



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA



Report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations

on Violence Against Women Migrant Workers

Prepared by the Ministry of Women's Affairs

Royal Government of Cambodia

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1. Preliminary Note

Cambodia is a predominantly labour sending country and therefore the present report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on “Violence Against Women Migrant Workers” is focused on Cambodian women migrant workers abroad, with some further information on Cambodian women migrant workers domestically and to the existing comprehensive response to violence against women and girls taking place in Cambodia.

When it comes to violence against women migrants from other countries in Cambodia, there is a certain number of Vietnamese women engaged in prostitution in Cambodia, although official estimates are not available. In general, women engaged in prostitution are at higher risk of health problems such as HIV/AIDS as well as of violence and gender-based violence [Cambodian Ministry of Women’s Affairs 2014]¹.

2. **Signing, ratifying, and acceding to relevant UN and/or ILO instruments and/or adhering to their provisions (operative paragraph 3)**

2.1. Compliance with CEDAW and other Core UN Treaties, ILO and ASEAN’s Conventions

UN Conventions/Treaties	Date of Ratification by Cambodia
ICERD	28 November 1983
ICESCR	26 May 1992 a
ICCPR	26 May 1992 a
CEDAW	15 October 1992 a
MWC	27 September 2004 s
ILO C29	24 February 1969
ILO C105	23 August 1999
ILO C111	23 August 1999

¹ Cambodia Gender Assessment 2014. Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Royal Government of Cambodia. Phnom Penh, 2014.



ILO C138	23 August 1999
ILO C182	14 March 2006
Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and members of their Families	Ratified on 27 September 2004
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children	Signed on 11 November 2001 and ratified on 2 July 2007
The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its protocol	Ratified on 15 Oct 1992
the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers	Signed 13 January 2007
ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children	Ratified in November 2015
The ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers	Signed November 2017

2.2. Memorandums of Understanding with other Countries

- Cambodia has concluded bilateral labour migration and trafficking agreements with Thailand. In 2014, Cambodia signed a memorandum of understanding with Thailand for Bilateral Cooperation in counter-trafficking,



and lately in April 2019, signed the bilateral agreement on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on Case Management of Repatriation and Reintegration of Victims of Human Trafficking and Development of the Joint Plan of Action of SOPs.

- In 2005, Cambodia signed an agreement with Vietnam for Bilateral Cooperation on Counter Trafficking in Persons and Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking. In 2009, Standard Operating Procedures for the Identification and Repatriation of Trafficked Victims between Vietnam and Cambodia were endorsed and in 2016, developed and adopted the Action Plan for the implantation of the above bilateral agreement.
- In 2016, signed the Bilateral Agreement between China and Cambodia on Strengthening Cooperation in Counter Trafficking in Persons and adopted the Action Plan to implement this agreement and currently, in the process of establishing the working group and focal point of both country for strengthening the cooperation between two countries to protect the victims of trafficking in persons.
- Cambodia and the Republic of Korea endorsed an MoU on the deployment of Cambodian workers under the employment permit system (EPS) and this MoU implement by the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training.

3. National Policy Framework

The Royal Government of Cambodia has made great effort in term of enactment and implementation of gender-sensitive legislation, policies and plans on migration, migration labour, social protection, ending violence against women migrant workers and migrant girls (including budget allocation to implement laws, policies and plans addressing violence against women migrant workers), as the following results:

- Second Labour Migration Policy-2015-2018 was developed and implemented. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT), the policy aimed at developing a sustainable, effective, and rights based framework to govern labour migration in Cambodia. The overall policy objective is to develop a labour migration governance framework that protects and empowers women, men and LGBT+ migrant workers throughout the entire migration cycle, guarantees that all migration decisions are based on informed choices, reduces the



cost and debt burden of migrant workers, increases access to social protection programmes, creates opportunities for migrant workers to leverage their skills development for long term decent work opportunities, and enables a positive, profitable, and harm free experience for workers, their families and communities, that also contributes to the economic and social development of Cambodia. Recognising the structural, cultural and financial barriers that different members of society face, this framework responds to the specific needs of all workers and their families, regardless of age, disability, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion, political opinion, membership of trade union or other community group, sexual orientation, legal status, or sector of work. The third Labour Migration Policy has been developed and to be finalized during this reporting period.

