



Why are migrant protection issues important in Myanmar?

Irregular migration from Myanmar take various forms, including economic migrants, internally displaced persons, smuggled migrants, trafficked persons, unaccompanied and separated children, stranded migrants, victims of exploitation and abuse, as well as refugees, asylum-seekers among others. Due to limited livelihood opportunities and poor socio-economic conditions, many people from Myanmar's remote and border areas leave for neighbouring countries (regularly or irregularly) in search of job opportunities offer through brokers. Smuggling is a complex process with real dangers for the lives, health and safety of migrants.



IOM's approach to migrant protection

- Improve reintegration for victims of trafficking by increasing the geographic coverage of reintegration assistance in Myanmar.
- Help Government departments in developing a framework for National Standard Operating Procedures to Protect Myanmar Victims of Trafficking.
- Assist Department of Social Welfare (DSW) in drafting Bilateral Standard Operation Procedures Between Myanmar and Thailand on Case Management and Return and Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking.

IOM Myanmar migrant protection activities:

- Increasing assistance to Myanmar men trafficked for forced labour;
- Providing assistance to victims of trafficking in conflict-affected areas in Myanmar;
- Expansion of rehabilitation services to victims of trafficking through capacitating Myanmar's emerging civil society organizations to actively address the protection needs of vulnerable migrants and trafficked persons;
- Reduce the vulnerabilities of migrants in natural emergencies and conflict areas through improved protection.



"I haven't had any contact with my family since I went away. Just before leaving Thailand, I phoned my brother. He was so excited and I don't remember what he was saying. I just remembered my brother crying.

I want to go back home straight away and maybe in the future I will help with my mother's business, selling seasonal fruits. I haven't told anyone in my family that I will be returning home to Bago region as I want to surprise them."

Aung Lwin (Name changed), a trafficked Myanmar fisherman whom IOM assisted to safely return from Indonesia.

Counter Trafficking and Assisted Return

IOM Myanmar works closely with the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division (ATIPD) to support bilateral case management meetings with Thailand on assistance to victims of trafficking, and to develop bilateral standard operating procedures. In 2015, IOM Myanmar has directly assisted over 1,200 male victims of trafficking returned from Indonesia and a total of 54 victims of trafficking and smuggling returning from Thailand, Australia, Japan, Netherland, Norway and Papua New Guinea. IOM is also engaged in supporting the development of an effective cross border and national referral mechanism (NRM) to strengthen direct assistance interventions to victims and vulnerable groups. Other activities include information campaigns on the risks of human trafficking.



Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative (MICIC)

IOM is piloting a project aimed at building the capacity of governments and other stakeholders to reduce migrant-specific vulnerabilities during emergencies. The project is being implemented in two origins (Guatemala and Myanmar) and two host countries (Mexico and Thailand) to explore the role of origin and receiving countries in reducing the vulnerability of migrants. IOM Myanmar undertakes a range of vital activities such as (i) development

and distribution of country-specific advice concerning hazards, preparedness measures, insurance, and access to assistance during and after disasters, (ii) development and adaptation of an e-learning tool to be integrated in relevant staff training procedures, (iii) strengthening of relevant government agencies in providing assistance to Myanmar nationals abroad and (iv) development of Standard Operating Procedures.

IOM's key partners in migrant protection include the Department of Social Welfare, Department of Relief and Resettlement, Ministry of Home Affairs, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division, Local authorities, community based organizations and UN, INGO and LNGO partners.

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