Quarter 3 2016 Newsletter

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UN-ACT ON TWITTER:

- RT @BeyondSlavery: An international minimum wage could produce a just global economy, argues Shelley Marshall https://t.co/3HjEZu77yS
- RT @SlaveryIndex: A father vows to save his daughter from a marriage he forced her into. https://t.co/g46aAGu3B5
- RT @KnowTheChain: New initiative to help companies keep cotton picked w/ forcedlabor out of supplychains https://t.co/AfHSzg4cnh
UN-ACT Project Updates

UN-ACT is pleased to release its new research report, *Human Trafficking Vulnerabilities in Asia: A Study on Forced Marriage between Cambodia and China.*

The study primarily draws on the accounts of 42 Cambodian women who experienced conditions of forced marriage in China, with interviews having taken place in both countries. Key informants from government and non-government stakeholders in Cambodia and China were consulted as well.

It analyzes recruitment, brokering, transportation and exploitation patterns as well as the links between these; determines service needs among Cambodians trafficked to China for forced marriage, in China, during the repatriation process and upon return to Cambodia; and identifies opportunities for interventions to prevent forced marriages from occurring and to extend protective services to those in need, at both policy and programming levels.

A summary and highlights can be found [here](#).

UN-ACT has published its [2015 Annual Report](#), detailing progress across all Output areas; outlining case studies from the countries which we work in; and discussing cross-cutting issues including human rights and gender, constraints in implementation as well as the way forward for 2016 and beyond.

Highlights of UN-ACT implementation and impact in 2015 are summarized on our [website](#), starting with the referral and support of 2911 trafficking survivors through national and transnational mechanisms across all 6 Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) countries.
A Chinese delegation, hosted by the Cambodian government, interviewed a Cambodian survivor of forced marriage in Kampong Cham, a major source area of Cambodian female marriage migrants to China.

The field visit was part of a three-day bilateral meeting held between the Chinese and Cambodian governments on 24 to 26 August in Cambodia and supported by UN-ACT and World Vision, as part of ongoing efforts to counter trafficking between the two countries. This was the first time NGO representatives from China participated in a field visit with government counterparts, contributing to trust and relationship-building to complement the provision of appropriate services to vulnerable victims of trafficking.

The field visit also informed formal discussions between the Chinese and Cambodian governments which took place immediately after in Siem Reap, where UN-ACT provided technical support during the negotiations to ensure that the bilateral agreement on combating human trafficking was aligned with international standards. The meeting produced a final draft agreement that will be signed by both governments before the end of the year.

Thailand and Myanmar are reviewing the Thai-Myanmar Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation to Combat Trafficking in Persons, and government officials held bilateral meetings on 23 to 24 August to begin the process, with UN-ACT providing technical inputs to the discussion. First signed in 2009, proposed key additions to the MoU revision include supporting the involvement of community watch groups and networks in areas with high risks of trafficking, and to outline strategies to expedite national verification of victims. Minutes on the discussions were signed at the end of the meeting and the Myanmar government will be hosting the second round of the MoU review.
The Thai Public Broadcasting Service, Thai PBS, has produced a 30-minute documentary (in Thai) on human trafficking in Nepal following the 2015 earthquake. The film also touches upon broader patterns of forced exploitation across Asia including vulnerabilities thereto, which UN-ACT provided an interview on. The full video can be found here. Enjoy watching!

LATEST UN-ACT BLOGS & ANALYSES

UN-ACT routinely publishes analyses and opinion pieces on latest trends and developments in anti-trafficking. Here are links and summaries of our most recent blogs

'The Global Effort Against Trafficking in Persons' reflects on what has been achieved in the counter-trafficking sector in honor of World Day against Trafficking in Persons that occurred on the 30th of July. In addition to raising awareness about this phenomenon, the World Day against Trafficking in Persons reminds us to focus our efforts on what more needs to be done if we are ever to achieve the goal of successfully combatting trafficking in persons.

