

Restoring Lives After Slavery

THA-IJM-RLS-P02



Bangkok, Thailand



Combatting Trafficking

Total Budget: \$57,750

Project Timeline

FULLY FUNDED

SEPT 21

SEPT 23



Overview

Our partner organisation focuses on enhancing the effectiveness of criminal justice systems and multilateral enforcement mechanisms to combat forced labour. This initiative aimed to aid vulnerable migrant workers and impoverished individuals who have fallen victim to human trafficking in the Thai fishing and other industries, often through deceit, debt bondage, and coercion. Thailand serves as a source, transit, and destination country for traffickers profiting from forced labour. This project sought to bolster social services for trafficking victims by funding three positions at the Bangkok office: a social worker, an interpreter, and a caseworker. These individuals were part of the Aftercare Team, providing assistance to rescued victims through legal proceedings, offering trauma counselling, and facilitating the repatriation process to reunite victims with their families. Although initially a three-year project, this project was concluded after two years.

Objectives

Impact



Aftercare services for victims

Trafficking survivors were assisted in the victim identification process to access government shelter and protection, leading to higher identification rates, post-rescue employment, and influence on policies regarding victim care.



Survivors rescued, arrests made

Over two years, 50 people were rescued from trafficking and forced labour. The aftercare team provided food, counselling and care plans for 89 survivors in total, while also gathering evidence for prosecutions.



Trauma informed care training

Training in trauma-informed care (TIC) was provided to 72 judges, 437 law enforcement officers and 114 government officials to ensure TIC principles across each stage of the criminal justice system. This makes a huge difference.



Life change

- Individuals have been rescued from horrific forced labour situations and care and support provided before being reunited with their families.
- Survivors are now empowered and knowledgeable about their rights, enabling them to better care for themselves and their families, as well as to advocate for others within their communities.
- Criminal justice actors have been trained to integrate trauma-informed care principles at every stage to improve the safety of victims and to ensure confidence in the system.





Gavash's Rescue Story

Gavash, a 30-year-old Sri Lankan, recounted his journey from a struggling family background to being trafficked into forced labour in Myanmar. Gavash was facing financial hardship, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, prompting him to seek opportunities abroad. Enticed by a promising job in Thailand, he found himself trafficked to Myanmar upon arrival in Bangkok, where he was subjected to brutal conditions in a compound, coerced into cryptocurrency scams, and controlled by armed guards. Enduring physical and psychological abuse, including beatings and confinement, Gavash finally secured his release. Our partner offered shelter, meals, transportation to the embassy and government offices while awaiting repatriation. Now safely back in Sri Lanka, he is seeking to rebuild his life and advocates for awareness and action against human trafficking and forced labor.



Rescue of migrant workers from exploitation in the fishing industry

Empowering victims

A married couple from Myanmar, who escaped forced labour at a Thai palm plantation, were wrongly accused of theft by their employers. Despite initially being convicted and sentenced to prison, our partner supported them in their appeal, resulting in their exoneration on November 10, 2022. The victory not only cleared their names but also empowered them to seek justice for their exploitation as victims of human trafficking.

Our partner's vision:

"To rescue millions, protect half a billion, and make justice for people in poverty unstoppable. Through our legal team and all our staff, we celebrate this victory, and we will continue to speak up and defend the rights of those who deserve justice and protection under the law."

