local partner to carry out consultations in a source area for migration and human trafficking as part of a national process informing the Lao Government's regular report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Terre des Hommes also provided funding for legal assistance and counselling to trafficked persons in Cambodia and Thailand through its local partners.
- By convening regular stakeholder meetings and inter-agency working groups at a national level in the GMS countries, UN-ACT remains a crucial coordinating body to strengthen engagement between COMMIT governments and civil society

in counter-trafficking. The project continues to ensure broad participation and inclusion of diverse perspectives, addressing both existing and emerging trafficking-related patterns. Through these platforms, the project helped enhance coordinated responses, avoid overlapping efforts, and bring a collective voice of civil society in engaging policy makers around advocacy and programming interventions in 2016. For example, UN-ACT was asked in Cambodia to act as a bridge between key government institutions, namely COMMIT and the National Committee on Counter Trafficking (NCCT), and all CSOs in the anti-trafficking community to gather inputs and share recommendations from the latter during the development of a bilateral agreement between Cambodia and China. Similarly, in Myanmar, UN-ACT initiated regular CSO participation in the human trafficking working group to directly engage with government agencies, and to promote a human-rights based approach to CTIP interventions. In Viet Nam, UN-ACT and IOM co-chair the Counter Trafficking Network with counter-trafficking stakeholders including civil society. The Network works together to build stronger coordination efforts and developed collaborative efforts to raise the awareness of the plight of trafficked victims, and promote their rights.

- UN-ACT worked with World Vision to bring managers from both government and non-government shelters as well as volunteers from China to visit hotspot areas for human trafficking in Cambodia.



Figure 6. UN-ACT website and Facebook page

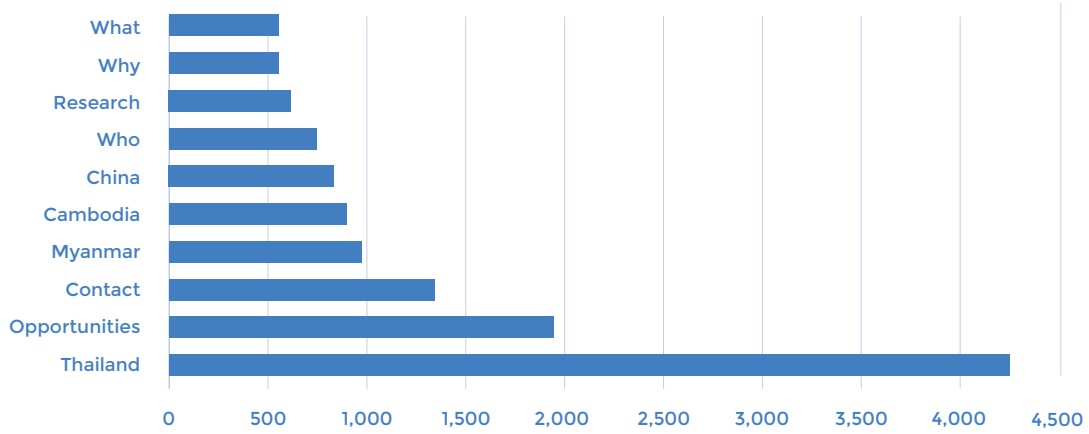


Figure 7. Pages most visited on the UN-ACT website in 2016 (excluding home page)

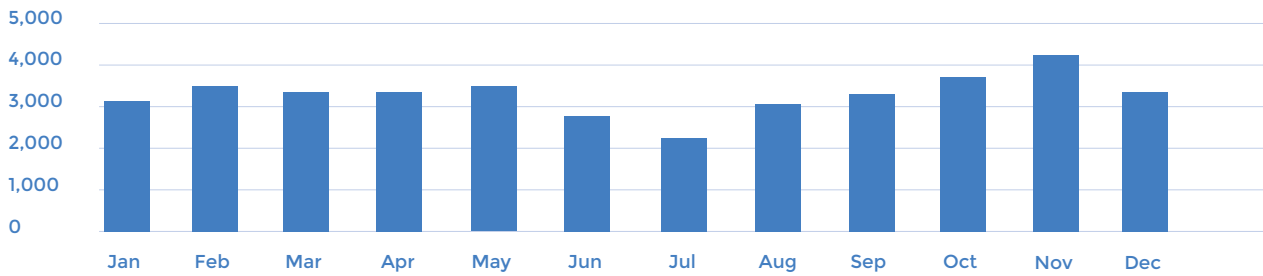


Figure 8. UN-ACT website page views in 2016 (by month)

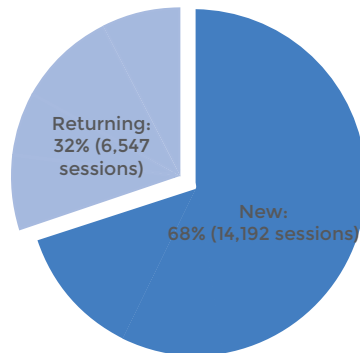


Figure 9. New vs. returning visitors on UN-ACT website in 2016

The objective of the visit was for the visitors to hear the voices of the clients they serve and to gain a better understanding of the communities from where they come. This was the first time that NGO representatives and volunteers from China joined a trip with government counterparts, providing an opportunity to build trust and relationships for more integrated services to trafficked persons.

- With the aim of continuing to institutionalize civil society engagement in the COMMIT Process, decisions were made at SOM11 on how the CSO Platform to COMMIT can meaningfully contribute to the implementation of SPA IV.

The COMMIT governments have been increasingly working with youth through the COMMIT Youth Forum where young people from all COMMIT countries come together to discuss with their peers and government officials effective approaches to counter human trafficking under the 'prevention' pillar of SPAIV. In 2016, the process for selecting youth for the regional COMMIT Youth Forum was designed to ensure national ownership, in that it was conducted at the country level through panels including government agencies. At SOM11, 12 youth representatives led one of the sessions and engaged in direct discussions with policy makers from their respective countries on effective prevention efforts.

In addition to the COMMIT Youth Forum, UN-ACT has contributed to a range of other youth initiatives by providing technical support and guidance, and by mediating between civil society, governments and regional institutions in 2016. Examples include:

- Youth from Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam were trained by CSOs to be able to better represent the views and interests of youth in the community and with government officials.
- Youth clubs, supported by World Vision at the community level, in all six COMMIT countries utilized toolkits in their efforts to prevent human trafficking and unsafe migration.
- 64 youths in Cambodia organized and participated in youth debates with community members and local government officials to facilitate dialogue and raise concerns around deficiencies in legal migration channels.
- Children, supported by Terre des Hommes, engaged on migration, human trafficking, child sexual exploitation and online protection with representatives of ASEAN governments in the

ASEAN Children's Forum 2016.

