



United Nations Action for Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



DECEMBER 2014

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18 December: International Migrants Day

18 December is International Migrants Day. To celebrate the contributions of migrant workers to Thai economy and society, the Saphan Siang campaign and World Vision, with support from UN-ACT, present the *Journey of Voices* exhibition at the Bangkok Art and Cultural Centre from 16-21 December 2014.

Come and experience this innovative event created by artist collective Public Selivery and artist Phil America highlighting the experiences of migrant workers living and working in Thailand's fishing communities. The exhibition is immersive and interactive, and includes a life-size sculptural fishing boat, a photography exhibit, a 16-channel video installation, and a large-scale 3D infographic display.

Also, read UN-ACT's [latest blog](#) on the *Saphan Siang Special* written by the ILO's Eliza Marks, and check out this [video clip](#) introducing facts about migrant workers in Thailand presented by Thai celebrity Kong Sorawit Suboon.

DECEMBER 2014						
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UN-ACT aims to ensure a coordinated approach to strategically and effectively combat trafficking in persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS)



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Trafficking Trends and Developments



CAMBODIA

- In November, reports emerged that over 10 Vietnamese montagnards escaped from Vietnam, taking refuge in a neighbouring Cambodian province and hiding in the jungle. The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Refugee Agency are working with Cambodian authorities to come to a resolution.
- Discussions surrounding the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Cambodia and Malaysia have been ongoing for two years. A meeting was held on 3-4 November between the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT) and Cambodian stakeholders, with a subsequent meeting to be held with Malaysian counterparts.



CHINA

- A research mission was conducted on human trafficking focusing on forced marriages of Cambodian women to Chinese men. UN-ACT, World Vision and partners visited two townships known for their significant numbers of Cambodian brides. Interviews were conducted with husbands and wives, as well as with police chiefs, entry and exit police and anti-trafficking authorities.



LAO PDR

- A multi-partner meeting took place focusing on a 16-day campaign against gender-based violence. UN Women, the UN Population Fund and CARE are heavily involved with the campaign and organizing various activities, and local students will also participate with drama and dance performances. Emphasis will be placed on community mobilization, and encouraging men to speak out against gender-based violence.
- The Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) met with UN-ACT representatives in hopes of initiating anti-trafficking activities in Lao PDR. In the past, JICA has conducted anti-trafficking work in Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam, and discussions are ongoing about the implementation of new initiatives in Laos in 2015.



MYANMAR

- The 7th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour was held on 20-21 November in Nay Pyi Taw. Numerous participants attended the meeting which has been created as a broad-based discussion forum on migrant labour. The 2015 forum will be chaired by the government of Malaysia.
- Myanmar has released 80 child soldiers from military service and returned them to their parents. The 80 minors constituted the 8th group of child soldiers freed by the army since 2012. Myanmar's armed forces last released 109 children from military service in Yangon in September of this year.

 **THAILAND**

- The EU Fisheries Commission issued a warning to Thailand giving the state six months to improve its human trafficking problems in the fisheries industry. In response, various government agencies together with representatives from the private sector visited European states and met with the EU delegation to provide progress updates, and to reassure Thailand's commitment in combatting trafficking in persons and forced labour in the fishing industry.
- The Thai army imposed security measures at the Thai-Burmese Friendship Bridge border checkpoint in Mae Sot to prevent drug and labor trafficking between Thailand and Myanmar. Currently, there are more than 40,000 migrant workers from Myanmar registered in the Mae Sot district. Authorities have launched daily operations to crack down on undocumented immigrants and return them to their country of origin as part of the government's efforts to suppress human trafficking.
- Thai authorities proposed an initiative where Thai prisoners nearing the completion of their jail terms would be brought aboard to work on fishing vessels. The initiative proposed that this would ease problems of prison overcrowding and human trafficking in the fishing sector. The proposal has been criticised heavily by rights activists and civil society organisations who have raised concerns on issues such as occupational risks, rights of prisoners and detainees, and security complications. In light of these critiques, the Minister of Labour added that, if the proposal were accepted, it would be undertaken on a voluntary basis.

