



ENHANCING ENGAGEMENT OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS IN LABOUR MIGRATION GOVERNANCE



Photo: UN Women/Staton Winter

Overview

The "Enhancing Engagement of Women's Rights Organizations in Labour Migration Governance" project, funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), strengthens the capacity of Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) in Southeast Asia to advocate for gender-responsive migration governance. Since its launch in May 2024, the project has trained 20 women from 12 organizations across eight Southeast Asian countries through advocacy workshops and Training of Trainers (ToT). These initiatives have deepened participants' understanding of regional and national migration policies, equipping them to align their advocacy efforts with international frameworks on gender equality, decent work, and sustainable development.

Background

With approximately **11.7 million migrant workers** in Southeast Asia - **nearly half of them women** - women migrant workers face challenges in accessing regular pathways to migration, especially those working in the **care and domestic work** sector. Their voices are often underrepresented in policy discussions, leading to migration policies that fail to adequately address their needs and realities.

When women migrant workers and their representatives are meaningfully included in migration policies and procedures, these systems become more gender responsive and inclusive. However, for WROs to be effective, they need the tools, skills, and opportunities to actively participate in policy-making processes.

This project, aligned with the **Sustainable Development Goals** (5, 8, 10, and 17) and the **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration**, strengthens the leadership of WROs, equipping them with skills to advocate for gender-responsive solutions in migration governance.

Duration

18 months (1 May 2024 – 31 October 2025)

Donor

Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

Target Beneficiaries

Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) across Southeast Asia

Implementing Agency

UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP)

Stakeholders

Regional CSOs such as the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW), International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP), Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), Task Force on ASEAN Migrant Workers (TFAMW), and Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM)

Locations

South-East Asia



Program output 1: Enhanced Knowledge and Advocacy Skills of WROs leaders and staff, particularly women of targeted regional and national CSOs, especially WROs are better informed about regional and national labour migration policies and have enhanced capacity to coordinate, mobilize and lead gender advocacy efforts

Key activities:

- Technical Meetings: To enhance understanding of migration policies and their gendered impact through regular technical discussions.
- Advocacy Workshops: To develop advocacy skills in negotiation, communication, and campaigning.
- Training of Trainers (ToT): To equip WRO leaders with the knowledge and tools to develop advocacy strategies and train others within their organizations.

Program output 2: Strengthened Networks for Collective Advocacy Regional CSOs, especially WROs have strengthened networks and coordination mechanisms to collectively advocate for gender-responsive labour migration policy and practices in targeted intergovernmental mechanisms and regional platforms

Key activities:

- Regional Exchanges: To foster collaboration among WROs and CSOs to develop joint advocacy points.
- Participation in Regional platforms: To support WROs to actively engage in platforms such as ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML) and the Regional UN Network on Migration.

What is Gender-Responsive Migration Governance?

Gender-responsive migration governance ensures that the unique experiences, needs, and challenges of men and women throughout the migration process are addressed effectively. This involves identifying and proactively dismantling gender-based barriers, promoting equality, and empowering women migrants to participate fully in policy formulation and decision-making.

Aligned with the principles of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, recommendation n°26), gender-responsive governance incorporates women’s empowerment and equality into migration policies. By transforming traditional gender norms, it enables migration to become a positive choice, fostering opportunities for women to create impactful change for themselves, their families, and their communities.



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