

UNIFEM Regional Programme on
PREVENTING TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN BY ADDRESSING THE
NORMATIVE DIMENSIONS OF DEMAND

1. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Trafficking in persons – the majority reported to be women and children – is a complex multi-layered development issue. It thus requires multi-pronged interventions that include both long term and more immediate preventive measures addressing the supply and demand basis of the phenomenon, as well as initiatives related to post-trafficking assistance and long term rehabilitation.

To date, however, the vast majority of interventions have focused on the supply side, looking at reducing the vulnerabilities of potential source communities and persons. Preventive measures addressing the supply dimensions of trafficking include: community awareness raising on the harms of trafficking and ploys of traffickers; livelihood projects intended to reduce vulnerability. More recently there have been a spate of initiatives addressing demand, but these are largely focussed on legislation to combat trafficking, capacity building for law enforcement officials and service providers to ensure adherence to human rights standards and to enhance the efficacy of implementation. Over the years there has also been much work on post trafficking assistance - trauma counselling, legal aid, assistance to return to countries of origin and socio-economic re-integration.

A variety of stakeholders including international development agencies are beginning to acknowledge that there is greater need to address the demand dimensions of trafficking more comprehensively, particularly ***the normative dimensions of demand, which have received scant attention***

Trafficking does not occur in a vacuum but against a backdrop of social tolerance rooted in interacting discriminatory age, class, gender, ethnic, nationality stereotypes and marginalization. **Socio-cultural norms, values and behaviours such as discriminatory** male centred assumptions of femininity, masculinity and sexuality, commodification of persons etc ***'justify' exploitative behaviour and generate a demand for trafficked persons,*** especially women and children. This is a critical dimension of the 'root' of the problem. There is therefore need to transform mindsets and develop partnerships especially with youth and male groups who will advocate for values, norms and practice based on the respect and dignity of human beings. ***The rationale for this program therefore is that awareness of these issues and of the***

boundaries of socially tolerated behaviour towards women, children and non-nationals can be challenged and changed through gender-sensitive education and awareness-raising, among other measures.

This programme which is finally intended to benefit potential/actual victims of trafficking, especially women and children is targeted at (a) middle, high school students and teachers in international/local schools, male networks, youth groups/associations at national/local levels, (b) general public and source communities; (c) policy makers, government bodies (Ministries of Women's Empowerment, Education, Information and Broadcasting, Culture and Religion).

2. DEVELOPMENT GOAL

The programme aims to prevent trafficking in **persons, especially women and children** by addressing the normative factors that generate demand.

3. OBJECTIVES:

- (a) To build knowledge/understanding of the ideas, perceptions, values, behaviour that generate the demand for trafficked persons, especially women and children into the sex sector and domestic work, and document, share and advocate alternate transformative practice;
- (b) To promote policies/programmes that transform ideas, perceptions, values, behaviour that generate such demand;
- (c) To pilot innovative programmes with teachers and students in educational institutions, youth and male groups, that interrogate and provide alternatives to prevailing norms, and behaviour generating demand;
- (d) To raise public consciousness interrogating and providing alternatives to prevailing norms and behaviour generating demand.

4. ACTIVITIES

- Conduct surveys on perceptions values and behaviours that generate demand for trafficked persons, especially women and children into the sex sector and domestic work and document and analyze alternate transformative practice;
- Develop advocacy materials targeted at policy makers, media personnel, middle and high-school students and teachers of local schools, community based, national and local youth and male groups;

- Pilot programmes, and conduct national and local work-shops for middle and high-school students and teachers, male and youth groups that interrogate and provide alternatives to prevailing norms, and behaviour generating demand;
- Organize government meetings to promote policies and programmes that seek to transform ideas, perceptions, values and behaviour that generate demand;
- Convene regional workshops to discuss good practices and continuing challenges between countries of origin and countries of destination;
- Conduct sensitization workshops for the media and undertake local and national media programmes to raise public awareness that interrogate and provide alternatives to prevailing norms and behaviours generating demand.

5. ANTICIPATED RESULTS

- Policy with budget, introduced to integrate in school curriculum value education that includes challenges to prevailing norms and behaviours generating demand for trafficked persons,
- Modules interrogating and providing alternatives to prevailing norms and behaviours generating demand for trafficked persons, integrated into value education syllabus of school curriculum;
- Principles of gender equality, non-discrimination, respect and dignity to all human beings an integral part of the constitution/ charters of educational institutions, male networks, associations, student bodies;
- Male networks/associations, community based organizations, student bodies implement activities on alternatives to prevailing norms and behaviours generating demand for trafficked persons;
- Advocacy materials generating knowledge and understanding of perceptions, values and behaviours that generate a demand for trafficked persons, especially women and children, and alternate transformative practice, developed and widely disseminated.
- Better media reportage, analysis in key national and regional media on the issue;

6. STRATEGY

Adopting a gender sensitive rights perspective, this three year Programme seeks to address relatively uncharted terrain in trafficking-related interventions –interrogating and seeking to transform ideas, perceptions, values and behaviours that generate the demand for trafficked persons, in certain sectors.

The Programme will look, in the first instance to build on existing interventions and institutional mechanisms. Strategies will include perceptual studies, advocacy, including policy advocacy, consciousness-raising among the general public including potential users of services of trafficked persons, piloting initiatives with mechanisms for up-scaling and replication built into their design.

The Programme covers countries of origin and destination in East and Southeast Asia as (a) trafficking occurs within and across national boundaries and (b) actions in both countries of origin (recruitment agencies, families selling women and children) and destination plug into the demand generating process.

Sustainability and multiplier effects will be ensured in the following ways. Consultations between various stakeholders to hone concept, detail the partnership and implementation responsibilities fosters a sense of ownership. Partnerships will be with national/local organizations with the necessary experience and expertise for sustainability. Where local capacity is lacking, it will be strengthened. Target groups and core advocates within each target group will be carefully selected, based on an assessment of their ability to influence change within their own institutions and across institutions. Political positioning, leadership roles/commitment, reach in terms of numbers that can be influenced, are examples of criteria that will be used to determine ability to influence change. Learning/training modules and awareness raising initiatives will be institutionalized (eg curriculum of schools) and a pool of institutional resources - teachers, trainers (male networks, NGOs) , core advocates (school students, male networks, youth groups) will be developed/strengthened for sustainability. Pilot initiatives will have embedded in their design the process to ensure upscaling, replication and multiplier effects. For example pilots with local and international schools or male networks will include advocacy and other activities that these groups will take up within their own institution and across, for multiplier effect. Pilot schools could be recommended as demonstration schools to local/national governments on efforts to combat trafficking, with the intention to upscale and replicate the initiatives.

7. COUNTRIES

- Thailand
- Philippines
- Lao PDR
- Cambodia
- Vietnam
- China
- Indonesia

8. PARTNERS

- Governments: Ministries of Education, Women, Information and Broadcasting, Culture, Religion
- Academia, Educational institutions, Youth and male networks
- NGOs: national, regional and global
- Media
- UN agencies and other Development Agencies