

PRESS RELEASE

Helping survivors of human trafficking reintegrate across the Mekong countries

BANGKOK, 7 April 2017 – Today a new tool to support the reintegration of trafficking survivors was released by [NEXUS Institute](#), the United Nations Action for Cooperation Against Trafficking in Persons ([UN-ACT](#)) and [World Vision](#). The guidebook - [Supporting the Reintegration of Trafficked Persons: A Guidebook for the Greater Mekong Sub-Region](#) - is for practitioners from government and non-government organizations alike, to address weaknesses in the current frameworks of victim assistance and reintegration in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS: Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam).

The guidebook highlights positive examples of the reintegration of trafficking victims as well as challenges that many victims face as they seek to move on from their exploitation. It also offers practical guidance to practitioners – through checklists and recommendations - on how to improve reintegration programming and policies.

The guidebook is based on the findings from the regional research study [After Trafficking: Experiences and Challenges in the \(Re\)Integration of Trafficked Persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region](#), which was published in 2013 by NEXUS Institute and the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP), now UN-ACT. This study was based on in-depth interviews with hundreds of trafficking victims throughout the GMS and identified many good practices and lessons directly from trafficking victims from the region.

Rebecca Surtees, Senior Researcher at NEXUS Institute and author of both the *After Trafficking* research report and the newly-published guidebook said, “More than 250 trafficked persons from six countries shared their very personal experiences and reflections of their lives after trafficking. This guidebook is based directly on their reintegration experiences and their recommendations on how to better support victim reintegration.”

The guidebook has been translated into the main languages of the countries covered by the project. It will be disseminated to relevant organizations and institutions in the region to support their on-going assistance work. Amy Collins, Regional Programme Coordinator of World Vision’s [Ending Violence Against Children](#) (EVAC) in East Asia Programme highlighted the importance of operationalising the guidance in the handbook to improve reintegration efforts: “World Vision, with our infrastructure in these countries addressing trafficking from policy, advocacy and implementation angles, stands ready to support this endeavour.”

Both the *After Trafficking* study and the reintegration guidebook are excellent examples of effective regional cooperation through the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking (COMMIT). COMMIT is a mechanism for bi- and multilateral collaboration against human trafficking based on a 2004 Memorandum of Understanding among the six GMS countries. UN-ACT and its predecessor project, UNIAP, have served as the Secretariat of COMMIT since its establishment.

Kaori Kawarabayashi, UN-ACT’s Regional Project Manager stressed the critical role of COMMIT in improving reintegration responses: “The research study was undertaken in the context of a region-wide reintegration initiative endorsed by the COMMIT governments. It is thanks to the COMMIT framework that we were able to generate the rich evidence base informing the study and this guidebook, and that we now have the mandate to work towards improving policies and programmes on reintegration across the sub-region, in line with international standards.”

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To access the guidebook, click [here](#).

To download the *After Trafficking* research report, click [here](#).

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