



ADDRESSING THE HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES OF LABOUR MIGRATION AND TRAFFICKING

THE ROLE OF ASIA PACIFIC NATIONAL SOCIETIES



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through our 191 member National Societies. Together, we act before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. We do so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions.

Guided by *Strategy 2020* – our collective plan of action to tackle the major humanitarian and development challenges of this decade – we are committed to 'saving lives and changing minds'.

Our strength lies in our volunteer network, our community-based expertise and our independence and neutrality. We work to improve humanitarian standards, as partners in development and in response to disasters. We persuade decision-makers to act at all times in the interests of vulnerable people. The result: we enable healthy and safe communities, reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience and foster a culture of peace around the world.

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Purpose of the Guidance Note

This Note provides guidance for the assistance, protection and humanitarian diplomacy activities of Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies in the Asia Pacific region in the context of labour migration and trafficking. The Note builds upon existing International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement policies, guidance and commitments relevant to migration and displacement. The Note also contains a collection of case studies of existing initiatives by Asia Pacific National Societies, demonstrating the strength and diversity of National Societies' activities related to labour migration and trafficking.

The Note is designed to support the existing initiatives of Asia Pacific National Societies, as well as provide guidance for those National Societies considering new initiatives in the context of labour migration and trafficking. The Note will be useful to National Societies across all departments - from leadership to migration, disaster management, health, shelter, Restoring Family Links (RFL), welfare and beyond. The note will also be useful for representatives from governments, regional institutions, academia, civil society organisations and United Nations (UN) agencies to deepen their understanding of the core mandate and strengths of Asia Pacific Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies in the context of labour migration and trafficking.

Introduction

There are an estimated 258 million international migrants across the globe¹. These migrants have moved for a variety of reasons - some have chosen to move to new countries to be with family, for employment, for education or quality of life, while others have been forcibly displaced across borders by war, violence, conflict or persecution². In many cases - and as reflected by the approach of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement - many migrants move due to “a combination of choices and constraints”³.

There are an estimated 88 million international migrants in the Asia Pacific region⁴ - 80 million in Asia and 8 million in the Pacific. At the same time, an estimated 40% of all migrants across the globe originate from the Asia Pacific region.

However, these statistics do not account for all irregular migrants - those without the necessary authorisation or documents to enter, stay or work in a country as required under immigration regulations.⁵ These statistics also do not account for people who migrate within their own country (“internal migrants”).⁶ Recent estimates suggest that there are 740 million internal migrants globally.⁷ Of the global population 258 million international migrants - an estimated 150 million migrants are working outside their country of origin.



What is in a label?

Migrants who are working outside of their country of origin may be referred to as migrant workers, labour migrants, overseas workers, economic migrants or other labels. The IFRC does not have a clear policy on which term(s) to use. However, it is suggested that the term “migrant workers” is preferable, consistent with the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.⁸

¹ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), World Migration Report, 2017.
² An estimated 22.5 million people have been forcibly displaced across international borders: <http://www.unhcr.org/afr/news/stories/2017/6/5941561f4/forced-displacement-worldwide-its-highest-decades.html>
³ The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement uses a deliberately broad description of “migrants” as “persons who leave or flee their habitual residence to go to new places to seek opportunities or safer and better prospects. Migration can be voluntary or involuntary, but most of the time a combination of choices and constraints are involved. It therefore includes, among others, labour migrants, stateless migrants and migrants deemed irregular by public authorities. It also concerns refugees and people seeking asylum, notwithstanding the fact that they constitute a special category under international law and that international refugee law sets out specific protections and entitlements for those falling within its scope.” IFRC Policy on Migration, 2009.
IFRC (2009) Policy on Migration.
⁴ According to these figures, one in every three migrants in the world resides in the Asia Pacific region. As well as comprising major countries of destination, the Asia Pacific is also an important region of origin for migrants. In 2017, more than 40% of all migrants (106 million people) originated from Asia.
⁵ Providing accurate figures for irregular migration is notoriously difficult, however, recent estimates suggest that the number of irregular migrants worldwide is in the tens of millions.
⁶ There are currently approximately 40 million people displaced due of conflicts and violence, and approximately 24 million people displaced because of natural disasters each year: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2017/>
⁷ UNDP, Human Development Report 2009, Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-report-2009>. The approach of the IFRC is that “migration within one country can lead to situations similar to international migration, especially if the migrants are subject to discrimination”. IFRC Policy on Migration, 2009.
⁸ International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, adopted by the UN General Assembly Resolution 45/158 of 18 December 1990.