Activity Result 4.2: Civil society has increased and sustained capacity to support Victims of Trafficking

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are important stakeholders in protecting and promoting the human rights of trafficked persons. Through UN-ACT's grant program, CSOs have been able to provide direct support to 1,307 trafficked persons between 2014 and December 2016. During the reporting period, four CSOs in four COMMIT countries extended the following services to those in need thanks to financial and technical support from UN-ACT:

- Cambodia: The Cambodian Centre for the Protection of Children's Rights (CCPCR) provided shelter, basic needs, psychosocial counselling, health care, vocational skills training, job placement, and re-integration support to 234 trafficked persons (131 men and 103 women).
- Lao PDR: Village Focus International (VFI) worked to improve border systems and village protection mechanisms to counter trafficking in southern Lao PDR. Key results included a cooperative framework between local government and VFI to establish a transit center at the border. VFI also trained local authorities in interviewing techniques, case



At SOM 11, 12 youth representatives led a session on the important role of youth in anti-trafficking and engaged in discussions with policy makers from their respective countries on effective prevention efforts.

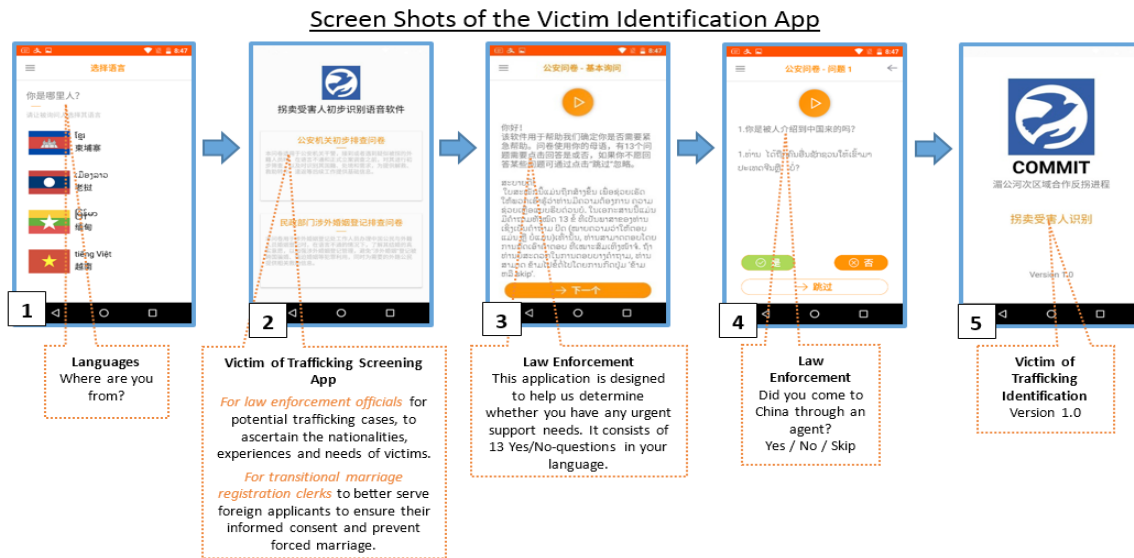


Figure 10. Identifying victims of trafficking can be challenging because there are significant disparities in relevant definitions and a mixture of diverse existing criminal patterns. Most significantly there is often a language barrier between the first responders and those who are trafficked across-borders. With this in mind, UN-ACT has worked across country borders, and coordinated with the private sector and civil society organizations to develop a mobile phone application that helps first responders overcome language barriers and identify victims of trafficking in China. The app provides links to Chinese interpreters who speak the relevant language, so that users can directly contact them if in-depth interview with the potential victims is needed. In addition, relevant international and domestic laws and policies regarding the protection of victims of trafficking can also be found in the app for quick and easy reference. A similar app is being developed for Thailand.

identification and investigation. This is an important step in creating an effective National Referral Mechanism (NRM) including a comprehensive protection structure for trafficked persons. During 2016, VFI, together with immigration officers, assisted 304 persons (168 men and 136 women).

- Thailand: The Labour Rights Promotion Network (LPN), during the grant period of 2015-2016, provided direct assistance to 637 trafficked persons (416 women and 221 men). LPN also developed and strengthened various local-level volunteer networks to better assist trafficked persons, including the Thai and Migrant Fishers Union Group and the Multi-Stakeholder Initiative for Accountable Supply Chain of Thai Fisheries. These clustered and specialized networks engage in concerted efforts to protect the rights of trafficked persons.
- Viet Nam: The Vietnam Justice Support Association for the Poor (VIJUSAP) provided direct assistance including legal assistance to 64 trafficked persons. The organization also extended additional legal assistance to 1,083 people (612 women and 471 men) who accessed their legal aid clinic. In addition, 53 trafficked persons participated in a needs assessment, with key results pointing to the importance of standardized access to justice procedures as well as counselling programs. UN-

ACT will further support VIJUSAP in 2017 to ensure that the results of the assessment are put into practice.

Activity Result 4.3: Increased engagement by private sector

In 2016, UN-ACT continued its engagement and collaboration with private sector partners. Key collaborative efforts are highlighted below:

- **PILnet:** The UN-ACT worked with PILnet, the Hong Kong-based Global Network for Public Interest Law, to develop networks of pro-bono lawyers and clinical legal education programs in universities in Thailand as a pilot country. The aim is to increase community-level access to justice for migrant workers and trafficked persons.
- **Mobile Application:** In China, working with government, private sector and CSOs, initiated the development of a GMS-language mobile application to help frontline responders in their victim identification efforts. UN-ACT plans to develop a similar mobile application in Thailand.
- **Microsoft YouthSpark:** UN-ACT worked with Microsoft YouthSpark and World Vision to provide ICT and human trafficking training to more than 100



CASE STUDY 3: VILLAGE FOCUS INTERNATIONAL (VFI)

Vatsana* is 21 years old and the youngest of six siblings. She is from Dasianoy village in Salavan province, Lao PDR. Her family worked in farming but was never able to grow enough rice to feed the entire family. When Vatsana was 15, her mother fell sick and passed away so she dropped out of school as there was nobody to support her education. Her father remarried and moved out of the family home to live with his new wife. With little prospects, Vatsana sought work in Thailand. She was approached by a man who was recruiting people to work on a farm owned by his employer. They used local transport to arrive at the Lao-Thai border at Vangtao village and then walked across the border.