'Human Trafficking in Thai Criminal Law: A Crime against the State or a Crime against the Person?' analyzes the approach to the crime of human trafficking in Thai criminal law, and
discusses the merits and repercussions of viewing it as a crime against the state or a crime against the person. It argues that the primary injured entity is the person, which should grant the individuals affected the opportunity to be joined to the case as co-prosecutors, with positive consequences for both the state and the individuals affected.

NEW RESOURCES ON THE UN-ACT WEBSITE

UN-ACT maintains a comprehensive resource center related to human trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region and Southeast Asia on its website, covering research, tools & guidelines, laws & agreements, and other publications. Below is a list of latest additions to the resource center including brief summaries and links for downloads.

IN 'RESEARCH'

Research including interviews with more than 130 children working on tobacco farms in Indonesia, and documenting major risks that could have long-term consequences on the health and development of child workers. It also discusses the responsibilities of the government as well as tobacco companies in preventing human rights abuses in the tobacco industry.

Research examining living and working conditions of labourers on palm oil plantations.
owned by Indofood, and documenting various exploitative practices carried out by the company. The report also provides recommendations to Indofood, partners and customers of Indofood, financial institutions that engage directly with Indofood, and also the Indonesian government to stop the exploitation of workers on palm oil plantations.

'Same Same But Different: A Baseline Study on the Vulnerabilities of Transgender Sex Workers in Bangkok's Sex Industry', Dton Naam, Equitas and Love146, 2016.

Report drawing on 60 in-depth interviews with transgender workers in the sex industry in Bangkok. It documents vulnerabilities to and cases of exploitation and debt bondage, and the physical and sexual abuse that transgender sex workers endure on a daily basis. The report also provides recommendations to the government, religious and community groups, and social researchers on the development of social programs and services to meet the needs of such groups.


Research report examining the working conditions at Thai broiler chicken production facilities. It is based on interviews carried out in May and June of 2015 with migrant workers from six Thai factories. The focus is on migrant workers, who have come to Thailand from Myanmar and are responsible for the majority of jobs in slaughter houses and processing plants.

IN 'TOOLS & GUIDELINES'


Guidelines on criteria, forms and procedures including for referral purposes in the identification and provision of services related to cases of human trafficking, endorsed by Cambodia's National Committee for Counter Trafficking in Persons (NCCT).

'Recommended principles to guide actions concerning children on the move and other children affected by migration', Jacqueline Bhabha and Mike Dottridge, 2016.

9 recommended principles intended to influence policy makers and other stakeholders responsible for implementing measures that affect the rights and needs of children on the move and others affected by migration.

IN 'LAWS & AGREEMENTS'


The 2014 Forced Labour Protocol as adopted by governments, worker and employer
delegates at the International Labour Conference with 437 votes for, 27 abstentions and 8 against. It supplements the 1930 Forced Labour Convention and will enter into forced in November 2016.

**IN 'PUBLICATIONS'**

**'ICT Benchmark Findings Report',** KnowTheChain, 2016. Benchmark report assessing 20 publicly traded ICT companies on the transparency of their efforts to eradicate forced labour from their global supply chains.

**'12 UN-ACT Results at a Glance',** UN-ACT, 2016. 2-pager outlining key results of UN-ACT programming in 2014 and 2015, aligned by the project's 4 output areas.

**'Corporate Human Rights Benchmark Pilot Methodology',** Corporate Human Rights Benchmark, 2016. Report on the first-ever ranking of the world's largest publicly listed companies on their human rights performance through incorporating six measurement themes. This will be followed by a ranking of the top 100 companies in the agricultural products, apparel, and extractive industries using this published methodology, developed over two years and in consultation with over 400 companies, industry associations, investors, governments, civil society representatives, academics and lawyers.

**'Best Response: Auditors' Insights on Child Labour in Asia',** Center for Child Rights & Corporate Social Responsibility, 2016. Report outlining child labor practices in the supply chains as encountered by auditors. It examines the findings from an auditor survey with 557 auditors from nine countries in Asia, together with the qualitative results from interviews with 40 selected auditors who participated in the survey. The report also identifies the gaps and challenges in preventing and responding to child labor.
Are you interested in learning more about prosecuting human trafficking? Then check out the newest issue of the Anti-Trafficking Review today!