Globally, 56% of all migrant workers are men and 44% are women.⁹ Currently, one in every five migrant workers in the world is in the Asia Pacific region.¹⁰ There are also links between labour migration and trafficking in persons. Although trends vary across the Asia Pacific region, many of the people who have been trafficked originating from South Asia are trafficked for forced labour, whereas many people who have been trafficked originating from East Asia and the Pacific are trafficked for sexual exploitation. Working with and for vulnerable migrants is one of the long-standing traditions of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.¹¹ This includes work with and for migrant workers and those migrants who have been trafficked.

Recently, a series of steps have been taken to further reinforce the work of the IFRC and its National Societies with and for migrants at the community, national, regional and global levels. Building on the 2009 IFRC Policy on Migration and 2009 Policy on Internal Displacement,¹² these steps include, in 2015 the identification by the IFRC General Assembly of migration as one of either (now revised to sever) strategic ‘Areas of Focus’ for IFRC support to National Societies; the development of the IFRC Asia Pacific Migration and Displacement Framework 2017-2022; the endorsement by 190 National Societies of the Global IFRC Migration Strategy 2018-2022 and the endorsement of the 2017 Movement Call for Action on the Humanitarian Need of Vulnerable Migrants.¹³

⁹ IOM, World Migration Report, 2018.
¹⁰ ILO, ILO Global Estimates on Migrant Workers: Results and methodology, 2015.
¹¹ IFRC, Policy on Migration, 2009.
¹² Movement Policy on Internal Displacement Resolution No. 5 of the 2009 Council of Delegates
¹³ 2017 Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Movement Call for Action on the Humanitarian Needs of Vulnerable Migrants, CD/17/R3

Labour Migration

Asia Pacific: Labour Migration Trends and Dynamics

The Asia Pacific region comprises major countries of origin, transit and destination for migrant workers – and in some instances, all three simultaneously.¹⁴

Who is a migrant worker?

While there is no universally accepted definition of a ‘migrant worker’, a generally accepted definition is found in the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families: “a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national”.¹⁵

Generally, ‘labour migration’ is defined as “cross-border movement for the purposes of employment in a foreign country”. However, in accordance with the 2009 IFRC Policy on Migration, it is recognised that “migrant workers who move within their own country may face situations similar to those who cross borders, especially where the migrants are subject to discrimination”.¹⁶

Many migrant workers in and from the Asia Pacific region move due to an aspiration for better work, for opportunities, for improved wages, working and living conditions; while others move due to debts owed or an absence of decent work choices in their countries or regions of origin. As with general migration trends, in many cases migrant workers move due to a combination of choices and constraints.¹⁷

¹⁴Countries like India and China have become countries of origin, transit and destination simultaneously: <https://www.iom.int/asia-and-pacific>
¹⁵International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, adopted by the UN General Assembly resolution 45/158 of 18 December 1990
¹⁶IFRC Policy on Migration, 2009.
¹⁷ IFRC Policy on Migration, 2009.

Asia Pacific: Countries of Origin for Labour Migration

The major countries of origin of migrant workers from the Asia Pacific region include: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam¹⁸ Between 2012 and 2014, more than 1.8 million people departed annually from the Philippines alone. In a typical year, more than half a million people leave Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal and Pakistan each to work abroad, while over 100,000 migrant workers depart from Sri Lanka, and Vietnam each per year.¹⁹

Many migrant workers from the Asia Pacific region migrate to other regions, in particular the Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) including United Arab Emirates. In 2015, 72% of documented migrants from the seven major Asia Pacific countries of origin (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka) went to Gulf Cooperation Countries.²⁰