After working in two jobs in Thailand, where she was paid between 2,500 and 3,000 Thai baht (approximately USD 75 to USD 90) per month, Vatsana no longer wanted to stay in Thailand and decided to move back to her village in Lao but along the way, she was arrested by the police who seized all her money and deported her.

Two weeks later, Phet*, a man from a nearby village, convinced Vatsana to work in Thailand again. He said the employer paid well and would cover transport fees, accommodation and food. Vatsana hoped that she would be able to earn enough money to pay for a better future. She was sent to work in Ladkrabang, Bangkok in wholesale stores, construction sites and cleaned houses. She was given no days off, worked long hours, received only two meals a day, and slept less than five hours a day, and sometimes worked through the night. She was not allowed to contact anyone. She was tortured by her employer who scratched her arm with a nail bar, tied her to a pole, and beat her with a rope. She saw other girls who had their arms burnt with an iron. Vatsana worked for her employer for 6 years and never received her salary. Eventually, she escaped with two other girls and found a job in a restaurant in Raminthra, Bangkok where she earned 7,000 Thai baht (approximately USD 210 a month). She only worked for one month, eventually leaving the job because she feared the police.

Vatsana moved to Suradthany province in the southern part of Thailand to work at a mobile phone shop. She was

promised 6,000 Thai baht (approximately USD 180) a month by her employer but was only paid 1,000 Thai baht, stating that the rest will be paid when she leaves. Vatsana worked long hours for 8 months and whenever she asked about her salary, her employer kept saying it would come later. She decided to leave the job and a Thai man helped her contact the Lao Embassy in Bangkok.

Vatsana was repatriated back to Lao where she received assistance from Village Focus International (VFI). She stayed at a VFI shelter and continued her education and trained in hairdressing.

In group counseling, Vatsana shared her story, saying: "I never thought that I would reach where I am today because I have gone through such terrible experiences. I have hope for the future now. I will have my beauty salon in my village and I will build my own family". Vatsana has since graduated from her training and received a small grant from VFI to run a beauty salon in her village. Today, her shop earns a steady income and it is popular with nearby villagers.

UN-ACT provides financial and technical support to the community-based services and programs that VFI offers to repatriated victims of human trafficking in Lao.

* Pseudonyms are used to protect identities of individuals affected.

disadvantaged youths in Thailand's border areas who are vulnerable to human trafficking. The sessions were effective in both informing young people about risks related to exploitation as well as in developing skills that will reduce their vulnerabilities to human trafficking.

- [Liberty Asia](#): UN-ACT supported the NGO Liberty Asia in its Legal Gap Analysis for Thailand and China related to human trafficking and money laundering, which was conducted in collaboration with private law firms and will be the basis for engaging banking and financial companies on their responsibilities in conducting due diligence on clients.
- [Internet Science Cooperation Maanshan City](#): UN-ACT in China collaborated with Internet Science and Technology Corporation Maanshan City to host the UN-ACT website in order to reach a broader Chinese audience.
- [Sharing Value Asia Summit](#): UN-ACT supported the Sharing Value Asia Summit to examine how corporate innovation and partnership can drive social, economic and environmental advances and examine drivers of public-private partnerships

UN-ACT'S Programming Principles

GENDER SENSITIVITY & HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

Gender sensitivity remains at the core of UN-ACT's considerations from the planning stage to the implementation phase and reporting of project activities. The project recognizes the similarities and differences in the experiences of women, men and children trafficking victims and aims to address their vulnerabilities and special needs through gender responsive program interventions and mechanisms.

UN-ACT supported COMMIT by laying out the key elements of gender development perspectives in human trafficking through the design and implementation of the SPA IV in order to ensure that coordinated actions would be undertaken at both national and regional levels in source, transit and destination countries. This included disaggregated and gender-sensitive indicators to monitor the progress under SPA IV. In addition, the COMMIT governments developed a common set of guidelines for victim identification and referral mechanisms that is gender-sensitive.

UN-ACT also supported four CSOs: CCPCR, VFI, LPN, and VJUSAP, in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam respectively, to ensure that, where possible, data and information related to victims, including sex, age, and forms of exploitation are disaggregated. The collected data and information will be further analyzed for trends and patterns of human trafficking to ensure a gender-responsive approach to anti-human trafficking policies and interventions.

Below are some country-specific gender initiatives from 2016:

- UN-ACT Cambodia and Viet Nam supported national counterparts in integrating gender into the national BCC strategy for the prevention of trafficking in their respective countries. This included incorporating specific strategies to address issues related to different gender and age groups.
- UN-ACT published 'Human Trafficking Vulnerabilities: A Study on Forced Marriage between Cambodia and China', highlighting the vulnerabilities of Cambodian women who are trafficked for marriage. The study aimed to determine service needs amongst the Cambodian

women during repatriation and upon return to Cambodia, and to identify interventions to prevent forced marriages and extend protective services for the women, at both policy and programming levels.

- UN-ACT Lao PDR is an active member of the multi-stakeholder gender working group to support the promotion of gender sensitivity in combating human trafficking. UN-ACT also provided technical inputs in addressing cross-cutting themes in the areas of, but not limited to, democratic governance, social justice, gender and human trafficking under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).
- The gender responsive approach is increasingly being prioritized by the Thai Government in undertaking reintegration measures with consideration to age and gender sensitivity as evidenced in the development of the Thailand-Lao PDR MOU on Cooperation to Combat Trafficking in Persons supported by UN-ACT.
- UN-ACT Myanmar and Thailand advocated for mainstreaming a gender-responsive approach in developing the 5-year National Plans of Action (2017-2021) for the two countries.

Gender rights responsiveness is integral to UN-ACT's anti-trafficking interventions. UN-ACT puts human rights at the center of its efforts, including focusing on the specific needs and vulnerabilities of children and women. The project ensures that its activities apply a consistent Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) at the regional and national level.