- **The Policy on the Protection of the Rights of Victims of Human Trafficking** was endorsed in August 2009. In 2014, the Government approved and disseminated the new “Minimum Standards on Residential Care for Victims of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation” to improve quality of response to victims.
- The **Village/Commune Safety Policy**, launched by the Ministry of Interior in 2010, comprises 9 lines of intervention, of which one of them addresses prevention and response to human trafficking at local level.
- **The Guidelines on Forms and Procedures for Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking for Appropriate Service Provision** adopted in December 2015
- The **National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018** targets migrant workers:
 - ✓ Further strengthening the administration of the recruitment of labor to work abroad, as well as enhancing protection of rights, health and safety of Cambodian overseas workers (Policy Priority No 4.153)
 - ✓ Improve procedures for the management of Cambodian workers overseas, both legally and illegally (Planned Action to Implement the Prioritized Policies No 4.154)



- ✓ Take measures to protect Cambodian laborers working overseas informally, particularly in Thailand, to ensure them basic rights (Planned Action to Implement the Prioritized Policies No 4.154)
- The National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2014-2018 (**Neary Rattanak IV**) is the five-years overarching policy to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in Cambodia and to guide efforts for gender mainstreaming across Government. This policy was developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and in cooperation with line ministries, CSOs and development partners. There are 3 specific measures for women migrant workers which are part of the Strategic Areas of Women's Economic Empowerment and Legal Protection of the Neary Rattanak IV:
 - ✓ Promote and address women migrant workers' challenges in the process of developing migration policies and other migration programs.
 - ✓ Ensure the reduction of migration-related risks for Cambodian women workers.
 - ✓ Strengthen gender mainstreaming in laws, regulations and policies and address violence against women, migrants and marginalized women and girls.
- The **Second National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women (2014-2018)** is the key policy in Cambodia to end violence against women and girls. It has been developed in a unique participatory process comprised by 10 consultations at sub-national level and a number of consultations at national level. This consultative process engaged a wide variety of actors, including line ministries, NGOs, women survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) themselves and civil society organizations working with groups which are especially vulnerable to GBV, such as women with disabilities, women working in men's entertainment sector, women engaged in prostitution and LGBT people. The diversity of the groups involved in the consultation is reflected in the Second NAPVAW's recognition that some groups of women and girls face particular vulnerability to violence and therefore need targeted interventions.



The Second NAPVAW builds on the lessons learnt from the First NAPVAW 2009-2012, on evidence-based surveys using internationally recognized methodologies (WHO) as well as on good practices from other countries' experiences. The Second NAPVAW is now being implemented and monitored through a high level technical working group on Violence against Women led by the Ministry of Women's Affairs which was established in 2012 and includes line ministries, CSOs, and international development partners.

- The **Second National Plan of Action (NPA) for Counter-Trafficking in Persons (2014-2018)** is the key policy and roadmap developed by the National Committee for Counter Trafficking in a joint consultative process involving line ministries, CSOs, development partners and private sector. The Plan is based on the findings of the assessment and lessons learnt of the First Plan of Action. The Second Plan of Action targets the '4 Ps' (Policy, Prevention, Prosecution and Protection) and sets up 6 core values for its implementation: 1) government ownership; 2) human rights-based approach; 3) gender-based programming; 4) active civil society and stakeholders participation; 5) integrated multi-sector approach; and 6) systemic monitoring, evaluation and sustainability.

The Second Plan of Action pays special attention to improvement of the '4 Ps' through development and implementation of guidelines or standards procedures, improvement of data collection systems, enhancement of cooperation between stakeholders, implementation of capacity development measures for involved authorities, enhancement of impact of primary prevention campaigns and activities, and increase efforts in research and evidence-based policy making. This NPA is currently on the process of Mid-Term Review.

- Guidelines related to Services for Women and Girls subject to Violence: There are five guidelines (i). the Minimum Standards of Essential Services for Women and Girl Survivors of violence; (ii). The Minimum Standards for Mediation as a Response to VAWG; (iii). the ASEAN Guidelines on the Collection and Analysis of Data on Violence Against Women; (iv). the VAW Prevention Strategy; and (v). the manual for Case Management with



Survivors of Gender Based Violence. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Cambodia has adopted and localized these guidelines.

