

CONCEPT PAPER

STRENGTHENING MECHANISMS AND STRATEGIES TO COUNTER TRAFFICKING

The Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs (MWVA)
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Introduction and overview

“My name is N.Ch After watching a video a woman persuaded me to sleep in her house. Then she sold me to a brothel in Pursat and I was later sold to another brothel in Tuol Kork. There I was tortured by beatings with sticks and electric shocks and made to have sex with 10-15 men a day until I was rescued by police and taken to a centre. Now I am infected by HIV and have no strength to make money for my family.”

Trafficking in women and children constitutes violence against women and children, and is a breach of their human rights. It is a universal and complex problem, which defies both simplistic analysis and easy answers. Trafficking, according to U.S. Senate Resolution 82 on Trafficking, *“involves one or more forms of kidnapping, false imprisonment, rape, battering, forced labour, or slavery-like practices which violate fundamental human rights.”*

The resolution, which was introduced in 1998, states: *“Trafficking consists of all acts involved in the recruitment or transportation of persons within or across borders, involving deception, coercion or force, abuse of authority, debt bondage or fraud, for the purpose of placing persons in situations of abuse or exploitation such as forced prostitution, battering and extreme cruelty, sweatshop labor or exploitative domestic servitude.”*

Trafficking is increasing dramatically in Cambodia, where increased economic globalisation has resulted in an increased feminisation of poverty, forcing a greater number of women and young girls to end up as victims of illegal and unscrupulous trafficking networks. Such migration in Cambodia is characterised by movement from rural areas to urban centres and across borders. Women and children’s vulnerability and the low status of females generally, combined with poverty and expanding global markets for sex and cheap labour, are at the root of trafficking. The acceptability of violence against women within many societies contributes to a dynamic through which traffickers and clients see women as expendable, and the women themselves are so beaten down that they are unable to resist their captors. The social cost of trafficking to individuals, families, communities and countries is immeasurable, and, more importantly, this form of modern-day slavery is an abuse of fundamental human rights that degrades all our humanity.

The Magnitude of the Problem

In Cambodia, one of the poorest nations in the world, the trafficking of women and children is a thriving business especially in Phnom Penh, and increasingly so in urbanising border areas such as Battambang and Banteay Meanchey provinces. Poipet, Sihanoukville, Koh Kong and the other fast growing provincial capital of Siem Reap are also following the same trend. However, reliable estimates are few, and empirical data is limited to the number of women and children who are trafficked, from where and to what destinations. However, Cambodia is known to be increasingly important as a sending, receiving and transit country. Existing studies in Cambodia provide only a partial picture of the extent and magnitude of the problem, often limited to the numbers involved in sex work who have been internally trafficked to meet the demands of the country’s rampant sex industry. According to the Cambodian Human Development Report it is estimated that there are from 80,000 to 100,000 sex workers in Cambodia. In Phnom Penh particularly, there are around 17,000 sex workers with 30% under 18 years old. Despite these alarming figures it has to be kept in mind that the actual situation is likely to be worse as the nature of this work means accessibility to victims is limited. Significant numbers of Cambodian women and children are also trafficked within and across national borders for purposes other than sexual exploitation but research and data remains sketchy.

Ministry of Women’s and Veterans’ Affairs (MWVA)

The Ministry of Women’s and Veterans’ Affairs (MWVA) was established in 1998 by the Royal Government of Cambodia as the national mechanism for advancing the role and the status of women and veterans in Cambodia. In 1999 the Ministry adopted the five year strategic plan, Neary Rattanak “Women are Precious Gems” as a framework for its activities. The strategies laid out in Neary Rattanak were further

elaborated into a five-year plan for MWVA to be incorporated into the Second Socio-Economic Development Plan 2001-2005 of the Royal Cambodian Government. The Ministry is mandated to conduct the following:

- To be a catalyst and advocate for the integration of gender concerns into the mandate, policies and programmes of line ministries, local government units and public institutions
- To ensure that the women's agenda and gender issues are incorporated into the decision-making processes
- To guide and coordinate external assistance and facilitate government and NGO collaboration on women and gender concerns (see also Neary Rattanak page 4)
- To organise and implement national policy to enhance women status, increase women rate on large numbers to understand and participate in political affairs, techniques, and service sectors especially in the affairs of economy, judiciary, information, education, culture and social development. (Ref: Article 3 of the draft sub-decree)

Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) Response to Trafficking

The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' affairs (MWVA) has the job to lead and control all state social affair services of civil society to assist women and introduce social solidarity actions to assist those women vulnerable to dangers of sex trafficking. Furthermore, the Ministry cooperates with the relevant ministries, taking measures against the trafficking of women and children and take measures to prevent women from prostituting themselves.

The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) acknowledges that gender relations and gender inequality expose women to the risk of trafficking due to their lack of economic empowerment and participation in decision-making within the family and community. As a result, women may be trafficked by their own family, neighbours, "friends" and unscrupulous agents.

Gender relations and gender equality in Cambodia create markets for commercial sex by men, with women who are grossly exploited, creating an intractable supply of women and children. To reduce such demand, traffickers should be dealt with as criminals, whilst the survivors should be treated as persons with rights to be respected and protected, not as illegal migrants or criminals.

Personal and economic empowerment are key factors in both resettlement and prevention strategies. Returnees and women at risk need support to empower themselves so that they gain increased control over their lives. This requires personal empowerment of women themselves, as well as creating a supportive environment in the family and community so that it is able to accept, not condemn and discriminate against these women. In other words, the unequal nature of gender relations must be addressed in the communities of origin or resettlement.

Economic empowerment is equally essential as a preventative strategy in order to reduce the attraction of trafficking. This is particularly difficult in poor countries like Cambodia, with poor communities, and requires more than the conventional income-generating projects. The potential earnings on offer need to be able to compete at some level with expectations of earnings compared with the risks known to be associated with trafficking. Such a differential can be addressed through higher income and better knowledge about the risks involved in being trafficked.

More active and enhanced participation of women in the economic and political life of the country towards a gender responsive and equal society will help stop trafficking and exploitation from continuing. Furthermore, public education programmes directed not only at women, but also at changing public attitudes, especially of men and the families and relatives of sex workers and victims of trafficking are required. A number of harmful misconceptions about women in sex work, including migrant workers, need to be clarified as these pose significant constraints for the development of just and humane policies and programmes on trafficking and commercial sex work. (Ref. UNIFEM Approach to Trafficking in Women and Children)

To address these challenges the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) have set up programmes to prevent the trafficking of women and children by training concerned ministries and conducting awareness raising on laws from the national to the provincial levels. A media campaign to counter trafficking has been launched and an advocacy and information project is being conducted. MWVA has established a Bureau of Counter-trafficking under the Department of Human Resources. In each province there are focal persons appointed who can deal with issues of counter-trafficking. The national information campaign to counter trafficking reached 70,000 people in remote areas and legal literacy training for government officials has taken place in six provinces in cooperation with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' affairs has also established The Cambodian National Council for Women (CNFW), which is under the auspices of the Council of Ministers. They have conducted three meetings and have formulated an action plan, which includes evaluating the law on trafficking with the Ministry of Interior and Justice, as well as making a report for CEDAW. The Women's Forum (under MWVA) is a coordination body, which meets once week to discuss issues related to women and is a representation of women members from all Ministries.