Throughout 2016, UN-ACT country offices provided human trafficking related technical inputs to better inform UN country teams in COMMIT countries. This included inputs for human rights thematic reports and special procedures of the Human Rights Council (HRC) particularly in supporting the work of the Special Rapporteurs on trafficking in persons, on contemporary forms of slavery and on the human rights of migrants.

In 2016, UN-ACT supported CSOs and the Thai Government in advocating for and recognizing that debt bondage is a human rights violation that occurs during the trafficking cycle. UN-ACT also coordinated and encouraged stakeholders in Thailand to share country specific information to the Special Rapporteur

on slavery. As a result, the issue was documented in the OHCHR thematic report on debt bondage, submitted to the HRC and further used as an advocacy tool. This development also informed Thai policy makers to revise the definition of 'forced labor or services' to include seizure of identification documents and debt bondage in the Thai labor and human trafficking laws.

UN-ACT supports COMMIT governments and its stakeholders to ensure that the rights of trafficked persons are realized and protected throughout the planning processes and in the implementation of COMMIT's activities and the governments' National Plans of Action (NPA). In addition, when providing technical support to COMMIT, UN-ACT takes into account the specific human rights standards applicable to national and regional priorities and challenges. For example, UN-ACT Myanmar continued advocating for the concerns and rights of women and children from fragile border areas. The geographic areas of Kachin, Shan, Rakhine, Mon, Kayin and the Tanintharyi Region in particular, have been scarred by years of conflict and are prone to natural disasters. Women and children from these areas are therefore considered especially vulnerable to exploitation, human trafficking, violence and abuse.

ACCOUNTABILITY

UN-ACT works to promote accountability and transparency by building and strengthening a robust M&E system to support the project and COMMIT governments. In 2016, UN-ACT provided support to the governments in developing their national M&E reporting mechanisms to enable COMMIT to become more results-focused. Applying results-based management (RBM) helps UN-ACT and COMMIT countries to ensure accountability by offering a process and structure to formulate and achieve results in counter trafficking.

At the regional level, the regional COMMIT Taskforce meetings and SOM provides a forum for peer review where the governments report and are held accountable to each other. At the national level, the members of the national COMMIT Taskforces report to each other on their efforts, and governments may be subject to the broader counter-trafficking sector through anti-human trafficking or inter-agency working group meetings convened by UN-ACT with participation of development partners and civil society.

SUSTAINABILITY

UN-ACT recognizes the importance of sustainability of anti-human trafficking mechanisms and interventions. Sustainability is one of the project's core programming principles and its key results areas aim towards ensuring that the COMMIT Process becomes increasingly sustainable and self-reliant. UN-ACT has been prioritizing capacity development for COMMIT to enable the government to realize their full potential in combatting human trafficking at a national and regional level. In light of the COMMIT capacity assessment conducted in 2015, UN-ACT has engaged the COMMIT governments in following up with the development strategy and is providing support for national capacity development plans. Governments are increasingly showing their ownership of the COMMIT process in various ways, contributing to COMMIT's sustainability. The COMMIT governments have been increasingly managing the secretariat function themselves for activities including organizing and holding national and regional COMMIT Task Force meetings and SOM11. In addition, in 2016, many of the governments covered their own administrative and operational costs for these meetings. The governments also allocated more funds, compared to previous years, from their national budgets to implement activities under SPA IV, with less financial dependence on UN-ACT. China became the first COMMIT country to directly contribute resources to UN-ACT, suggesting a significant step towards the long-term sustainability of the process. UN-ACT will continue to strengthen the countries' functional capacities, while at the same time assuming a stronger technical advisory role in COMMIT.

SDGs and UN-ACT

In late 2015, The UN and Member States adopted the 'Agenda 2030' for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The pledge to 'leave no one behind', which includes all vulnerable groups such as migrants, has been a key feature of the discussions on the SDGs. World leaders have committed to addressing global development issues including eradicating forced labor, modern slavery and human trafficking, and understand that these phenomena are inextricably linked to other development challenges.

UN-ACT has been contributing to the development of the ILO Alliance 8.7, focused on realizing SDG 8.7 on forced labor and in 2016, UN-ACT participated in and facilitated discussions about the nature of cooperation against trafficking in this region and the parameters of this alliance. UN-ACT is equally contributing to the achievement of SDG 16 to promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies, with a special focus on target 16.2 on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.



CONSTRAINTS IN IMPLEMENTATION: Improving UN-ACT Project Performance Through Learning and Reflections

IN 2016, budget constraints (due to exchange rate losses and donor priorities being shifted towards the migration/refugee crisis in Europe) were a challenge hindering UN-ACT's ability to implement our planned activities and initiate substantive interventions. It was challenging to support CSOs through small grants and to build strong relationships with countries outside the COMMIT process due to these limitations. Some of the targets on the collaboration with other non-COMMIT countries were deprioritized given limited funding. However, UN-ACT is hopeful that sufficient funding will be mobilized for 2017 given positive indications from donors.

In addition, changes in officials working on human trafficking in the ASEAN Secretariat had affected UN-ACT and COMMIT's ability to progress further on cooperation with ASEAN in 2016, however a new focal point is anticipated at the start of 2017 and efforts will then be made to further develop COMMIT-ASEAN collaboration plans.

There were also some challenges in developing more concrete mechanisms for the collection and tracking of data related to human trafficking and migration. No new mechanisms for victim identification were developed this year to improve data collection and tracking. This is expected to improve in the coming year as the new indicators and guidelines on victim identification should make it easier to collect data. With regard to the collection of information regarding the total amount of victims referred and supported, work still needs to be done to disaggregate this data. This year only Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand were able to provide partial breakdowns related to age and sex of victims. Therefore, further progress on data management is needed in the region to allow authorities to better track the complex trafficking and migration trends.

THE WAY FORWARD

UN-ACT will continue to work on increasing governments' capacity and ownership of the COMMIT Process by supporting governments to implement capacity development strategies and support governments on a number of priorities in 2017 and

beyond. This includes developing and implementing national and regional victim identification frameworks and referral mechanisms to support victims of trafficking, conducting in-house and joint research on trafficking to increase the evidence base for policy making and interventions, working with youth and civil society, fostering private sector engagement, and strengthening partnerships with organizations committed to combatting trafficking in the region. With respect to the victim identification and referral mechanisms, the six COMMIT governments repeatedly affirmed the critical importance of rapid and accurate victim identification as an essential aspect of an effective response to trafficking in persons. Victim identification will continue to be a key area of focus in 2017.