Asia Pacific: Countries of Destination for Labour Migration

The Asia Pacific region also includes significant countries of destination for migrant workers, such as Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, the Maldives, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Thailand. In some countries in the Asia Pacific, numbers of migrant workers are high on a comparative scale, for example in Brunei Darussalam and the Maldives more than 25% of the population are migrants.²¹

Labour migration in and from the Asia Pacific region is dominated by high levels of temporary migration to work in sectors that are relatively low-paid. Often this type of work is facilitated by brokers and recruitment agencies. Labour migration in and from the Asia Pacific is also often highly gendered – for example, men working in the construction sector and women working in the domestic sector.²²

¹⁸ ILO Global Estimates on Migrant Workers: Results and methodology, 2015.

¹⁹ UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 'Towards Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Asia Pacific Region: Challenges and Opportunities', 2017. Available at: <http://www.unescap.org/publications/towards-safe-orderly-and-regular-migration-asia-pacific-region>

²⁰ ADB, ILO, and OECD, Labour Migration in Asia: Building effective institutions, 2016: <https://www.oecd.org/migration/labor-migration-in-asia-building-effective-institutions.pdf>

²¹ UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 'Towards Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Asia Pacific Region: Challenges and Opportunities', 2017. Available at: <http://www.unescap.org/publications/towards-safe-orderly-and-regular-migration-asia-pacific-region>

²² For example, a recent survey in Chittagong, Bangladesh revealed that 70% of migrant workers used recruiters to facilitate their migration and job placement. Hussain, A, 70% of migrant workers resorting to middlemen, Dhaka Tribune, 30 October 2017: <http://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/nation/2017/10/30/70-migrant-workers-resort-to-middlemen/>

Asia Pacific: Irregular Labour Migration

It is difficult to obtain accurate figures for the numbers of irregular migrants within or from the Asia Pacific region, however, there is a general consensus that the number is very high.

Avoiding labelling migrants as “illegal”

It is important that the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement use the terms “irregular migrant” and/or “undocumented migrant” rather than “illegal migrant”. This is because the term “illegal” can be misleading, legally incorrect, and dehumanising.²³

The 2015 Red Cross Red Crescent San Marino Declaration affirmed: “We call on all everyone to stop labelling people on the move as illegal migrants”²⁴

A person may choose to be or become an irregular migrant for a number of reasons: formal channels may be too costly, or simply not available, waiting may take too long or indeed a migrant may not be aware that they are in an irregular status.²⁵ As highlighted by the UN's Special Representative to the Secretary General (SRSG) for International Migration:

“It is tempting, for example, to make a binary division between regular and irregular migrants. Yet regular migrants range from individuals on short-term work or student visas to permanent residents of foreign countries, and those who acquire a new citizenship. Likewise, there is a spectrum of irregular migration, from overstaying a visa to deliberate efforts to undermine border controls [...] There is no one single answer, just as there is not one singular problem to solve.”²⁶

²³ Referring to migrants as “illegal” denies their innate dignity and human rights. Characterising migrants' existence as illegitimate ignores their experiences as workers, women, men, children, families and the elderly. When dehumanising terms are accepted as the norm, people are turned into targets of contempt, and even their right to life may come under threat. See: PICUM, Why Words Matter: <http://picum.org/words-matter/>

²⁴ Francesco Rocca, IFRC Vice-President, during the 12th Mediterranean Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2015: <http://www.ifrc.org/en/news-and-media/press-releases/europe/italy/red-cross-red-crescent-mediterranean-platform-on-migration-calls-to-stop-labelling-people-on-the-move-as-illegal>

²⁵ In Thailand, for instance, migrant domestic workers have stated that they prefer and have successfully navigated their irregular situation. Being regular, they note, would mean a kafala-like work permit tied to their employer with little to no power to change their job if they were exploited. ILO, Protected or Put in Harm's Way: Bans and restrictions on women's labour migration in Southeast Asia, 2017.

²⁶ Report of the United Nations' Secretary General, Making migration work for all, 2017.