In addition, under the Five Year Second Socio Development Plan and that of Neary Rattanak, the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) aims to improve the social and economic status of women and their families by focusing on the following prioritised areas:

1. The rights of women, young girls and veterans and their families to receive primary health care so that their living will be improved with equity (health)
2. To ensure that women, girls and veterans receive complete rights in all education levels and skills, so that they will become active human resources for promoting equity in society (education)
3. To ensure that women and veterans will receive complete rights and legal protection with equity in all sectors according to state laws, and women's rights principles, which are human rights (legal protection)
4. To ensure equity for women and veterans to receive economic resources and opportunities, so they can help reduce poverty and develop the country (economic development)
5. To strengthen the active and meaningful involvement of women, so that they will become partners and receive equal benefits as men in all fields in developing the country and society (participation)
6. To strengthen institutional capacity and management, planning, finance for sustainability, transparency, efficiency and eternity (capacity)

To address these goals in a more comprehensive and effective manner, the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) has taken a more holistic appreciation of trafficking, including an understanding of the need for a rights based approach to trafficking and gender equality. Cambodia needs a counter-balance to the focus on economic development that ensure human rights are protected and exploitation is minimised.

Trafficking, as we have seen, is currently the focus of government attention in The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA), which has recognised that a coordinated national approach needs to be formulated. As the Ministry charged with raising the status of women and mainstreaming gender concerns, MWVA is the ideal institution to lead such a process to manage external assistance and encourage all ministries, local governments and public institutions to integrate gender equality concerns such as trafficking into their own mandates, policies and programmes.

The following presentation outlines the mechanisms and strategies (to address crucial gaps) for action by government ministries, non-governmental agencies, public and private institutions and the United Nations organisations acting in partnership with the Ministry of Women's and Veteran's affairs (MWVA) which is mandated to act as a key focal point. Gender sensitivity and protection of human rights is the underlying theme of the work MWVA conducts and is incorporated into the future mechanisms and strategies for MWVA counter trafficking activities. It is by strengthening these mechanisms and the development and implementation of comprehensible strategies that women and children's vulnerability can be lessened in

order that they can be offered real prospects of escaping the cycle of poverty, abuse and exploitation and violence that accompanies trafficking.

The contents should in no way be regarded as a complete and final statement on all mechanisms and strategies but as an indication of the main areas where the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) can play a key role in the future. A more comprehensive assessment of gaps and recommendations can be seen in the document "*Government And Ngo Response To Counter Trafficking Of Women And Children In Cambodia*" in Annex 1.

The power point presentation

(This can be shortened into the power-point presentation)

The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) is committed to the improvement of living standards and empowerment of Cambodian women by providing knowledge, opportunities and resources for them to utilise their full potential and reap benefits through ensuring their equal rights in the educational, socio-economic, political legal and cultural spheres. Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) continues to engage in promoting and consolidating the rule of law, respect for human rights, democratic institutions, including police and judiciary. Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) are working on developing civil society, independent media and the role of NGOs. The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) adheres to the following principles.

Guiding principles

- The human rights and dignity of women and children should be respected and valued and this should be reflected in all policies and programmes.
- Government policies should address the gap between rich and poor and lack of access to justice, which are important contributory factors to the feminisation of poverty.
- Counter trafficking activities should focus on the root causes such as poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, rape and abuse, impunity and domestic violence.
- Gender equalities at the family, community and societal level must be promoted in a culturally sensitive way.
- Cooperative efforts to combat the commercial and sexual abuse of women and children must be intensified at national and international levels.
- Policies and strategies for prevention and rehabilitation must reflect both harsh economic realities and opportunities in order to be effective.
- Institutions, including legal systems, should incorporate the recognition of the human rights of women and children in their principles and above all in their practices and their major educational and advocacy role in combating trafficking.
- The media must be gender sensitive when reporting and covering issues concerning women and children.

I: Prevention

1. Information and Awareness Raising

Mechanism 1:

- The mass media institutions nationwide are to be encouraged by the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) especially the Advocacy and Information teams, creating and maintaining a strong partnership and initiating a proactive communication strategy.
- MWVA staff, including provincial departments, are to contribute to the process by identifying core messages, audiences, activities and events that might justify activities involving media practitioners.
- The Information department is to be strengthened through capacity building and reinforced two-way communication with other departments and on-going donor programmes within the ministry.