 **VIET NAM**

- The Central Women Union of Vietnam organized a human trafficking awareness event in Lao Cai, a high risk province in Vietnam. The event targeted women, men, adolescents, students and local authorities and attracted thousands of participants, seeking to raise community awareness regarding trafficking.
- The Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security will host bilateral meetings, tentatively scheduled for December, between Vietnam and China to review anti-crime cooperation in the past 5 years and establish a plan for further cooperation in the future. The other respective bilateral meetings between Vietnam-Laos and Vietnam-Cambodia will be held in May 2015.
- The Vietnamese Border Guard Command, in cooperation with UN-ACT, World Vision and Peace House Project continued a training course on victim identification, ethics and working skills for border guard officers in northern provinces. Approximately 46 officers from 17 provinces participated in the training seminars.

NEWS UPDATES

Nine Cambodian Women Seek Refuge in China

“Nine Cambodian women who were lured to China and forced into unwanted marriages have fled their abusive husbands and are taking refuge in the Cambodian consulate in Guangzhou...” ([Cambodia Daily](#))

PM: Govt committed to anti-human trafficking MoU signed with Cambodia

“Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha has affirmed the government’s determination to push forward the memorandums of understanding (MoUs) recently signed with Cambodia, particularly the one seeking to eradicate human trafficking.” ([Pattaya Mail](#))

Modern slavery affects more than 35 million people, report finds

“The Walk Free Foundation (WFF), an Australia-based NGO that publishes the annual global slavery index, said that as a result of better data and improved methodology it had increased its estimate 23% in the past year.” ([The Guardian](#))

Thai fishermen convert boats to cash in on human-smuggling

“The smuggling of Rohingya Muslims fleeing persecution in [Myanmar](#) is so lucrative that Thai fishermen are converting their boats to carry humans, police, locals and officials in southern Thailand said.” ([Reuters](#))

Over 200,000 people trapped in modern slavery

“The 2014 Global Slavery Index (GSI) report showed that some 35.8 million men, women and children around the world are today trapped in modern slavery, either through human trafficking, forced labour, debt bondage, forced or servile marriage, or commercial sexual exploitation.” ([The Nation](#))

Vietnam court jails six human traffickers

“A court in southern Vietnam gave six people jail terms on Friday after finding them guilty of trafficking 14 local women into China to marry paying bachelors.” ([Thanh Nien News](#))

Trafficking in children on the rise, says new UN report

“One in three known victims of human trafficking is a child, and girls and women are particularly targeted and forced into “modern slavery,” according to the 2014 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, released today by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC).” ([UN News Centre](#))

Woman Arrested for Attempted Human Trafficking

“Police arrested a woman on suspicion of human trafficking in Tbong Khmum province’s Suong City on Monday, after the woman was found with a teenage girl whose parents had raised the alarm with local authorities once she went missing in Ratanakkiri province.” ([Cambodia Daily](#))

Inner Mongolia Police Bust International Human-Trafficking Ring

“The police in north China’s Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region have broken a human-trafficking ring, rescuing women who were trafficked into China from neighboring Myanmar.” ([Women of China](#))

Thai prisoner fishing plan may ‘reduce trafficked migrants’

“Thai activists have poured scorn on a plan to put low-risk Thai prisoners to work on fishing trawlers in a bid to ease overcrowding in jails, according to the *Bangkok Post*.” ([Mizzima](#))

23 foreign women rescued from human trafficking syndicate

“Twenty-three foreign women believed to be victims of a human trafficking syndicate were rescued by the Immigration Department in a special operation in Gua Musang town on Sunday.” ([New Straits Times](#))

Uyghurs found in Thai human-trafficking camp raids

“Chinese authorities in Thailand on Thursday have identified dozens of Uyghurs, who were discovered in a raid on a suspected human trafficking camp by Thai authorities in March, are from Xinjiang, and are looking into reports that more than 100 Chinese Uyghurs allegedly escaped from Thai shelters.” ([Global Times](#))

Human-trafficking gang arrested attempting to smuggle illegal workers into Phuket

“Three human-trafficking suspects were arrested yesterday trying to smuggle 19 illegal Myanmar workers into Phuket. The men – all Thai nationals – were apprehended at 2am near a checkpoint north of the island in Takuapa, Phang Nga province.” ([Phuket Gazette](#))