4. Sex-disaggregated data collection and research on: trends in women's labour migration and violence against women migrant workers, including domestic workers and undocumented women migrant workers at all stages of migration.

In 2015, Cambodia's working age population (15-64) was estimated at 10 millions or 64% of the total population, 40% the total population was in the age range of 15-34 (UN DESA, 2015). This demographic trend suggests that the country has a largest number of young people entering the labour market. While the majority of them work in the country, more and more Cambodians are emigrating to find jobs abroad, driven by considerable wage difference and limited employment opportunities in the domestic labour market. There were an estimated 1.19 million Cambodians emigrants in 2015, around 7.6% of Cambodia's total population. This marks an increase of 160% from 2000. Thailand is the most common destination country, receiving 68% of Cambodia's emigrants.

Most Cambodians emigrate through irregular channels and it is estimated that fewer than 10% of Cambodians emigrate through recognized and legal channels (Tunon & Khleang, 2013). The number of regular Cambodian migrants has increased significantly over the last decade, though they still represent a small share of total migrant population. Between 1998 and 2015, a total of 209 804 Cambodian workers participated in state-sponsored labour migration programmes. Of these, 55% went to Thailand, 25% to Malaysia, 22% to South Korea and 1% to Japan (OECD Development Pathway, 2016).

Malaysia was the first country to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Cambodia, paving the way for Cambodians to work legally in the country. Cambodians began arriving in Malaysia under this programme in 1998. The recruitment process was managed by the employment recruitment agencies licensed by MoLVT. Between 1998 and 2015, Cambodia sent a total of 52 265 workers to Malaysia, 78% of whom were women (employed as domestic workers) and 24% were men (working in the construction and manufacturing). Following the series of reports of abuse and exploitation, however, the Cambodian Government banned sending domestic



workers to Malaysia in October 2011. A new MoU between the two countries is currently being considered in order to increase the protection of migrant workers.

Thailand has accepted legal Cambodian migrant workers following and MoU signed in May 2003. Legal Cambodian workers only started to arrive in 2006, however, when Cambodian Inter-Ministerial working Group conducted a nationality check of irregular Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand and issued them with identity certificates. Between 2006 and 2015, Cambodian officially sent a total of 115 420 migrant workers to Thailand, the majority of whom were men employed in manufacturing and services.

South Korea has allowed Cambodian nationals to work in the country since 2003 through an industrial trainee scheme. More recently it has also created an employment permit system via the Act on Foreign Worker Employment. The placement of migrant workers in South Korea is done by the Cambodia's Manpower Training and Overseas Sending Board, a public agency for recruiting, training, sending and managing Cambodian workers overseas, and created by sub-decree 70 in 2006. As of 2015, there were 43 920 Cambodian migrant workers employed in South Korea, mostly men working in manufacturing (65%), agriculture (34%) and fisheries (1%).

According to the data from the Ministry of Planning in 2012 showed that the gender distribution of Cambodian international migrants is fairly even, at 54% men versus 46% women. The majority of migrants are young, on average 25 years old. About 8% of migrants are children under 18, 48% are between 18 and 24, 32% are between 25 and 34 and 12% are over 34 years of age. The majority of Cambodian migrants have a low level of formal education, though male migrants tend to be more educated than women. The data also suggest that the main reason for migration is to seek employment. Most adult migrants seek advice from their parents in making the decision to migrate, while some took the decision themselves.

Women migrants from rural areas are more likely to migrate internally and less likely to migrate internationally than men migrants. Among rural women migrants, 74% migrate internally and 25.9% migrate internationally; among rural men migrants, 65% migrate internally and 35% migrate internationally. Women migrants are



slightly younger and more likely to be single than male migrants [Cambodian Ministry of Planning 2013]².

According to the Ministry of Planning, migrants with less education are more likely to migrate internationally, while the more educated migrate to Phnom Penh, although this finding is not reported by sex. Cambodian women migrants have migrated both legally and irregularly as domestic workers, factory workers, laborers, engaged in prostitution, and food-processing workers [Maltoni 2011]³.