- High priority is to be given to working with partners within the media sector to develop new networks. This includes mass media, journalist associations, universities and media institutions, media watch groups, media NGO's, media networks and lawmakers etc. both on national and international level. (As set out in the draft Media Policy 29 March 2001)
- The number of female reporters and broadcasters in the national media is increased through a process initiated by the collaboration of various government ministries.
- The official recording of births is strengthened through cooperation with designated ministerial departments.

Strategies:

- The media are trained to provide national and international coverage of issues relating to women's rights in regard to counter trafficking and materials are produced.
- Greater coverage of information and advocacy campaigns through the media focusing on trafficking, migration and violence against women and children is created
- Positive socio-cultural attitudes towards the value of girls/daughter and women are promoted. In particular the media are educated about appropriate materials to reduce portrayals of women as subordinate in society or sexual objects and to respect confidentiality of victims of trafficking and exploitation and forced labour.
- The media are encouraged to reduce the societal discrimination against sexually abused and sexually exploited women and children
- Male education and re-socialisation is conducted so that they become conscious agents in minimising sexual exploitation and the sex trafficking trade by limiting demand and reaching out and engaging Cambodian men for a better understanding and support for women's issues and equality between men and women.
- Campaigns are used to stress the importance of keeping families intact and of not exploiting children for profit.
- A long-term sustained effort to design a clearly defined target audience is conducted.
- Raise awareness nationwide through the media about the importance of having registered birth certificates and strengthen ways to follow-up missing children and women

Mechanism 2:

- The Gender Resource Centre at The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) is encouraged to be more active and additional provincial information resource centres are set up.
- The Gender database based at the Ministry is used to generate information on the roles of women, status and living conditions, which can contribute to counter trafficking advocacy programmes.

Strategies:

- Appropriate targeted research to create effective preventative strategies and further information and collection of data on trafficking is strengthened as a basis for sound policy and programme formulation.
- Communities are involved in developing their own indicators of success of counter trafficking initiatives and information is collected from a range of research agencies to facilitate a better understanding of how target populations view this issue.
- Accurate sophisticated analysis of the "causes of trafficking" (data – research) is compiled and the recognition of the significant overlap between four other relevant issues ie labour migration, prostitution, HIV and mobility, as well as better distinctions between women and children in discussions and statistics is conducted.
- Agencies and institutions are encouraged to use a common definition of trafficking, in line with appropriate international legislation.

2. Education

Mechanisms:

- The Department of Education, Training and Information programme at MWVA is strengthened and joint policies and plans are formalised in cooperation with the relevant organisations, especially the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS).

Strategies:

- Expand educational opportunities and access for girls and women as a means of improving their status and capacity, so they can protect themselves from abuse and give them skills to change and improve their lives. Quality basic education with strong life skills component and policies on non-formal education are developed, adequate schools and centres are built, materials and resources are developed and a national campaign for enrollment and literacy for all are conducted.
- MWVA, NGOs and the Ministry of Education work together in reviewing the images of women and men in school textbooks and introduce gender issues, women's rights and Violence Against Women (VAW) at all levels into the educational curricula.
- Adult education to increase literacy among women is conducted in order that they can understand and adopt new technologies.

3. Employment and Income Generation

Mechanisms:

- A regular inter-ministerial task group is set up by Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) (Economic Development Department) as a forum for cooperation in collaboration with other Ministries (COM, MOC, MOA, MIME etc) not only identify issues in the micro and small enterprise area, but collaborate with the private sector to create a marketing system for absorbing women and their products locally and internationally.
- Partnerships are formed with associations, NGO's and private companies to further boost this sector.
- Policies/laws are formulated to protect local products and exports and vocational training centres are built.
- Integrated management programmes are built for women and enhanced appropriate banking systems for women in rural areas are set up.
- Networks of women in business and farm households are facilitated especially in provincial areas.