Bangladesh Intercepts Ship Holding 600 Trafficking Victims

“The Bangladeshi Navy said Tuesday that it had intercepted a small ship holding more than 600 victims of human trafficking the day before.” ([New York Times](#))

Singapore passes 1st trafficking law

“SINGAPORE – The government here passed its first law to prevent human trafficking, even as at least one non-governmental organisation pushed for more rights for victims.” ([Bangkok Post](#))

Police Arrest 17 Bangladeshis Wanted for Human Trafficking

“A yearlong investigation by immigration police culminated in the arrest on Saturday of 17 Bangladeshi men hiding in Phnom Penh and Poipet City to avoid charges of human trafficking in their home country.” ([Cambodia Daily](#))

China Human Trafficking 2014: Chinese Police Arrest Gang Suspected of Trafficking Burmese Women

“Police in China have arrested members of a gang accused of trafficking women from Myanmar, according to a report from state news agency Xinhua on Monday.” ([International Business Times](#))

U.N. report says number of female human traffickers ‘exceptionally high’

“Nearly three in 10 convicted human traffickers worldwide are female, according to a U.N. report Monday which found that women play a bigger role in trafficking than other major crimes such as murder or robbery.” ([Japan Times](#))

Thailand’s Human Trafficking Trails: Corrupt CIB Chief May Have the Answers

“Former Central Investigation Bureau Chief Pongpat Chayapan amassed billions of baht from corruption and may be the person who can now most easily explain how Thailand’s human trafficking networks function without being exposed and crushed.” ([Phuketwan](#))

Malaysian police detain five suspected of human trafficking

“In a raid on Monday, police found 55 Myanmar nationals in a weak condition in a house in George Town, some 300 kilometres north of Kuala Lumpur...” ([The Nation](#))

China rescues trafficked Myanmar girls

“Chinese authorities in the northern region of Inner Mongolia arrested 31 people on suspicion of trafficking women after police discovered they’d been holding 14 people, 11 of them from Myanmar.” ([Bangkok Post](#))

Vietnam cops arrest two human trafficking cases with victims’ help

“Police in the Mekong Delta hub of Can Tho are investigating two delta locals for trafficking girls to China and Malaysia.” ([Thanh Nien News](#))

Two teenagers rescued from forced prostitution in Laos

“Vietnamese border guards in Quang Tri Province have arrested two women suspected of trafficking two teenage neighbors to Laos and forced them to work as prostitutes.” ([Thanh Nien News](#))

10 saved from alleged human trafficking since March

“Sibu police chief ACP Mohd Kamal Kordi disclosed that his men had helped release six foreigners from being detained against their own will recently.” ([The Borneo post](#))

Modern Slavery And Human Trafficking In The UK: ‘Hidden Crime’ More Prevalent Than Thought

“A British Home Office report suggests the number of victims of modern slavery is higher than previously thought. The U.K. is home to an estimated 10,000 to 13,000 victims of modern slavery, including women forced into prostitution and “imprisoned” domestic workers and laborers.” ([International Business Times](#))

Trafficked Cambodian rescued

“A trafficked Cambodian woman was taken into Malaysian immigration police custody after a raid on karaoke bars on Sunday night, Cambodian embassy officials confirmed yesterday.” ([Phnom Penh Post](#))

Three Cambodian brides due back from China

“Three more Cambodian women who had been trafficked to China as brides are set to fly back to the Kingdom today, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.” ([Phnom Penh Post](#))

Report shines light on trafficking

“Elite police units simultaneously descended on two guesthouses across the river from Phnom Penh yesterday. Thirteen victims, mostly teenagers, were pulled from the houses where they had been forced to provide sexual services, according to police.” ([Phnom Penh Post](#))

Cambodia ranks 14th in prevalence of ‘slavery’: index

“The Global Slavery Index 2014, released on Monday by Australia-based NGO Walk Free Foundation (WFF), ranks Cambodia 14th out of 167 countries for the prevalence of slavery, with an estimated 155,800 people enslaved, or 1.03 per cent of the population.” ([Phnom Penh Post](#))

Taking a lead in modern slavery

“Despite the social stigma and shame associated with commercial sex in Pakistan, pre-pubescent girls are commonly pushed into forced prostitution. Pakistanis are among the top 10 nationalities of suspected traffickers in Europe.” ([Daily Times](#))

MONTHLY FOCUS

Learn, Act, Share with IOM X to Help Prevent Exploitation

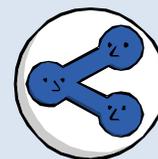


Learn. Act. Share. These are three words you are going to hear a lot over the next year as the International Organization for Migration rolls out its IOM X campaign in Asia Pacific, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The aim is to inspire young people to join a movement against exploitation and human trafficking.