The Pacific

Although compared with Asia there are far fewer migrant workers in and from the Pacific, significant dynamics in the Pacific region do exist. These are characterised in part by seasonal worker programmes from Pacific Island States to Australia and New Zealand, and there have been reports of exploitation within these seasonal programmes.²⁷ Aside from seasonal worker programmes, there are also bilateral travel arrangements in place which allow people to live and work in neighbouring countries in the Pacific. For example the Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement between Australia and New Zealand allows for free movement between the two countries.²⁸ There are also irregular migration movements within the Pacific, of people moving between Asian countries and Pacific Island States.²⁹

The Benefits of Labour Migration

For many, labour migration within and from the Asia Pacific region can be an empowering process, enabling migrants to fulfil their ambitions and aspirations, and for migrant workers to meet the financial needs of their families. Migrant workers are also often able to contribute economically, socially and culturally to countries of destination, as well as to their family members and the economy in their country of origin through the remittance of their earnings.

Financially, migrants, including irregular migrants, contribute to their host societies by paying taxes and injecting around 85% of their earnings into the local economy. The remaining 15% is sent back to communities of origin through remittances, and in 2017 an estimated US\$596 billion was transferred in remittances globally, with US\$450 billion going to developing countries. Remittances add up to three times the total of official development assistance.

Empirical studies have established that migrants often take jobs that people in local labour forces do not wish to fill, and thus boost economic activity. Migrants offer expertise and entrepreneurship that benefit their host societies, and migration is linked to improvements in skills and education in countries of origin.

The benefits that migration brings to host communities and to countries of origin are emphasised in the 2009 IFRC Policy on Migration,³⁰ the Sustainable Development Goals,³¹ and in the 2017 report of the UN Secretary General on ‘Making Migration work for all’:

*Migration is an engine of economic growth, innovation and sustainable development. It allows millions of people to seek new opportunities each year, creating and strengthening bonds between countries and societies.*³²

²⁷ The Guardian, Hungry poor exploited: Alarm over Australia’s import of farm workers, The Guardian, 3 August 2017: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/aug/03/hungry-poor-exploited-alarm-over-australias-import-of-farmworkers>

²⁸ In 2013 there were 582,761 New Zealanders in Australia, however this may include people who were visiting Australia and not necessarily living and working: <https://esa.un.org/migmngprofiles/indicators/files/NewZealand.pdf>

²⁹ In one case this has resulted in tightening of immigration legislation, and the deportation of migrant workers. Asia Pacific Report, Vanuatu to deport illegal workers in labour market crackdown, Asia Pacific Report, 10 September 2017: <https://asiapacificreport.nz/2017/09/10/vanuatu-to-deport-illegal-workers-in-labour-market-crackdown>

³⁰ IFRC Policy on Migration, 2009.

³¹ The Sustainable Development Goals contained “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1, 2015).

³² Report of the United Nations’ Secretary General, “Making migration work for all”, 2017.



Barriers to Migrants Reaching their Aspirations

One of the primary obstacles to migrants achieving their aspirations are restrictive or ineffectual labour policies, laws and employment customs. Low-wage migrants often face dangerous working conditions, exploitative contracts and violations of their labour and other rights. In some cases, migrants are trapped in sponsorship-based employment schemes dependent on a single employer, or have to bear exorbitant recruitment costs, including the fees paid to a recruiter or agent, transport costs and visa and passport fees, which can result in bonded labour and situations akin to ‘modern slavery’ (see section on ‘Human Trafficking’).

Humanitarian Concerns for Migrant Workers

The 2009 IFRC Policy on Migration highlights that “despite these benefits [of migration], migrants often face suspicion, or even hostility and xenophobia”. At the end of 2017, the UN Secretary General clearly noted: “we must sadly acknowledge that xenophobic political narratives about migration are all too widespread today.”

Beyond suspicion and xenophobia, many migrants also face and experience other humanitarian concerns.