In order to assess UN-ACT's performance, results and impact, a mid-term evaluation was initiated by an independent evaluator in October 2016. The evaluation report is expected to be finalized by the beginning of 2017. At the end of 2016, the evaluator produced preliminary findings which included:

- UN-ACT serves the role as a trusted/neutral intermediary, backed up by the status of the UN, and has the ability to discuss and negotiate with governments who might otherwise resist outside involvement.
- UN-ACT's value is in the relationships of trust it has built up (with different officials) and in its longevity (not a temporary 'project' that lasts 2 or 3 years and then disappears).
- It also acts as intermediary between NGOs and their governments, giving them a voice where otherwise they would have none, and sometimes between one government ministry or agency and another in the same country.
- Without UN-ACT, COMMIT might lack much substances and probably lose any human rights focus.
- The intention is to make COMMIT independent however UN-ACT provides valuable additions to this process as the "gold dust".

- UN-ACT's ability to commission research is crucial, as is its ability to bring the findings to the attention of government(s) in a sensitive way that encourages them to initiate appropriate changes.
- ASEAN doesn't offer any sort of alternative framework for similar achievements (no-one to act as intermediary/advocate/researcher).
- Not providing UN-ACT with the necessary resources impacts on its effectiveness. It is important that donors continue to fund UN-ACT.

The final key findings and recommendations will help to inform UN-ACT in identifying and reinforcing initiatives that demonstrate the most impact and effectiveness for the coming years.

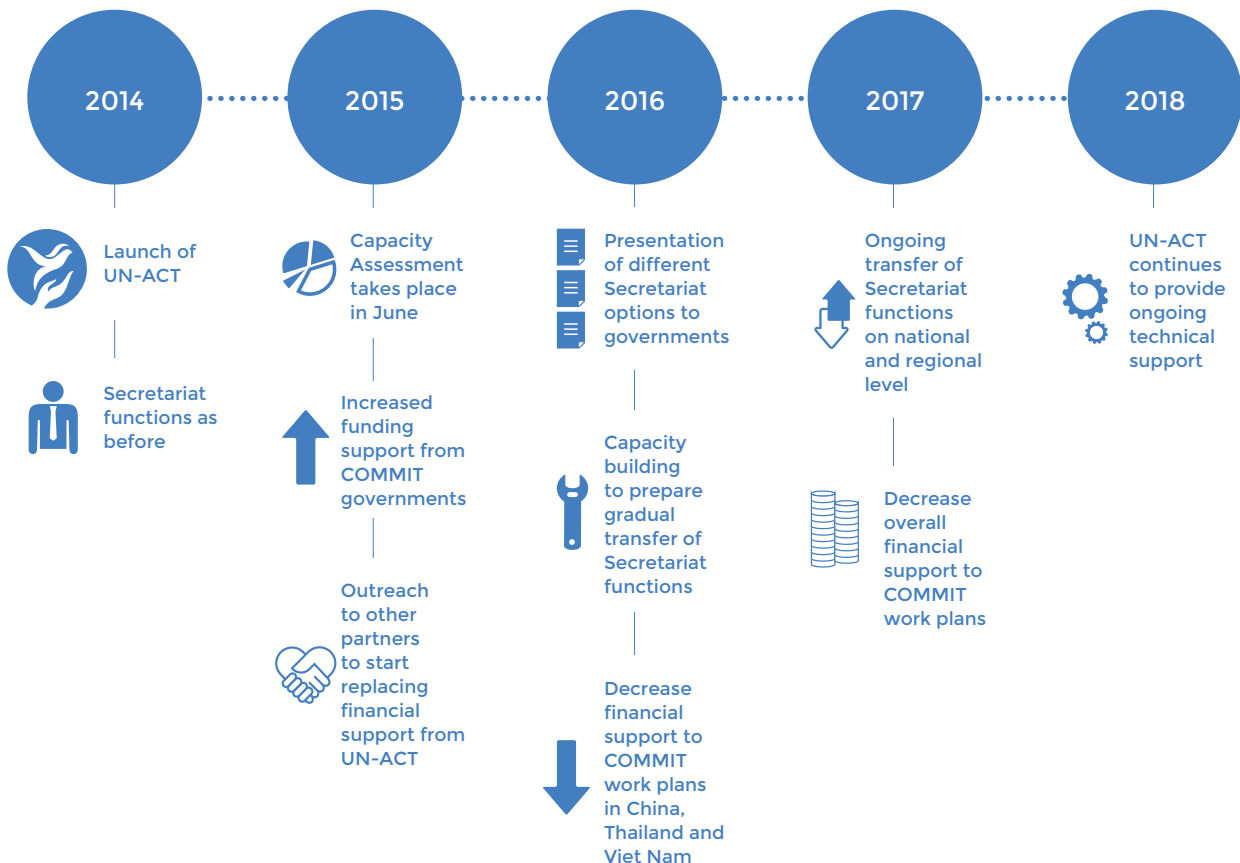


Figure 11. Sustainability plan for the COMMIT Secretariat

ANNEX 1 INDICATOR TABLE

Outcome: Key anti-trafficking stakeholders in the region are working in a more cooperative and mutually supportive manner to effectively combat trafficking in persons											
Indicator 2: Number of changes in trafficking policies after advocacy from civil society											
Baseline: 0											
Progress Marker 2016: 8											
Result 2016: 20 (CMB: 3, CHN: 3, VNM: 4, RMO: 6 (COMMIT Guidelines on Victim Identification and Referral Services))											
Target: 40											
Activity result	Indicators	Baseline	Cambodia	China	Lao PDR	Myanmar	Thailand	Viet Nam	Regional	Progress Marker 2016	Achievements
Output 1: The COMMIT Process is strengthened to become sustainable and self-reliant											
1.1 COMMIT accountability and transparency enhanced	# of countries reporting back on agreed M&E framework	0	1	-	1	1	1	1	N/A. Draft M&E log frame drafted and presented to COMMIT regional TF. M&E capacity building trainings provided to M&E focal points in Thailand, Vietnam, Lao PDR and Cambodia respectively.	5	Five out of six COMMIT countries successfully developed their monitoring and evaluation frameworks. These frameworks strengthen the countries' national systems for counter-trafficking with measurable indicators and targets to monitor their progress in policy, victim protection, criminal justice and trafficking prevention under the SPA IV (1).