Using a Communication for Development (C4D) approach, IOM X is producing content that delves into exploitation and human trafficking issues specific to ASEAN. For example, an upcoming IOM X music video will give young people a view into exploitation within the fishing industry, while a subsequent IOM X docu-drama program will help employers understand domestic worker rights.



Through its content, IOM X is asking its audience to take three actions:



IOMX.org/learn

Learn about exploitation and human trafficking. You can do this by viewing IOM X videos, using the eLearning portal and downloading online resources.

IOMX.org/act

Act in a way that prevents exploitation and human trafficking. For urban audiences, this means following tips provided by IOM X, such as not buying products sourced by unethical companies. For migrants and aspiring migrants, this can include memorizing helpline numbers and safeguarding travel documents.

IOMX.org/share

Share information about exploitation and human trafficking with others. You can do this by downloading The X Kit (an easy-to-follow guide on how to raise awareness about the issue among peers) or screening one of IOM X's free videos at a community gathering.

The campaign's website will launch in January 2015, and is optimized for online learning, storytelling and social sharing – with an aim to inspire passive online observers to become passionate online advocates. Website features will include an IOM X eLearning module, issue-specific landing pages, a creative photo sharing platform and engaging videos. IOM X is working with digital partners to use technology to help prevent exploitation and better protect victims.

IOM X is also building a network of young leaders across Southeast Asia. These young people will attend a capacity building workshop in early 2015, where they will design events using the “Learn. Act. Share” model. Ultimately, these young leaders will be taking IOM X across the region through their own community outreach activities.

The campaign is working closely with stakeholders and influencers across Asia Pacific – including celebrities, private sector partners, government agencies and non-governmental organizations – to identify further opportunities for collaboration.

IOM X operates under the IOM Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok. For more information, please email IOMX@iom.int and connect with IOM X on www.facebook.com/IOMXorg and www.twitter.com/IOMXorg

FEATURED PUBLICATIONS

Understanding the prevalence and patterns of Trafficking in Persons: Progress and Challenges

The growing global concern towards eradicating human trafficking, forced labour and modern-day slavery has brought much needed attention to these phenomena and an understanding that current efforts are insufficient to tackle the issue. This increased attention has resulted in deeper analysis of the problem using available data and developing methods to better understand human trafficking and related phenomena, as well as an advocacy drive for greater focus on this issue.

Two significant reports have been released in November 2014 contributing to the dialogue on human trafficking prevalence, flows and responses. These are The Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014, produced by UNODC, and The Global Slavery Index 2014, produced by the Walk Free Foundation.

The Global Report on Trafficking in Persons covering patterns and flows of trafficking in 128 countries, based on reported cases and data provided by states, and focusing on regional trends. This is the second Global Report on TIP from UNODC and provides a typology of criminal organisations and persons involved in trafficking in persons, as well as identifying at least 510 flows connecting different source and destination countries. There are accepted limitations on what we can interpret from such data, recognising that the number of those identified is a small fraction of those estimated to have been trafficked and may not be representative of others.

However analysis of such data is useful in understanding which victims and perpetrators are identified as well as their profiles. The Global Report shows an increased detection in the cases of trafficking for purposes other than sexual exploitation and in the trafficking of children, without necessarily interpreting a change in prevalence of these patterns. The criminal justice data available provides evidence of the ineffectiveness of the criminal justice responses and the resulting impunity for traffickers.



The report also addresses the lack estimates of the scale of trafficking in persons globally and nationally, given the weaknesses in available data and methodologies at present, and suggests a more detailed way forward will be published in 2015.