The two main destinations for women and men international migrants are Malaysia and Thailand, with men also migrating in substantial numbers to the Republic of Korea. The number of Cambodian women migrating through official (documented) channels to Malaysia increased sharply between 2008 and 2010 as a result of the ban placed by Indonesia in 2009 on migration of domestic workers from Indonesia to Malaysia. Cambodia introduced its own ban on domestic worker migration in 2011 (Government of Cambodia 2011). While the ban has reduced the flow of women migrants to Malaysia from Cambodia, it has not eliminated it as it does not cover migration into other sectors, such as into factory work. The number of women migrating through official channels to Thailand has continued to increase.

In 2015, there were 9,931 (38.67%) Cambodian female migrant workers out of 25,676 in abroad, and there were 1,795 women (24.90%) out of 7,208 in the Republic of Korea under the EPS, and if compare to 2011, only 11 per cent of the total number of Cambodians.

According to the annual report of the National Committee on Anti-Trafficking in 2015, there are about 450,000 undocumented Cambodian migrants in Thailand and based on the working group of the Cambodian Embassy (the Committee to legalize migrant workers) in Thailand has provided the legality for the Cambodian migrant workers 233,032 (documented). In 2015, there were about 22,691 women victims among 67,852 of Cambodian migrant workers who were deported from 11 countries (Malaysia 67 women out of 99, Indonesia 353 both sexes, Thailand 22,535 women out of 67,186, Vietnam 93 women out of 153, Singapore 01 woman, China 25, Papew Guaney 06, South Africa 01, Russia 01, and Lao PDR 04 women out of 25).

² *ibid.*

³ Maltoni, B. *Female Labor Migration In Cambodia*. Phnom Penh, 2011



5. Preventing violence against women migrant workers, including regulation of labour recruitment and intermediaries, capacity building programmes and awareness raising efforts for government and civil society including for migrant girls .

To address violence against women migrant workers, including regulation of labour recruitment and intermediaries, as well as capacity-building programmes and awareness-raising efforts for government and civil society on preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, the Royal Government of Cambodia has some key preventive measures as the following:

- Cambodia has signed the **Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and members of their Families**.
- The **Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia** stipulate as follows:
 - Article 31 provides that the Kingdom of Cambodia shall recognize and respect human rights as stipulated in the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human rights, the covenants and conventions related to human rights, women's and children's rights.
 - Article 32 provides that Khmer citizens residing abroad shall receive the protection of the state.
 - Article 38 states that the detention of a person shall not be done unless in accordance with the law.
 - Article 45 calls for the abolition of all forms of discrimination against women.
- The **Law on the Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation** (2008) is a comprehensive law addressing trafficking in persons and sexual exploitation crimes in Cambodia in compliance with Cambodia's obligations under the Palermo Protocol. It provides the definitions and sentences applicable to unlawful recruitment, cross border transfer of persons and the act of buying, selling or exchanging a human being for the purposes of exploitation.
- The anti-trafficking legislative framework in Cambodia also includes the **Penal Code** (2009) and the **Agreement on Guidelines** for practices and cooperation between relevant government institutions and victim support in cases of Trafficking in Persons (2007). The Penal Code addresses the unlawful



confinement of people as well as forgery of official documents, bribery of officials and identity fraud. The Trafficking in Persons Agreement provides for victim protection from the time of the identification of the crime, victim rescue and through the judicial process.

- The **Cambodian Labor Law** prohibits forced or compulsory labor and provides for a fine of 61-90 days' reference wages or imprisonment ranging from 6 days to 1 month (Article 15). It also prohibits the hiring of people for work to pay off debts (Article 16).
- The **Sub-Decree 190 on the Management of the Sending of Cambodian Workers Abroad through Private Recruitment Agencies** (August 2011) replaced the Sub-decree No. 57 on the Export of Khmer Labour to Work Overseas (1995).

The Sub-Decree 190 is a key legal instrument which acknowledges the potential impact of migration on poverty reduction and human resource development. It also strengthens the regulatory framework for managing labour migration and protecting migrant workers. For example, it demands that recruitment agencies are responsible for making arrangements to ensure that migrant workers receive appropriate social security coverage in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations of the receiving country; it imposes upon recruitment agencies certain obligations regarding the return of migrants (e.g. notifying Cambodian missions abroad and the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training upon the termination of migrant workers' contracts, facilitating the safe return of workers, and the issuance of certificates stating that the migrant workers have worked abroad).