1.2 Sufficient technical and functional capacities developed by government	# secretariat functions transferred to the governments (a,b,c,d,e,f,g)	0	5 partly (b, c, d, e, g)	3 partly (f, b, g)	4 fully (b, d, c, e), 1 partly (g)	2 fully (d, g)	5 partly (a, b, d, f, g)	2 fully, 2 partly (e, k)	N/A (Governments agreed to develop national Capacity Development plans based on review of Capacity Assessment)	6 fully, 20 partly	Fully: 8 Partly: 16
1.3 Effective implementation of SPA IV	% of COMMIT work plan activities funded by government and mobilized by govt from other partners (per country)	0%	100% (15/15 activities) Govt & partners 13.33% (2/15) - govt only	100% (7/7 activities) Govt & partners 54% (4.87/9) govt only	100% (12/12 activities) Govt & partners 89.58% (10.75/12) govt only	100% (32/32 activities) Govt & partners 6.25% (2/32) govt only	100% (8/8 activities) Govt & partners 62.5% (5/8) govt only	100% (21/21)	N/A	60%	100% (government and partners) 42.51% (government only)
Output 2: COMMIT countries increase their cooperation with other countries and regional actors to effectively counter human trafficking											
2.1 Joint anti-trafficking efforts of COMMIT countries with key destination countries increased	# project activities/ interaction with non-COMMIT countries	0	1 (India)	0	2 (Indonesia, Bali Process Countries)	1	1 (Malaysia)	2	1 (US) (4)	15	8 (5)

2.2	Institutionalized engagement between COMMIT and ASEAN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3	4 (6)
2.3	Coordination and cooperation among relevant regional actors for anti-trafficking increased	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	9	15 (7)	
Output 3: Policy makers, academia, non-state actors and the public have increased access to evidence-based research and knowledge on human trafficking															
3.1	Evidence-base for anti-trafficking intervention enhanced and accessible	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7	3	8
3.2	Strategic dissemination and advocacy on research findings to influence policy and programming strengthened	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	15	6
		0	N/A	Chinese UN-ACT website: 898 returning sessions (24.27%) 2,802 new sessions (75.73%)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6,547 returning sessions (31.6%) 14,192 new sessions (68.4%)	3,500	7,445 returning sessions (31.6%) 16,994 sessions (68.4%)	

Output 4: Civil society and other non-governmental actors are able to contribute more effectively to anti-trafficking efforts											
4.1 Increased engagement between government and civil society	# CSOs participating in COMMIT meetings	0	7 CSOs, 7 reps, 2 mtgs	12 CSOs, 12 reps, 3 mtgs	1 CSO, 1 rep, 1 mtg	0	3 CSOs, 4 reps, 2 mtgs	8 CSOs, 15 reps, 1 mtg	21 CSOs, 28 reps, 3 regional mtgs	70	52
	# of referrals from government to CSOs/CSOs to government	0	815	42	133	104	N/A	N/A	N/A	900	1,094
4.2 Civil society has increased and sustained capacity to support VoT	# victims supported by NGOs with UN-ACT funding	0	188 (63 male, 85 female)	0	60	0	160	89 (3 male, 86 female)	N/A	130	497
4.3 Increased engagement by private sector	# of collaborations with private sector partners	0	0	1	1	0	3	0	1	8	6

ANNEX 1 INDICATOR TABLE NOTES

2016

1 M&E focal points in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam were trained in 2016. Five out of six COMMIT countries successfully developed their monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

2 The letters refer to specific COMMIT secretariat functions as follows:

a. To provide support to the COMMIT Process to ensure that the process continues to be guided by international norms and standards;

b. To provide administrative, technical and substantive support to the COMMIT Process at the country and regional levels including assistance in the convening of technical roundtable discussions;

c. To organize annual Senior Officials Meeting and the Inter-Ministerial Meeting and urgent meetings requested by the Governments;

d. To document outcomes of meetings convened and decisions reached;

e. To prepare press releases and press advisories as required, disseminate information on COMMIT undertakings, and represent the information source for public inquiry on the COMMIT Process;

f. To raise funds to ensure timely implementation of the COMMIT Sub-regional Plan of Action and for its administration according to standards set by the UN;

g. To provide an annual progress report on the COMMIT SPA implementation status at the annual SOM meetings.

3 UN-ACT provided capacity building training on detecting illicit networks related to TIP for US government agencies (U.S. Pacific Command) which works on combatting TIP

for the Asia-Pacific.

4 There are ongoing efforts between Malaysia and three COMMIT countries (Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam) regarding the development of MoUs specific to human trafficking. In addition, Viet Nam and Malaysia signed an MOU on Cooperation in Preventing and Combatting Transnational Crimes. Indonesia participated in a four-country meeting on trafficking in persons with Myanmar, Cambodia, and Thailand on the sideline of the Bali Process Ad Hoc Group Senior Officials Meeting in 2016 to discuss current situation and challenges of irregular migration.

5 The ASEAN Secretariat and representatives participated in the COMMIT national and regional Task Force meetings and the SOM 11 where it led a session on ASEAN-COMMIT collaboration. UN-ACT also provided technical inputs to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights Stakeholders meeting on Fisheries & Seafood IUU & Sustainability Solutions.

6 Indicator 2.3 refers to (1) ILO Global Data Initiative, (2) Bali Process SOM, (3) Regional Network Meetings, (4) Pathways to Employment (Expanding legal & legitimate labour market opportunities for refugees) - Bali Process, (5) USAID TIP Evidence Gathering Summit, (6) ILO Sub-Regional Consultation on Alliance 8.7 (SDG), (7) ECPAT South East Asia Regional Consultation on 'Ending the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children', (8) South East Asia Coordination Group Against TIP with UN partners, (9) UN Technical Working Group on Sustainable Societies (includes migration/TIP) with UN partners including the development of the Migration and SDG Concept Paper, (10) ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights Stakeholders meeting on Fisheries & Seafood IUU & Sustainability Solutions, (11) Chulalongkorn University and their migration networks, and UN Summit on Refugees and Migrants, (12) Global Forum on Migration and Development, (13) Anti-Corruption & Transnational Crime Roundtable, (14) APEC Pathfinder Dialogue and Social Value Asia Summit and panel discussions on the role of private sector in development, and (15) international conference to commemorate International Migrants' Day, under the theme "Harmonizing Migration Networks: In Search of Inclusive and Sustainable Solutions".