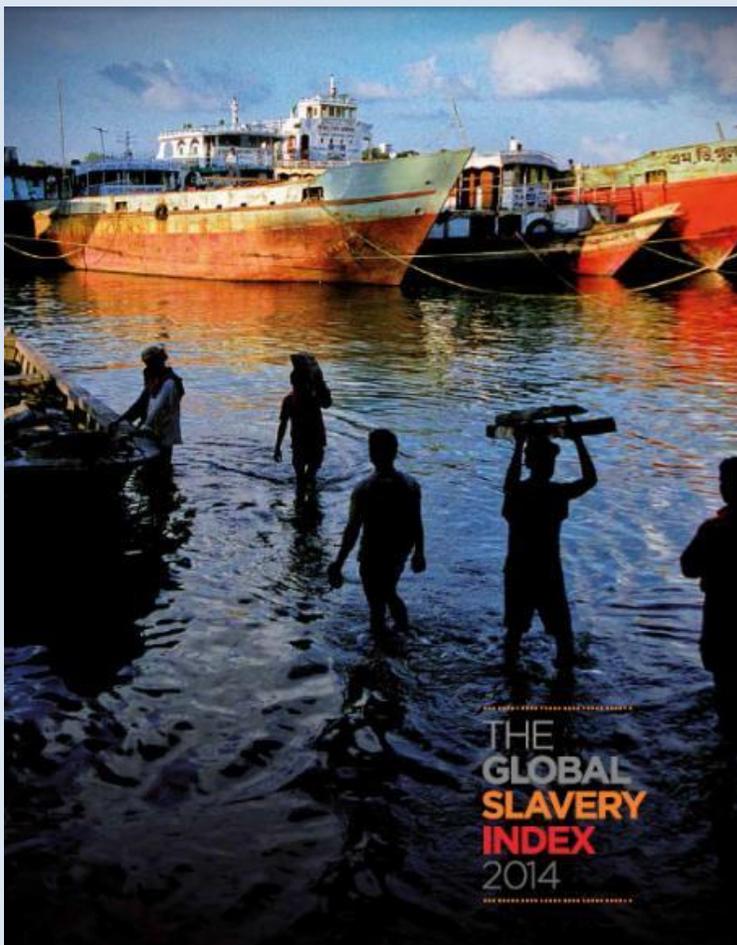
The Global Slavery Index is the second such annual report and seeks to provide a tool for understanding slavery across the world, with estimates of prevalence in each country, government responses, and vulnerability in those countries. The Index is ambitious in its aims and provides estimates of the number of persons in modern slavery in 167 countries in the world.

With the resources supporting the Walk Free Foundation, the Slavery Index will be seen by influential global leaders and will bring the issues of human trafficking and slavery to their attention. The critical issues in some countries will also be brought to light, whether the fisheries industry in Thailand or bonded labour in India. Recognising the need to act quickly to raise attention of the phenomenon yet balancing that with the needs for rigor and credibility in such an undertaking, the Slavery Index has taken a bold approach in bringing attention to the problem.

The paucity of data on human trafficking and modern-day slavery, as well as the associated definitional issues, draw a focus to the data sources upon which the prevalence indices are derived, including the extrapolation and inferences that are made from prevalence in one country to another. Questions have been raised about both the methodology in research and analyses and published in [The Economist](#) and [The Guardian](#) newspaper.

These analyses have critically explored the indices, with researchers and advocates challenging the foundation of the methodology. Anne Gallagher's [critique](#) of this well-publicized advocacy tool will be an important reference from which those seeking to understand more about the Slavery Index may reflect upon given her well recognised expertise on the issue of human trafficking and associated phenomena.

Ultimately, these reports represent the growing recognition that increased knowledge of prevalence, trends and vulnerabilities to human trafficking, are necessary in combating the problem. Greater investment is needed for this research and monitoring, which will provide for better informed advocacy, policy-making, and responses. Further developments in the knowledge base will ultimately be to the benefit of anti-trafficking interventions and demonstrate more accurately the level of need required in future anti-trafficking efforts and where these should be targeted.



A full copy of the UNODC The Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014 can be downloaded [here](#)

The Global Slavery Index can be accessed [here](#)

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