The Sub-Decree 190 has been supplemented by a number of *prakas* or ministerial orders in order to provide minimum operating standards and greater clarity to the authorities on their roles, responsibilities and procedures [see list of *prakas* adopted by the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training in section "Key Actors Involved" of present report]. The Sub-Decree 190 (Article 4) establishes the official minimum age for work abroad in 18 years.

Other relevant Cambodian laws include Prakas 108 of 2006 on Education of HIV/AIDS, Safe Migration and Labour Rights for Cambodian Workers Abroad, Sub-decree 70 of 2006 on the Creation of Manpower Training and Overseas Sending



Board, which regulates migrants to Korea⁴, Sub-decree No. 38 on the Law Referring to Contracts and other Liabilities 1998, which regulates the conditions under which a contract may be deemed invalid, void or voidable due to fraud, Sub-decree No. 195 on the issuing of passports for Khmer Migrant Workers 2008, and Sub-decree No. 39 on Granting Normal Passport to Cambodian Labourers to Legally Work Abroad 2009.

Currently, Cambodia is one of the countries in ASEAN that implements the Safe and Fair programme: realizing women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the ASEAN Region is part of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls, a global, multi-year initiative between the European Union and United Nations. For instance, one of the activities of the programme is to train service frontline service providers on "Essential Services Packages for Women and Girls Subject to Violence". The other example is that the programme works with the two associations of private recruitment agencies to develop code of conduct for the private recruitment agencies.

6. Key Government Institutions and Actors Involved which ensure mechanisms and services for protection, assistance and improved access to justice

The Cambodian Government agency responsible for the governance of labour migration is the Department of Employment and Manpower, under the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training's General Department of Labour.

Sub-Decree No. 52 (2005) mandates the **Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT)** with two tasks that are directly related to labour migration: (1) to improve the management of overseas employment service provision through private companies and the promotion of employment of Cambodian workers overseas; and (2) to coordinate and cooperate with other ministries (especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Women Affairs), local authorities, and regional and international organizations.

Sub-Decree 52 and Declaration No. 062/07 of the MOLVT outline the Department's key responsibilities in the management of overseas workers: (1) study and propose measures to develop and protect employment; (2) manage, issue work permits and

⁴ ILO (2009), *Review of Labour Migration Management, Policies and Legal Framework in Cambodia*, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.



work books, and provide working visas to Cambodian workers overseas; (3) issue to and check work permits for foreigners in the country; (4) prepare legal procedures and monitoring measures; (5) set up employment offices under provincial offices of the Department of Labour and Vocational Training; (6) develop statistics on employment and manpower in-country and overseas; (7) prepare regulations on the management of foreigners working in Cambodia and the management of Cambodian migrant workers overseas; (8) manage foreigners working in Cambodia and Cambodia workers overseas, in cooperation with concerned ministries; and (9) seek employment markets for Cambodian workers to work overseas.

The MOLVT has endorsed **8 prakas** (ministerial orders) to supplement the Sub-Decree 190 with the goal of improving conditions, security and welfare of Cambodian female and male migrant workers abroad:

1. Prakas on the Use of Key Terms in Sub-Decree 190 (February 2013)
2. Prakas on Private Recruitment Agency (February 2013)
3. Prakas on Recruitment Process and Pre-Departure Orientation Training (February 2013)
4. Prakas on Receiving Complaint Mechanism for Migrant Workers (February 2013)
5. Prakas on Inspection on Private Recruitment Agency (February 2013)
6. Prakas on Reward and Penalty to Private Recruitment Agency (February 2013)
7. Prakas on Services of Private Recruitment on Site and Repatriation (February 2013)
8. Prakas on Promulgation of Minimum Standards of Job Placement Services Abroad Contract (September 2013)

The MOLVT is in process of developing guidelines for identification and referrals of victims of trafficking.

The MOLVT established a Labour Migration Information System (LMIS) that collects sex- and sector-disaggregated data on the number of Cambodian workers that migrate through regular channels, with support from partners such as IOM.