These include:

- Physical, mental and sexual abuse
- Violence
- Discrimination and exclusion
- Lost family and community support networks and links
- Language and cultural barriers
- Informal and formal barriers to accessing basic services, including education, healthcare, livelihoods, psychosocial support, legal and protection (including child protection) services
- The fear and reality of arrest, detention for indeterminate periods (and the detention of children, including unaccompanied or separated children), and deportation
- Going missing, in transit or in destination countries
- Dying en route to or in destination countries
- The risk or reality of being trafficked (see section on ‘Human Trafficking’)

Women and Migration

According to the latest available figures, almost exactly half (49.4%) of all international migrants in the Asia Pacific region are women. However, the proportion of men to women is much more dramatic amongst temporary migrant workers. In many countries, women comprise a low number of workers migrating through official channels.³³

In some instances, when female migrant workers report their experience of abuse or exploitation overseas, countries of origin and destination may choose to restrict or ban migration by women.³⁴ Bans or restrictions on migration by men occur with less frequency in the region. Studies by the International Labour Organization (ILO) have found that these restrictions or bans may result in harm to migrant women and adolescent girls, including increasing the risk of exploitation and trafficking.³⁵

Despite the benefits received by low-paid female migrants, they may be at risk because of their status as women, often coming from poor families, with low levels of education and few relevant skills. For domestic workers, these risks are particularly acute as they are often employed in isolated workplaces and in a sector not usually covered by labour regulations in countries of destination.

In recognition of the specific vulnerabilities of domestic workers, in 2011 the ILO adopted the ILO Domestic Workers' Convention (No. 189), which calls for domestic workers to be covered by international labour standards and receive fair wages and other benefits.³⁶ Also, in recognition of the specific needs of female migrants, especially domestic workers, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies from the Asia Pacific and Middle East North Africa (MENA) regions adopted the Manila Declaration on Women Household Service Workers in May 2015.



³³ The proportion of women who migrated through regular channels from Bangladesh in 2016 was almost 25%, although this represented a rapid increase from only 4% in 2007. UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2017), 'Towards Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in the Asia Pacific Region: Challenges and Opportunities', p. 21

³⁴ ILO, Protected or Put in Harm's Way: Bans and restrictions on women's labour migration in Southeast Asia, 2017; ILO and GAATW, No Easy Exit: Migration bans affecting women from Nepal, 2014.

³⁵ ILO, Protected or Put in Harm's Way: Bans and restrictions on women's labour migration in Southeast Asia, 2017; ILO and GAATW, No Easy Exit: Migration bans affecting women from Nepal, 2014.

³⁶ C189 - Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189): http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C189

Manila Declaration on Women Household Service Workers

In 2015, National Societies from the Asia Pacific and Middle East North Africa region adopted the Manila Declaration.³⁷ The declaration recognises and declares, inter alia, that:

- Migration is not only an issue of people movement but more importantly an issue involving basic human rights and the protection of human dignity.
- Among migrant workers, women workers, especially those who work as domestic helpers, are most vulnerable, prone to abuse in view of their isolation and without sufficient means to obtain support and assistance when needed.
- National Societies wish to adopt a common position, and take collective action and utilise the largest humanitarian network of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to protect the rights of labour migrants - with a particular focus on women household service workers.
- National Societies shall do their utmost to exercise humanitarian diplomacy to influence their respective governments and other stakeholders to assist and protect women migrant workers in distress and provide programs which protect the rights, reduce the vulnerabilities and support the best interests of women migrant workers.
- National Societies commit to strengthen partnerships within and across countries in order to ensure the working environment of migrant workers in host countries fosters tolerance and cultural respect, and that the individual needs and vulnerabilities of migrant workers, irrespective of their status are properly addressed, consistent with the principles of humanity and universality.

³⁷ IFRC, Manila Declaration on Women Household Service Workers, 2015. Available at: <http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Documents/Asia-pacific/201505/Declaration.pdf>

Children and Migration

Children affected by migration may be grouped into three categories:

- Children who migrate with family members
- Children born to migrant parents in a country of destination³⁸
- Children who migrate alone or with people other than their family members.

In most countries of destination in Asia and the Pacific, low-paid migrants are not permitted to bring dependents with them. Thus, children who accompany or are born to low-skilled migrants are often in an irregular status. One immediate impact of having an irregular status is that a child may not be able to attend formal education. Even if the host country provides for universal education - as is the case in Thailand - familial, economic and community barriers result in only a small fraction of migrant children, or the children of migrants, enrolling in formal education.