This special issue analyzes human trafficking prosecutions in different regions of the world and from a range of different perspectives; with 5 themed articles focusing on Russia, the United States, the Balkans, and Western Europe.

The Anti-Trafficking Review is a peer-reviewed academic journal that promotes a human rights based approach to anti-trafficking, and a platform for dialogue for those seeking to exchange new ideas and findings.

You can view the new issue [here](#).
Today is International Domestic Workers’ Day!

There are almost 70 million domestic workers around the world - and the numbers are increasing. They make important contributions to millions of households, including by helping raise the children therein. However, they are often exposed to abuse, exploitation and human trafficking.

On this day, as we are advocating for countries to ratify the International Labour Organization’s Convention 189 on domestic work, we would like to share with you some important resources in this context:

1) Watch this video of an exhibition called ‘No one should work this way’ by journalist
Karen Emmons and the well-known photographer Steve McCurry - Official Page about the plight of foreign domestic workers in Asia.

2) Read this recently launched report titled 'Coming Clean' by the Justice Centre Hong Kong providing a prevalence estimate of forced labour and human trafficking among foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong.

3) Access these valuable resources of the My Fair Home campaign, highlighting the rights of domestic workers and encouraging everyone to get involved in their promotion:

4) Find out what you can do to help prevent abuse and exploitation on IOM X dedicated website on domestic work including the latest video as part of the Happy Home campaign.

Posted on 7 July 2016

The U.S. Department of State has published its annual Trafficking in Persons Report, a global ranking of governments' compliance with minimum standards in addressing human trafficking, as defined by the US administration.

Countries are ranked on 4 Tiers (1 = best and 3 = worst, with a Tier 2 Watch List status between 2 and 3). In the Greater Mekong Sub-region, the results in 2016 are as follows:

- Cambodia: Tier 2 (upgrade)
- China: Tier 2 Watch List (unchanged)
- Laos: Tier 2 Watch List (unchanged)
- Myanmar: Tier 3 (downgrade)
- Thailand: Tier 2 Watch List (upgrade)
Vietnam: Tier 2 (unchanged)

The report, however, is not without controversies.

Some argue that certain rankings are politically motivated (see this The Guardian article following Malaysia's upgrade last year.

Others question the criteria used and indeed the purpose of such global reports (See this comment by Anne Gallagher).

The full 2016 TIP report can be accessed here.

Posted on 27 July 2016

UN-ACT congratulates the International Organization for Migration on becoming part of the United Nations system as a related organization. The formalization of this partnership is expected to form closer cooperation between the two organizations and contribute to a more effective global response to the challenges posed by large and sudden population movements. The IOM assisted an estimated 20 million migrants in 2015; it is an intergovernmental organization with over 9,500 staff and 450 offices worldwide. Read more here.
Thailand recently ratified the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP), making it the third country in Southeast Asia - besides Singapore and Cambodia - to do so.

ACTIP is the region's first legally binding instrument to combat human trafficking, and was signed by ASEAN leaders during the ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur last November.

The next test of the member states' commitment is whether or not they manage to establish the required enforcement and monitoring mechanism for implementation - only then has ACTIP the chance to make a real difference in the lives of those vulnerable or subjected to exploitation.

Read more [here](#).
In Bangladesh, sex work is legal, but the industry is unregulated. Daulatdia is a small village in Bangladesh that is almost entirely dedicated to sexwork. The village is home to over 2,000 sex workers, some of whom are victims of kidnapping, abandonment, and sex trafficking. In the midst are 300 children. Save the Children is currently providing education programmes and other support to keep vulnerable children in school and out of the sex industry. Watch the video on The Guardian [here](#).