The MOLVT has been involved in the regional discussions on the drafting of an ASEAN Agreement on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers.

The MOLVT hosted the Fifth ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour in Siem Reap in October 2012, the theme of which was “Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers: Towards Effective Recruitment Practices and Regulations”. The Government of Cambodia also hosted the Regional Conference on Human Rights Instruments, International Labour Standards, and Women Migrant Workers’ Rights, in September 2012.

- The **Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MOSAVY)** issued a new Policy and National Minimum Standards for the Protection of the Rights of Victims of Human Trafficking (August 2009), which includes guidelines to improve victim treatment and protection, and began to train officials on the use of these standards. The policy aims to result in continuity of care for victims who often engage with multiple service providers, from shelters to counselors and prosecution authorities. MOSAVY is in process of drafting a guideline on victims reintegration.
- The **Ministry of Women’s Affairs** has accomplished several awareness campaigns on safe migration and prevention of trafficking for marriage through the media (mainly radio talk shows) and in several provinces.

The Ministry has also coordinated the fight on Violence Against Women and Girls across the country and has comprehensively addressed Violence Against Women and Girls through legal reform (e.g Domestic Violence Law passed in 2005), policy formulation and implementation, primary prevention campaigns, legal protection and service delivery for victims. The Ministry has developed and implemented two comprehensive National Action Plans on Violence Against Women (First for the period 2009-2013; and Second for 2014-2018) in cooperation with line ministries, NGOs and development partners. The Ministry established a high level mechanism for inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholders coordination to address Violence Against Women and Girls (called Technical Working Group on Gender-Based Violence).



The Ministry also decisively contributed to mainstreaming gender aspects in anti-trafficking efforts made by the Royal Government through the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT).

- The **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** and Cambodian Embassies abroad, in collaboration with other governments, international agencies and NGOs, have assisted and supported thousands of Cambodian victims in the country and abroad and also collaborated in assistance and repatriation of victims with other nationalities.
- The **Ministry of Interior** has been intensively involved in dealing with issues and crimes affecting male and female migrant workers in country and abroad through the National Police as well as its ministerial departments for Issuance Passport and Department of Anti-Human Trafficking.
- The Royal Government of Cambodia has endorsed December 12 as a “**National Anti-Human Trafficking Day**” in our country. Since then, the Royal Government, with the support of partners, has celebrated six consecutive National Anti-Human Trafficking Days to raise public awareness and to mobilize support from stakeholders to bolster our efforts to fight human trafficking.
- There is a strong **recruitment agency association** for Cambodian migrant workers which has good cooperation with the Royal Government of Cambodia. This recruitment agency association is also promoting self-regulation through the monitoring of its Code of Conduct.
- The Cambodian **trade unions** are also providing information and support services to migrants and their families, and building relations with trade unions in destination countries.

In the annual meeting of Cambodia National Council for Women in February 2019, the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia approved on the allocation of national budget of 500 Million Cambodian Riel (almost 122,797 USD) for provision of legal support for women and girls subject to violence. In the meantime, a team of government lawyers are also available to provide pro-bono legal assistance to the women and girls who are victims of violence.



7. Bilateral, regional, international and other cooperation and partnerships (Transnational and/or Inter-Ministerial Cooperation)
- The **Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT)** Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Yangon in 2004 by the representatives of our six governments from the Greater Mekong Sub-region (Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam) to improve cooperation and coordination in response to human trafficking, including implementation of international standards for counter-trafficking and aligning multi-lateral, bi-lateral, and government-NGO efforts to fight trafficking in persons. Following the MoU, the six countries have been working very hard and achieved significant successes in the last 10 years. The countries developed Sub-regional Plans of Action to establish roadmaps to combat trafficking in persons in the sub-region. The Fourth Sub-regional Plan of Action has been developed and approved by the COMMIT Senior Officials Meeting on 30th April 2015. The Fourth Sub-regional Plan of Action will be implemented for the next four years, between 2015 and 2018. Based on these Action Plans, each country developed National Action Plans and implement corresponding activities to combat trafficking in persons in accordance with their respective context and resources invested by the governments while withholding the regional mechanism.
 - Following the endorsement of MoU signed in Yangon, each country established a national inter-ministerial taskforce. The **COMMIT Cambodia Taskforce** is chaired by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and co-chair by three ministries: Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation; and Ministry of Justice.
 - In 2015, the COMMIT Cambodia Taskforce successfully organized 1) the Tenth Senior Officials Meeting of COMMIT, where overall progress and good practices in the region under the COMMIT during the past 10 years were presented and goals for future counter-trafficking efforts in the region were established; and 2) the Fourth Inter-Ministerial Meeting, in which ministers from the six COMMIT countries endorsed the Fourth COMMIT Sub-Regional Plan of Action for the period 2015 to 2018 and reaffirmed our commitment to eradicating all forms of human trafficking in the region through the endorsement of a new COMMIT Joint Declaration.