ANNEX 2

OVERVIEW OF EXPENDITURES IN 2016

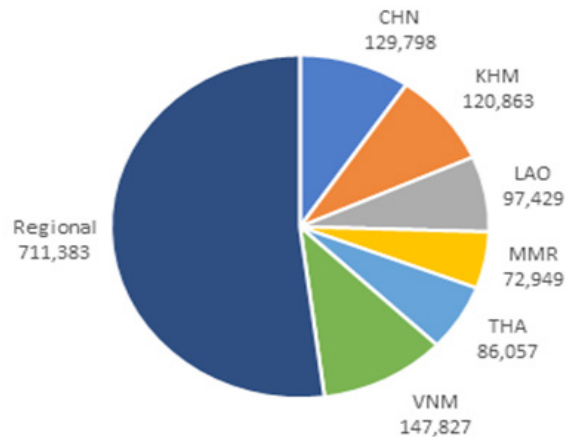


Figure 12. Division of Expenditure by Office

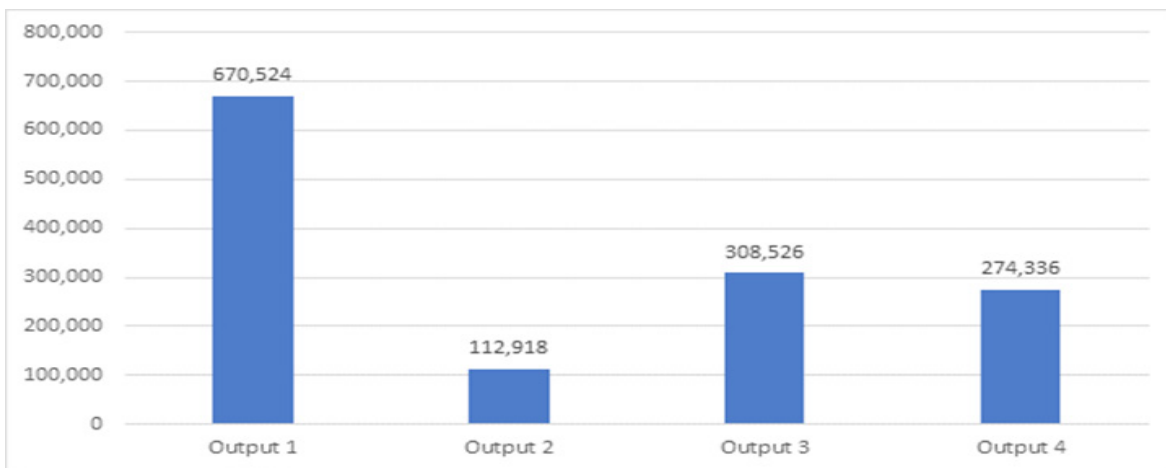


Figure 13. Expenditures by Output (with Operations)

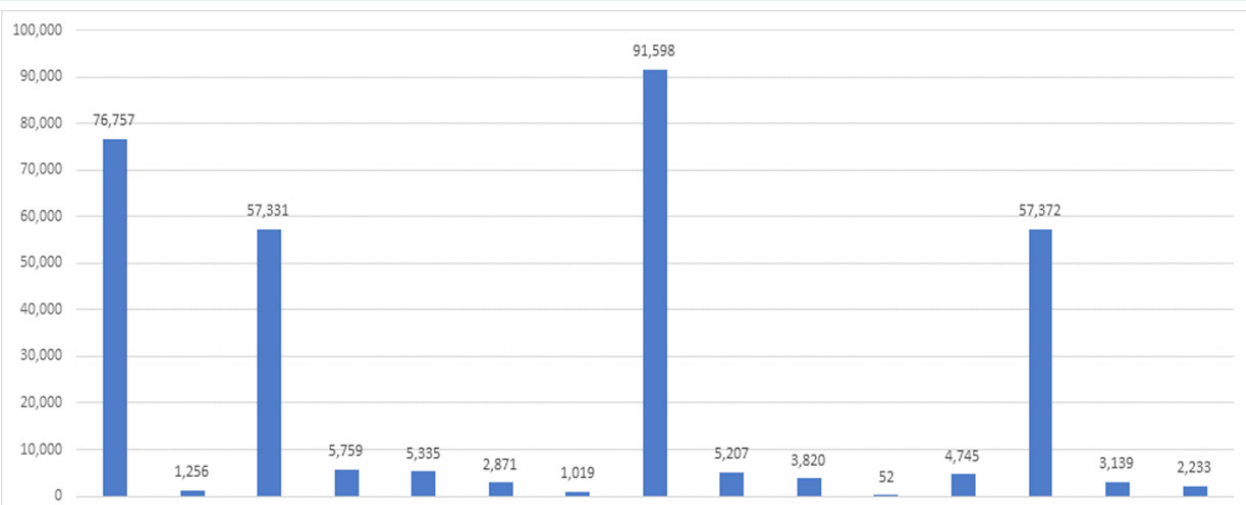


Figure 14. Expenditure per Activity Result (without Operations)

ANNEX 3

UN-ACT RISK ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

LACK OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

RISK EVALUATION:

It is very likely that this risk will occur.

UN-ACT funds have been affected by exchange rate losses and a cut in the third tranche of funding from Norway which had to divert funding to address the migration/refugee crisis in Norway/Europe. Lack of funding undermines UN-ACT's capacity to implement planned activities.

ASSESSING CONSEQUENCE:

The project risks not being able to achieve its objectives and results

MITIGATION:

The project is increasing its resource mobilization efforts with traditional and new donors. It is also working with development partners to jointly implement activities. In addition, COMMIT governments have been able to increasingly take on more of the financial responsibility for implementing COMMIT activities. In 2016, China became the first COMMIT country to make a financial contribution to the UN-ACT. The new UN-ACT brochure is utilized for mobilizing resources and promoting the project. An independent mid-term evaluation began in the last quarter of 2016 and will be carried out until the first quarter of 2017 to, among other aims, review the financial situation and provide recommendations on how UN-ACT can address the funding challenges.

LACK OF POLITICAL WILL

RISK EVALUATION:

It is possible that the risk will occur.

