



**UN Inter-Agency Project on Human
Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region
(UNIAP)**

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UN Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (UNIAP)

The importance of internal and external cooperation agreements (internal MOUs, bilateral and multilateral MOUs)

- APF Human Trafficking and National Human Rights Institutions Workshop

Sydney, Australia November 23, 2005



UN Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (UNIAP)

**Cambodia
China
Lao PDR**

**Myanmar
Thailand
Vietnam**

UNIAP brings together six Governments, twelve UN agencies, eight international NGOs, and a wide variety of partners in the anti-trafficking community

Phase I: June 2000 – May 2003

Phase II: June 2003 – June 2006

UNIAP's overall goal:

To reduce the severity and harm associated with human trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region by identifying gaps in responses and promoting a more coordinated response approach among regional actors.



Overview of Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region

- Not just cross-border, large internal population movements
- Therefore need for internal MOUs b/w internal 'sending' and 'receiving' regions, and/or clearly defined responsibilities between government departments and or NGOs
- Yet, considerable cross-border trafficking
- Therefore need for bilateral and multilateral MOUs to address certain trends, often agreement on mutual prevention, labour migration, repatriation issues



Importance of MOUs in the fight against Trafficking

- MOUs can result in a clear identification of priorities on the part of the parties = political commitment
- MOUs can be tailored to address certain issues, or, be fully inclusive of the spectrum of trafficking issues
- MOUs can exist at different levels:
 - Internal: government department to government department, government to NGOs, internal (province-province), etc
 - externally: bilateral, multilateral, etc



Different thematic focus of some internal agreements

- Common Operational Guidelines for Government Agencies
 - **MOU on Common Guidelines of Practices for Agencies in the Nine Northern Provinces (Thailand)**
- Common Operational Guidelines between Government and NGO
 - **MOU on Operations between State Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (Thailand)**
- Region to Region, Internal Labour Migration
 - **Pan-Pearl River Delta Regional Women Development Cooperation Framework (China)**



Different thematic focus of some Bilateral Agreements

Labor and Employment - international labour migration
(Thailand-Cambodia, Thailand-Lao, Thailand-Myanmar,
etc)

Trafficking - prevention, suppression, rehabilitation
(Thailand-Cambodia, Thailand-Lao, etc)

Law Enforcement Cooperation

-information exchange, extraditions, etc



Important Multilateral Trafficking MOUs

- Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT)
 - Process initiated by the Governments of the Greater Mekong Sub-region in late 2003
 - Regional agreement on human trafficking, specifically in the GMS
 - Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region signed in Yangon on 29 October 2004





Rationale for COMMIT

- High-level policy dialogue
- Multi-sectoral approach
- Strong local ownership
- Targeted regional focus (Mekong)
- Comprehensive & specific focus on human trafficking
- Builds on existing regional initiatives





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- Challenges Of MOUs
- How to transfer political commitment into political action?
- Implementation?
- Monitoring?



Thank you.