The Philippines, with its high levels of poverty, widespread internet access, and well-established English language proficiencies, provides a perfect environment for the industry of child sexual exploitation to flourish. Unlike previous forms of child sexual abuse and exploitation, there are no photos and videos uploaded to the internet that the police can track. Instead, the conversations are live and encrypted through Skype, payment is made...
by anonymous wire transfers, and the exploitation takes place within the children’s homes – and at times under the watch of their parents. Read the full article here.

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Some "were reduced to eating seafood they found washed up on the beach."

Rural Cambodian villagers have filed a lawsuit in California against US and Thai companies, accusing them of human trafficking, labour exploitation, and debt servitude in a Thai seafood factory. The workers are seeking compensation for unpaid wages, mental abuse, pain and suffering.

According to the lawsuit, managers at the seafood factory confiscated their passport, prevented them from returning home, and made them work up to 6 days a week for wages that were less than promised.

Read more here.
Forced to work for 20 hours, nearly every day, without holiday, sick days or overtime, and paid far below the minimum wage and with regular deductions for utility and accommodation fees, despite sleeping on the floor.

These are the stories of 14 Myanmar migrant workers who have escaped from a poultry farm in Thailand.

Thailand is one of the world’s biggest chicken exporters, sending roughly 41% of its entire broiler poultry meat production to Europe. Some of the chicken is used in ready meals and petfood, and if processed in the EU, may be sold as a product from the Union instead of from Thailand.

Read The Guardian article here.

NEWSLETTER SURVEY

In every newsletter, we ask you a survey question - mailchimp can only handle one question per time - to help us improve the frequency, format and content of our newsletter, and hence to make it more useful to you as our readers.

We present the results of your answers in the next newsletter and respond to how we will incorporate your inputs, or simply do it!

We asked you in our previous newsletter: What kind of content would you like to see
In response, we will be providing more analysis of human trafficking-related developments going forward. In fact, we have already started - see the two new blogs on our website and in this newsletter!

This time around, we have the following question for you: **How do you rate the overall quality of our newsletter?** (Please click on the response below that most reflects your opinion)

- Very good
- Good
- Average
- Bad
- Very bad

If you have other thoughts and ideas to share on our newsletter or otherwise, please don’t hesitate to get in touch via unact@undp.org. We look forward to your feedback!

**UPCOMING UN-ACT EVENTS**

**COMMIT Victim ID and Referral Mechanisms Workshop, Bangkok , 25-26 October 2016**

The six 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.

This event is the next step in the development of COMMIT Guidelines on Victim Identification and Support Services. It aims to share information on national victim identification frameworks and referral mechanisms in existence or development; analyse, refine and endorse the COMMIT ‘Guiding Principles for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region’; and to propose indicators for the implementation of the Guiding Principles for consideration of the COMMIT Senior Officials’ Meeting in November 2016.

**COMMIT Task Force and Senior Officials Meeting, Vientiane, 23-24 November 2016**

The next COMMIT Task Force and Senior Officials Meeting in Vientiane will review progress in SPAIV implementation and plan the year ahead. It will allow for engagement between COMMIT governments and civil society through the COMMIT Youth Forum and the Civil Society Platform to COMMIT, and welcome representatives from ASEAN, the private sector as well as UN agencies and other international organisations for a dialogue on joint interventions against human trafficking. This year’s focus will be on victim identification and support services, in line with the 2016 priorities of COMMIT as defined earlier this years.

**COMMIT Youth Forum, Vientiane, 21-24 November 2016**

The COMMIT Youth Forum will take place in Vientiane, alongside the COMMIT Task Force and Senior Officials Meeting. This year, participants have been selected through a competition model, whereby youth across the COMMIT countries were able to apply online or in writing, and were selected with the involvement of COMMIT governments, civil society and UN agencies against pre-defined criteria on skills and experiences.

The youth will spend a few days learning about human trafficking and tools to prevent it from happening, both for themselves and their work in communities. Later, the participants will have the opportunity to address and discuss with representatives at the COMMIT Task Force and Senior Officials Meeting. The COMMIT Youth Forum will be supported by IOM X, Save the Children, Terre des Hommes Netherlands and UN-ACT.