COMMIT countries have demonstrated considerable political will to combat human trafficking. This was evident in increased contributions by governments to their national COMMIT activities; the development of COMMIT victim identification guidelines and monitoring systems for counter-trafficking with measurable indicators and targets to monitor their progress under the COMMIT Sub-regional Plan of Action. However, more systematic data collection and reporting – and the political will to ensure this – is needed to effectively counter trafficking in persons. Previously, there was little pressure on governments to show progress made against indicators and commitments on combatting trafficking. There are also indirect risks from restrictive laws and policies being developed in a number of

countries related to limiting the space for civil society organizations to work, among them organizations involved in anti-human trafficking efforts.

ASSESSING CONSEQUENCE:

There can be substantial impacts on the ability of UN-ACT to achieve the intended results.

A lack of political will may limit the sustainability of the COMMIT Process and implementation of measures agreed to under COMMIT SPA IV at the national and regional level. Limited implementation could result in inadequate prevention, protection and prosecution efforts, with consequences for those vulnerable to or affected by human trafficking.

MITIGATION:

UN-ACT continues to build trust and relationships with relevant government counterparts to reinforce the need for political will in the areas noted above. UN-ACT ensures continuous engagement and focused discussions on the factors driving the need for better anti-trafficking efforts, not only for moral and rights-based reasons, but also for political, economic and social reasons, with all levels of government. UN-ACT also emphasizes with governments the importance of research and the systematic collection of data on human trafficking and counter-trafficking responses by government agencies that demonstrates whether COMMIT countries are meeting the commitments made in SPA IV or other COMMIT decisions.

LACK OF ENGAGEMENT WITH NON-COMMIT COUNTRIES

RISK EVALUATION:

It is possible that the risk will occur.

In terms of regional bodies outside of COMMIT, there has been formal and informal engagement with bodies such as ASEAN and the Bali Process. However, regarding individual non-COMMIT countries, current resources limit expanding activities with non-COMMIT countries and limit the project's ability to deepen its engagement with them. Nonetheless, engagement does continue between COMMIT and non-COMMIT countries including through the development of agreements such as bilateral MOUs.

ASSESSING CONSEQUENCE:

Limited consequence on the ability to achieve the overall intended results of UN-ACT.

While informal and formal relations have been pursued with non-COMMIT countries including Malaysia and

Indonesia, COMMIT – in particular given limited resources – has been prioritizing activities within COMMIT as opposed to with countries outside of COMMIT. Political commitment by both COMMIT countries and non-COMMIT countries, as well as sufficient resources, are needed to ensure the risk is managed.

MITIGATION:

UN-ACT works through different channels and with a range of potential partners in regional bodies including ASEAN and the target non-COMMIT countries. For example, UN-ACT has been seeking support and cooperation through the Malaysia and Indonesia UNDP Country Offices.

POLITICAL SENSITIVITY

RISK EVALUATION:

It is possible that the risk will occur.

Working with governments, civil society and other stakeholders to combat human trafficking is likely to continue to be politically sensitive, due to the various economic, social, moral, security and reputational implications of the issues. However, the project design has taken account of such concerns and focuses and coordination with all relevant stakeholders and national capacity development in the sector. There is now a strong recognition by the various government agencies within COMMIT of the need to work collaboratively across borders and across sectors which sets the foundation for overcoming political sensitivities. The COMMIT Process provides its member countries with a forum and guidance to address human trafficking across sectors and borders in a way that minimizes political sensitivities.

ASSESSING CONSEQUENCE:

Limited consequence on the ability to achieve the overall intended results of UN-ACT.

The consequences related to political sensitivities vary depending on the project activity, but the impact is usually contained within that specific activity. Working closely with governments and other stakeholders provides channels for feedback at different stages and therefore limits the consequences of politically sensitive issues.

MITIGATION:

The project takes a collaborative approach to work with a range of stakeholders and prioritizes its capacity building goals. Assessing the sensitivity of initiatives based on the experience and expertise of UN-ACT helps to guide interventions and reduces the potential risk. In planning any activity or initiative, UN-ACT ensures that it strategically weighs the different interests and

relationships to ensure that political sensitivities are appropriately managed.

LACK OF COMMITMENT BY PARTNERS TO PROJECT INITIATIVES

RISK EVALUATION:

There is a low possibility that the risk will occur.

The project relies on partnerships at the national, regional and international level for the success of project initiatives, and these are dependent on common goals and available resources. Where the project has limited resources for initiatives, the incentives for partners to join and remain committed to interventions may be reduced.

ASSESSING CONSEQUENCE:

Limited consequence on the ability to achieve the overall intended results of UN-ACT.

The project continues to engage with both old and new partners. Due to the collaborative nature of the project and the synergies with a range of different partners, this risk is likely to be minimized. Also, given the wide range of partnerships that the project has developed, any lack of engagement from one partner can be balanced by engagement with others.

MITIGATION:

UN-ACT continues to ensure its selection of partnerships is strategic and informed. UN-ACT prioritizes and invests in maintaining strong relationships with a wide range of partners across its activities, which helps to mitigate this risk.

DIFFERENCES IN PERSPECTIVES WITHIN AND BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS

RISK EVALUATION:

It is possible that the risk will occur.

The COMMIT governments work collaboratively on their anti-trafficking efforts, yet often have different perspectives towards the COMMIT Process and levels of interest in the different areas of anti-trafficking cooperation. These factors can result in obstacles to progress in project implementation.

ASSESSING CONSEQUENCE:

Limited consequence on the ability to achieve the overall intended results of UN-ACT.

The COMMIT Process is a long-standing regional body established through a multilateral approach based on consensus on the common interests of the governments. Differences in perspectives are therefore usually overcome by the governments' overarching

desire for regional cooperation on anti-trafficking and for progress on this important issue which they view as a national and regional priority.

ETHICAL AND SECURITY CONCERNS

RISK EVALUATION:

It is unlikely that the risk will occur.

The project takes a rights-based approach to interventions and therefore seeks to implement initiatives with such considerations well planned for. The primary risk is that government and non-government partners may unintentionally cause ethical and security concerns in their work with victims of trafficking, in developing policies, or in their work with the media.

ASSESSING CONSEQUENCE:

Limited consequence on the ability to achieve the overall intended results of UN-ACT.

Any infringements on ethical and security concerns may have significant consequences to the lives of trafficked and vulnerable persons as well as those directly communicating with them, and should therefore be carefully mitigated.

MITIGATION:

UN-ACT assesses the security and ethical concerns and risks for all its initiatives including with implementing partners and national counterparts and develops corresponding capacity building efforts to reduce risks as an ongoing strategy.

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in more than 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.



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