Child migrants, and the children of migrants, may be further vulnerable to the worst forms of child labour, as well as arrest and detention, especially as irregular migrants.

An End to the Detention of Children

It is the position of the IFRC that children should not be detained because of their immigration status.

The IFRC has called on all States across the globe to: [Eliminate the] detention of children solely for reasons related to their migration status and the separation of migrant parents and children.



Children may also migrate independently. The number of child migrants can be quite significant: for example, during a regularisation exercise for migrants in Thailand in 2004, more than 93,000 people who registered were under the age of 15 years.

Unaccompanied or separated children may face a number of risks when migrating, including:

- A lack of civil registration, or incomplete registration on arrival
- Best Interests of the Child Assessments and Determinations that may not meet international standards
- Formal and informal barriers to basic services, including healthcare, education and housing
- Elevated mental health and psychosocial risks including social isolation, grief, post-traumatic stress disorders, anger and relational issues.³⁹

Protection of Children on the Move

The position of the IFRC towards Children on the Move is that:⁴⁰

- All children on the move, irrespective of their legal standing, age, gender, or health status should have access to protection and humanitarian assistance.
- Because of their higher vulnerabilities, unaccompanied and separated children require particular and urgent protection.
- No child should be detained based solely on her or his migration status.
- In order to improve the protection and humanitarian assistance of children on the move, it is necessary to meaningfully engage and provide leadership opportunities for girls and boys to identify protection risks, and find and implement solutions.
- More needs to be done to enhance the evidence-base of what specific interventions work to protect children on the move and those that do not, and why.

³⁸ Technically, children born to migrant parents in a country of transit or destination are not international migrants, but the law and authorities in many countries treat them as such. IFRC Policy Brief: Global Compact on Migration.

³⁹ A specific gendered need of adolescent girls on the move – and female migrants – is sufficient menstrual hygiene management support, as highlighted in assessments conducted by the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society and IFRC in response to children arriving in Bangladesh from Myanmar in 2017. IFRC Position Paper: Protection and Assistance for Children on the Move, 2017.

⁴⁰ IFRC Position Paper: Protection and Assistance of Children on the Move, 2017.

The Role of Asia Pacific National Societies in the Context of Labour Migration



The Approach of the IFRC and National Societies' work with and for Migrants

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is in a unique position to assist, protect and advocate for all migrants, including migrant workers.

This is because the approach of the Red Cross and Red Crescent enables National Societies to work with and for migrants irrespective of their specific legal status or category.⁴¹ This means that the IFRC and their member National Societies - unlike many other actors working on migration – are not restricted to working with and/or assisting certain categories of migrants. Some local, national and international actors find themselves hampered by their mandates, which restrict their work to only with those people who, for example, are categorised or meet a legal definition of being trafficked, or as asylum seekers and refugees.

The “deliberately broad” approach of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement supports the work of National Societies with migrants who have humanitarian needs, but who do not necessarily meet the legal definitions of specific categories or migrants. This also enables National Societies to work with migrants whose experience falls into multiple migration-related categories – all at one time or at different times during their migration journeys, in recognition of the heterogeneity of people who migrate.

⁴¹IFRC Policy on Migration, 2009.

Strengths of the IFRC and National Societies' Work with and for Migrants

There are many actors, including governments and non-governmental organisations, working to address humanitarian needs and enhance strengths in labour migration and respond to human trafficking. It is important to ensure that National Societies and the IFRC are working to our strengths – namely:⁴²

- Local, volunteer-led presence, and wide reach to and trust among communities across the region
- Global network of 191 National Societies
- Auxiliary role, including the ability to advocate for migrants in ways other actors cannot
- Humanitarian mandate grounded in the seven Fundamental Principles
- Commitment to assist all people based on need, irrespective of legal status, coupled with a reputation for impartiality and confidentiality that some migrants in irregular situations trust
- Access to detention centres (including immigration detention)
- Restoring Family Links work to find missing migrants and avert situations of broken family links
- Psychosocial expertise which migrants and their families need after exploitation and traumas
- Presence in disasters and conflicts, as well as large-scale population movements
- Long-standing reputation for health and care activities for all people

The unique position of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to assist, protect and advocate for all migrants, including migrant workers, is also due to engagement in 191 countries across the globe – spanning nearly all countries of origin, transit and destination. Working together along migratory routes means that National Societies can optimise humanitarian action with and for migrant workers.