- The **National Committee for Counter Trafficking** was established by the Royal Government of Cambodia in 2009 to ensure inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholders coordination in the fight against trafficking in persons. The Committee, chaired by the Ministry of Interior, has developed and implemented the First National Plan of Action (2001-2013) and is now implementing the Second National Plan of Action (2014-2018). Based on the findings of the impact assessment of the First National Plan of Action, the Committee was restructured in 2014 with the goal of deepening and consolidating the response at sub-national level, including provincial, district and commune levels. The Committee has established national working groups to facilitate a holistic and comprehensive response to human trafficking, targeting prevention, protection, prosecution, law enforcement, child welfare and international cooperation. The members of the working groups comprise both government officials and civil society organizations.
- A **Migration Working Group** was established in September 2012 under the Secretariat of the National Committee for Counter Trafficking. The overall purpose of the Group is to “promote and protect the safety, rights, and interests of migrants in a way that is gender responsive by using a multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach”. The Ministry of Interior chairs this Group, and there are number of vice-chairs, including the MOLVT, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, and the Ministry of Justice.

8. Conclusion

The Royal Government of Cambodia has taken remarkable steps to improve the conditions of Cambodian migrants working abroad, to fight against human trafficking and to combat violence against women and girls. A number of ministries, government institutions, CSOs, development partners and private sector have cooperated closely to develop, implement and monitor key laws, policies and programs to address the needs of migrant male and female workers and to enhance their safety and welfare.

Despite significant successes and strong commitment to address Violence Against Women Migrant Workers from the Royal Government of Cambodia, important challenges still remain and greater efforts need to be made in order implement measures for migrant workers and human trafficking in a more gender-responsive



way as well as to target migrant workers in our already comprehensive efforts that tackle violence against women and girls.

Regional and bilateral cooperation between Cambodia and countries of destination of Cambodian women migrants workers need to continue being strengthened and enforced in order to improve assistance to female migrant victims of gender-based violence, including identification and referrals, as well as prosecution of perpetrators in coordination with states' authorities.

Further improvements are needed in data collection to better account and address cases of violence against women migrant workers abroad.

Due to limited capacities as well as human and financial resources, further support from the United Nations and development partners is still needed by the Royal Government of Cambodia in order to address Violence Against Women Migrants Workers more effectively as well as to fully implement the existing laws, policies, Memorandums of Understanding or agreements, and standard operating procedures.



9. Annex

Data from the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training:

Number of Cambodian migrant workers sent to work overseas through private recruitment companies and committee for training and sending workers overseas in 2017 and 2018

Description		Unit	2017	2018
Malaysia	Total	Person	27	53
	Female	Person	7	20
Saudia Arabia	Total	Person	12	16
	Female	Person	12	16
Thailand	Total	Person	248,918	323,872
	Female	Person	103,417	136,717
Japan	Total	Person	2,296	3002
	Female	Person	1,241	1,417
Singapore	Total	Person	138	287
	Female	Person	138	287
Hong Kong	Total	Person	5	54
	Female	Person	5	54
South Korea	Total	Person	5,967	4,870
	Female	Person	1,631	1,142
Total	Total	Person	257,363	332,154
	Female	Person	106,451	139653



Dispute resolution for overseas migrant workers in 2017 and 2018

Description		Unit	2017	2018
Migrant workers	Total	Person	493	214
	Female	Person	187	98

Source: MoLVT, April 2019