Strategies:

- Income and occupational options and opportunities are promoted in the private sector and appropriate skills and training, job orientation and placement support for women are provided. Training is linked to specific jobs, rather than adding to the general "training stock".
- Small/medium enterprise and investments are provided for women.
- Economic support programmes for sustainable livelihood and poverty alleviation among families, girls and women most at risk of being trafficked are implemented.
- Improvement of non-discrimination and social protection for older and younger women workers is ensured.

4. Participation

Mechanisms:

- Survivor networks are developed (child to child, women to women peer support groups) to promote and empower women in order for them to have input in the implementation of counter trafficking activities such as policies, laws and national plans where their views and needs are accounted for.

Strategies:

- The abilities of women and children are strengthened to ensure their participation in eliminating trafficking and sexual exploitation.
- Perspectives of those who most need their human rights protected and promoted in regard to trafficking are implemented into policies and programmes.
- Advocacy efforts are increased to reduce demand, and include a strong component of gender sensitisation on issues pertaining to women and girls so that they are engaging society to confront trafficking issues.

5. Advocacy

Mechanisms:

- The Gender and Advocacy Training Team under the Advocacy Steering Committee at the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) are encouraged to work fully within the principle areas for advocacy gender mainstreaming, health, education, legal protection and economic empowerment as laid out in the Second Socio-economic Development Plan.
- Effective planning and coordination is introduced into the Women's Forum, a national coordination forum between Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) and NGOs established to run regular meetings for strategic planning and advocacy for the promotion of the status of women and to penalise violence against them.

Strategies:

- Capacity of staff at The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) and especially the Gender and Advocacy Training Team is enhanced so that the following strategies are conducted
- (Health) The vulnerability of youth, especially women and young female factory workers to HIV/AIDS is reduced through advocacy promotion of responsible male reproductive behaviour through programmes at relevant ministries
- (Legal Protection) Trafficking of women and children in Cambodia is reduced through effective enforcement of the 1996 Law on Suppression of the Kidnapping, Trafficking and Exploitation of Human Beings (see Protection)
- (Domestic Violence) Domestic violence is reduced through the adoption and implementation of the Law on Domestic Violence
- (Economic Empowerment) A conducive environment for Micro-and Small Enterprises is created especially for women entrepreneurs through a number of advocacy initiatives with relevant ministries. (See Employment and Income Generation Sector page 8)

II: PROTECTION

1. Legislation and Legal Reform

Mechanisms:

- The Legal Protection team at the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) is instrumental in creating a system of cooperation between concerned ministries such as the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice and The Cambodian National Council for Women (The CNCW) for reviewing and amending the new draft law and sub decrees on the Suppression of the Kidnapping, Trafficking/Sales and Exploitation of Human Persons 1996.

Strategies:

- Specific advocacy strategies are used by The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) to win support from the Council of Ministers to approve the amendments of the 1996 law.
- Policies are developed to seek support for anti-trafficking and violence against women and comprehensive legislation is revised and elaborated on all aspects of trafficking, in accordance with international legal instruments, including setting a clear definition of minors and adults and legal age of consent

2. Legal Enforcement

Mechanisms:

- The joint project by the Ministry of Interior and five other international organisation is strengthened (Law Enforcement Against Sexual Exploitation of Children LEASEC project) and there by the training and capacity building of the police and the judiciary encompassing gender sensitisation is accelerated.
- Standards for joint or cooperative evidence gathering is established and more effective policies and systems for registering and monitoring establishments that offer sex and systems to monitor the entry of foreign paedophiles are formulated.

Strategies:

- Support from the relevant Ministries through advocacy conducted by the Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs (MWVA), primarily with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior for strengthening and reviewing the mechanisms used to implement the 1996 Law on Suppression of the Kidnapping, Trafficking and Exploitation of Human Persons by October 2002.
- Reciprocal exchange of law enforcement officers with other countries to strengthen areas for future cooperation and how to make operations more compatible are determined.
- Law enforcement officials are encouraged to focus on the real exploiters and further prosecutorial resources are put in place and best practices are identified.
- The judiciary learns about the issue of family violence and the importance of enforcing new legislation. Improve treatment of trafficked victims (using guidelines – "Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Trafficked Persons")
- Ensure that the law on trafficking of women is enforced and promoted via community education and media campaigns, and that perpetrators of trafficking are prosecuted.
- Cooperation is encouraged by the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA), MOSALVY, NGOs, Ingo's and police forces to protect women and children.

