



Credit: IOM

This Knowledge Uptake provides lessons learned and promising practice-oriented solutions to feed into the consultations for the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) and serves as a global knowledge product for policymakers and practitioners. The Knowledge Uptake draws upon IOM's years of experience in supporting migration policy and implementing operational programs and services to address trafficking in persons and protect victims, including through IOM's U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Populations, Refugees and Migration (PRM)-funded Global Assistance Fund (GAF) and Regional Migration Programs.

KEY TAKEAWAYS AND GOOD PRACTICES

Protect victims of trafficking through timely identification. Identifying victims of trafficking is paramount; it is particularly important for front-line responders, such as police officers, border officials, healthcare staff, and labour inspectors.

In MesoAmerica, IOM's Regional Migration Program provided trainings to build the capacity of governments, specifically border officials and national police, on identification and assistance to victims of trafficking through basic interviewing techniques and profile identification. Furthermore, the Regional Migration Program assisted El Salvador in developing national protection mechanisms, and Guatemala in developing the "Guidelines for Identification of Victims of Trafficking in Persons."

In the Dominican Republic, the Regional Migration Program facilitated the establishment of the Border Monitoring Network, a joint initiative of the government and civil society to strengthen coordination in identification and referral of migrants in vulnerable situations, such as victims of trafficking.

Enhance protection through direct assistance and access to effective remedies for victims of trafficking. Victims of trafficking often have limited access to services and resources, but may be entitled to temporary residence, safe accommodation, medical and psychological services, legal aid, and assisted voluntary return and reintegration support.

IOM's Global Assistance Fund (GAF) is an emergency support mechanism that provides case-specific assistance to migrants in vulnerable situations globally, including men, women, and children who have been trafficked. GAF's support includes immediate protection and personalized assistance in countries of destination, transit, and origin, including safe accommodation, medical care, psychosocial support, legal assistance, as well as assisted voluntary return and reintegration. The U.S. Department of State has contributed to the GAF since 2008. The fund is open to contributions from donors. GAF has provided direct assistance to more than 2,500 victims of trafficking from 70

nationalities since its inception in 2000. In one recent case, the GAF contributed to assisting 600 men from foreign fishing boats in Indonesian waters. Some had not been on dry land for years; one of the victims had been separated from his family, without any contact, for 22 years.

Established in strategic locations along the migratory routes, such as in transit countries, the Regional Migration Programs' Migrant Resource and Response Mechanisms (MRRMs) are flexible cooperation arrangements among key partners to facilitate the identification of migrants in vulnerable situations, including victims of trafficking, and to ensure that they receive appropriate immediate and longer-term support. They are tailor-made to fit each country's migration patterns and needs, and take into account the specific social, political, economic, and legal context.

Improve rule of law and enforcement. States must continue to establish policies and frameworks to prevent and protect victims of trafficking as well as prosecute traffickers, but effectiveness lies in the enforcement and implementation of such measures.

In the Greater Mekong Sub-region, the Regional Migration Program provided technical support to Lao PDR in developing its first legislation on the prevention and prosecution of human trafficking. Border cooperation meetings between Thailand and Myanmar supported by IOM led to an exchange of information that resulted in prosecuting traffickers and a trafficking ring as well as the rescue and safe return of over 100 victims of trafficking.

Increase pathways for safe and regular migration, and awareness campaigns with positive messages. Public awareness campaigns should provide a balanced message, not only highlighting the risks of trafficking but also promoting existing safe and regular alternatives.

In the Greater Mekong Sub-region, the Regional Migration Program distributes education materials on safe migration and concurrently hosts job fairs for meaningful and safe employment abroad. This provides employment options so job seekers do not have to resort to irregular and potentially unsafe migration.

Reduce the demand for cheap goods and services produced by trafficked persons. The private sector should adhere to labour standards and ensure ethical recruitment, fair employment practices, and clean supply chains. Information campaigns for consumers can also reduce demand of services and goods that lead to trafficking.

In Vietnam, the Regional Migration Program conducted a workshop on ethical recruitment and migrants' rights for representatives of the provincial government and private sector, including recruitment agencies. In the same region, IOM supports IOM X, an innovative campaign to encourage safe migration and public action to stop human trafficking. The campaign advocates support of businesses that adhere to protection standards and suggests individuals research the working conditions of the companies they support.

Address trafficking in persons in times of crisis. During times of crises, such as in armed conflicts, natural disasters, and protracted unrest, trafficking in persons may occur or be exacerbated. Humanitarian interventions should mainstream trafficking responses before, during, and after the crises.

The Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) was a state-led process to improve the ability of States and other stakeholders to respond to the needs of migrants caught in countries in crises and developed the MICIC "Guidelines: To protect migrants in countries experiencing conflict or natural disaster" as well as the MICIC Issue Brief "Responding to human trafficking and exploitation in times of crisis: Reducing the vulnerabilities of migrants in preparedness, response and recovery efforts" to detail the importance and ways in which countries can address trafficking in persons during times of crisis.

Promote and develop research and analysis on human trafficking. Research and analysis on human trafficking trends and profiles can aid in the development of better policies and programs, as well as monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policies and programs. IOM's Regional Migration Programs continue to collect data about migrants and migration trends, including on experiences of exploitation and trafficking, and facilitate the analysis of IOM's primary data in cooperation with UN and academic partners.