



International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The UN Migration Agency

## ABOUT IOM TIMOR-LESTE COUNTER-TRAFFICKING PROGRAM

IOM Timor-Leste operates within the context of counter-trafficking prevention, protection, and prosecution. IOMs comprehensive approach to addressing human trafficking focuses on institutional capacity development, preventing human trafficking, protecting victims, and strengthening data collection and research in partnership with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Timor-Leste National Police, and with funding from the United States Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (JTIP).

Since 2016, IOM has trained 660 people including law enforcement officers, government officials, social services staff, NGOs, judges and prosecutors. These trainings have primarily focused on developing and strengthening national surveillance and referral capacities to ensure the effective protection of victims of trafficking (VoTs), as well as helped to increase awareness, address the root causes of vulnerability to trafficking, identify potential victims and provide services including safe housing, counseling and medical treatment.

IOM has also worked with the government to strengthen national policies and procedures, as well as improve legislation and regulations. In 2016, IOM provided technical support to establish the Inter-agency Anti-trafficking Working Group which to this day continues to play a pivotal role in combating human trafficking. IOM also supported the drafting of the National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons (2016-2018) and the establishment of the National Referral Network for Domestic Violence and TIP. In 2018, IOM facilitated the First National Community Engagement Forum on TIP and worked alongside the MoJ to socialize the 2016 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Law in 12 municipalities.

Today, IOM continues to support the government to strengthen institutional capacity to combat human trafficking in Timor-Leste, through identifying TIP challenges, opportunities and gaps in protection, prevention and prosecution, building partnerships, and sharing information, tools and strategies to better meet the needs of VoTs and those in potential trafficking situations in Timor-Leste.

# 10 FACTS ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN TIMOR-LESTE

**10.** In 2018, 64 Victims of Trafficking (VoTs) were identified from 7 confirmed TIP cases.

**9.** Domestic Trafficking within Timor-Leste primarily involves children under 18 years of age for the purpose of domestic servitude, labour and sexual exploitation.

**8.** Labour recruiters directly approach families and use heavy-handed recruitment tactics that promote the alleged benefits of labour migration.

**7.** Timorese women and girls are particularly vulnerable to being sent to Indonesia and other countries for the purpose of domestic servitude.

**1.** Three types of Trafficking in Persons (TIP) are prevalent in Timor-Leste; outward trafficking (70%), inward trafficking from other countries (20%) and internal trafficking (10%).

**2.** Timor-Leste is a destination country for men, women and children trafficked for the purpose of forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation, the majority of victims of trafficking are women.

**3.** Victims trafficked to Timor-Leste have originated from China, Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar and the Philippines.

**4.** Victims are often approached with promises of better employment and education prospects, opportunities to pay off debts or to earn large salaries in the US dollar economy.

**5.** Timor-Leste is also a source country for human trafficking. The primary type of TIP affecting Timor-Leste is associated with labour migration out of East Nusa Tenggara province in Indonesia.



**6.** The key drivers for outward labour migration are poverty and underemployment. This migration often occurs in the form of self-initiated irregular travel into Indonesia based on information from family, friends, neighbors and/or the community.



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