3. Special Legal Services

Mechanism 1:

- A multi- disciplinary task force including those from the judiciary, law enforcers, lawyers, social workers and counsellors as well as medical practioners is formulated between joint cooperation between The legal department of the Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs (MWVA) and other Ministries (MOJ, MOI) Roles and responsibilities among the Ministries are clarified.
- Training programmes are planned and implemented jointly so The Task Force is trained with the assistance of other Ministries and NGOs to enable it to be able to work specifically on trafficking, exploitation, abuse and forced labour cases with the emphasis on training and recruitment of female personnel.

Strategies:

- The task force is trained on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, CEDAW and other related laws, how to handle trafficking cases sensitively, how to collect evidence, offer witness protection measures and strengthen their role. Credible law enforcement and Government personnel work together to assist building a core of committed public officials to improve procedures in assisting trafficking victims and to prevent punishment and harassment of women in sex work.
- The number of trained personnel is increased in all areas of counter-trafficking activities and facilities of legal services at the community level are upgraded.

Mechanism 2:

- The Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs (MWVA) in cooperation with other Ministries and NGOs challenge the culture of impunity, silence and sexual double standards. Strong penalties to monitor government officials and personnel against bad practices and corruption are implemented. A complaints procedure is established so that action can be taken against those that violate codes of conduct, the law and do not fulfill their duties.

Strategies:

- Government and public officials who participate in trafficking are vigorously investigated and prosecuted and all appropriate measures against such officials who condone trafficking are taken.

- Civil servants involved in corruption or settling cases outside the judicial system are prosecuted including police who fail to investigate cases.

4. Cross Border Cooperation

Mechanisms:

- Improvement of international and regional cooperation especially with neighbouring countries in counter trafficking and other forms of forced labour cases.
- Memoranda of Understanding and extradition treaties for cases of trafficking and bilateral readmission agreements with neighbouring and other countries are concluded as appropriate.

Strategies:

- Periodic case documentation and monitoring across countries is explored to enhance reporting and prosecution of cases to promote the rights of victims to be successfully repatriated to their home country.
- Protocols and extradition treaties are established and reciprocated among countries that are targeted in regional trafficking networks.
- Immunity is granted on prostitution and immigration charges for victims in court who are not held liable for crimes.
- Bilateral partnerships within the framework of official development assistance are encouraged

III: RECOVERY/REHABILITATION AND REINTERGRATION:

1. Direct Services

Mechanisms:

- Workshops and meetings are conducted by Government ministries, interagency groups (UN) and NGO networks to discuss regulations, guidelines and good practices for direct services to victims of trafficking, exploitation, abuse and forced labour.
- Establish an institute for capacity building of social workers and counsellors.

Strategies:

- Joint discussions and action are held on alternative methods to residential based shelters and plans are formulated on how to strengthen protective measures. (Ie confidentiality, medical evidence gathering, training and capacity building of centre based staff, the problems of rehabilitation and plans to form a central clearing house).
- Visible, accessible and survivor friendly services centres are established and a methodical approach is used before rescuing girls.
- Partnerships between local doctors, teachers, Government Ministries and lawyers need to be forged with each recovery centre in the country.

2. HIV/AIDS/ Health

Mechanisms:

- Firm cooperation is established and action plans formulated between The Inter-Departmental Committee at The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) and the National Aids Authority (NAA)
- The National Policy on Women and the Girl Child and HIV/AIDS is implemented by the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs by establishing plans with other Ministries and NGO service providers.

- The capacity of selected relevant government institutions such as the Ministry of Health (MOH) and NGOs in advocacy efforts in support for multi-sectoral programmes at reducing HIV/AIDS and to increase health examinations and treatment free of charge and to provide medical reports on the victims to the court is strengthened.

Strategies:

- The Ministry of Women's and Veteran Affairs (MWVA) initiate common goals and research on women and HIV/Aids in Cambodia to assist in developing strategies.
- Leaders and staff in the Ministry of Health, MOSALVY and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) are sensitised on gender issues and HIV/AIDS in order to gain support understanding and commitment.
- Awareness is created amongst women and girls of their rights and primary health care services especially HIV/AIDS prevention.
- The Ministry and NGOs develop partnerships to raise awareness on HIV/AIDS and its impact on families and communities and information to prevent discrimination against victims is conducted.
- Support mechanisms for the sheltering and counselling of victims with HIV/AIDS are improved and the number of centres for victims is increased.

(See the National Policy on Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS March 2001)

3. Community Reintegration

Mechanisms:

- The capacity of staff and their roles and responsibilities are strengthened in projects being implemented by MOSALVY, UNICEF and IOM in cooperation with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MWVA) in supporting and following up the welfare and security of children and young women who have been reintegrated.

Strategies:

- A sustained community partnership between government staff, implementing international organisations and social action officers, local authorities, communities, teachers, monks, and Village Development Committees (VCD's) is developed to disseminate information on documented cases; work towards the prevention of social ostracism of trafficked and exploited women and children, creating a supportive environment in the family and community so that they are able to accept not condemn and discriminate.
- Women and children are empowered so that they can seek assistance easily in returning to the communities or origin or resettlement area and alternative options are sought for those who are unable to be reintegrated.

IV: COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

Mechanisms:

- The Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs (MWVA) builds alliances on the issues of trafficking with key Ministries, United Nations, intergovernmental agencies and international and local NGOs networks (already in existence) These alliances further the goal of integrating a human rights perspective on gender equality into international anti-trafficking initiatives and areas for potential collaboration and coordination and mainstreaming throughout the government are identified.

Strategies:

- A formal procedure for further strengthening cooperation and information sharing between the concerned institutions ie CNCC, CNCW, ECPAT, UN interagency project, COSECOM are established and public awareness campaigns, research and investigations are formulated into these networks. Closer relations are established with NGOs in particular.

- Permanent network meetings among stakeholders are ensured and public forums and round table meetings with all institutions are organised.
- Cooperation and inter-country skills sharing are strengthened and effective follow up activities promoting regional cooperation are conducted.
- Provincial and district committees and networks working to counter trafficking are supported and strengthened.
- The Subcommittee at the CNCC is assisted to fully monitor the implementation of the Five Year Plan Against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children 2000- 2004.

Conclusion

The Royal Cambodian Government and particularly the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MWVA) is mandated to ensure that trafficking and exploitation of women and children is addressed in all in all structures, processes and policies - including laws and legislation. In this regard the Ministry has made a proactive effort in demanding that both international and local development organisations take into account the issue of trafficking and exploitation and practical measures are built into programme designs, assessments and monitoring regardless of the sector focus of the programmes.

Furthermore, The Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs (MWVA) is committed to supporting and reinforcing the mechanisms and strategies outlined in this paper in cooperation with other Ministries and NGOs especially national women's NGO and those working to counter trafficking. Violence against women and particularly trafficking impedes the efficiency and effectiveness of development interventions. Such commitments and the strengthening of mechanisms give women and girls and others that are victims of trafficking and forced labour minimum access to services and control of resources at all levels and opportunities to take part in decision-making with full protection against all forms of discrimination. Cambodia can never fully develop as other countries if these issues are not addressed in development agendas and social policies.

In the next five years the Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs is committed to strengthening the measures already taken and to expand successful programmes. The main constraints that the Ministry face are the lack of qualified human resources and the lack of financial resources in order to strengthen such mechanisms and strategies.