⁴² IFRC Global Strategy on Migration 2018 – 2022: Reducing Vulnerability, Enhancing Resilience

Doha Dialogue

In 2014 and 2015, the Red Cross Red Crescent ‘Doha Dialogue on Migration’ hosted a series of events throughout the Asia Pacific and Middle East-North Africa (MENA) regions.

The events brought together a range of stakeholders focused on labour migration, including Movement partners, humanitarian organisations, non-governmental organisations, government representatives, academics, research institutions and others, with the aims of:

1. identifying good practices and examples of national, regional and cross-regional collaboration, and
2. evaluating ways to strengthen relevant labour laws, policies and programmes to protect the rights and interests of migrant workers.

Asia Pacific National Societies and Cross-Regional Cooperation

Vanuatu Red Cross Society extended RFL services to Ni-Vanuatu working in New Zealand and Australia under seasonal labour migration schemes when Tropical Cyclone Pam struck in March 2015. Lists of workers were provided by the New Zealand and Australian National Societies to their counterparts in Vanuatu, who visited over 100 families in villages to get information to relay back to migrant workers in Australia and New Zealand.

Philippine Red Cross has coordinated with the ICRC on the frontline of conflict zones to trace Philippine migrant workers in Gaza, Syria, and Libya when conflicts broke out in these locations.

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society provided RFL services during the repatriation of irregular Bangladeshi migrants intercepted by authorities at sea en route to India in 2008, and to Indonesia in 2015.⁴³ In each instance, and in cooperation with the **Indian Red Cross Society** and **Indonesian Red Cross Society** respectively, phone call services and “I am alive messages” were sent via the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society to families in Bangladesh. Upon return, National Society volunteers accompanied the returning Bangladeshi migrants to their home villages.⁴⁴

In 2017, the **Red Cross Red Crescent Asia Pacific Migration Network (APMN)** facilitated a ‘Peer-to-Peer Exchange Programme’ whereby three selected representatives from National Societies in the Asia Pacific region spent time with the Australian Red Cross.⁴⁵ The participant from the Sri Lankan Red Cross Society returned to Sri Lanka with examples of programmatic support that could be integrated into the work of the National Society, such as psychosocial support and livelihoods support to families affected by migration.

The work of Asia Pacific National Societies with and for migrant workers



In the Asia Pacific region, many National Societies see the importance of addressing the needs of migrant workers.⁴⁶ Further, several National Societies have also identified that there are humanitarian consequences not only for many migrant workers, but also for their family members who stay behind, those who join them, and the communities that host migrant workers.

This section looks at the specific roles and activities of Asia Pacific National Societies with and for migrant workers, in countries of origin and destination across the Asia Pacific region.

⁴³ The ‘Andaman Sea Crisis’ of 2015 involved prospective migrant workers as well as refugees, and people originating from both Bangladesh and Rakhine, Myanmar, in a ‘mixed migration’ context.

⁴⁴ IFRC (forthcoming) Guidance Note on Human Mobility In The Context Of Disasters And Climate Change: The Role Of Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies In Asia Pacific

⁴⁵ In 2017 representatives from Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, Pakistan Red Crescent Society and Sri Lanka Red Cross Society spent 2 weeks in Australia participating in a Peer-to-Peer Exchange Programme hosted by the Australian Red Cross.

⁴⁶ Documented by the Red Cross Red Crescent Asia Pacific Migration Network (APMN) in a report of the ‘Mapping of National Society migration-related activities in the Asia Pacific Region’ undertaken in 2016.

Asia Pacific National Societies’ Initiatives with and for Migrant Workers in Countries of Origin

Reducing the risks associated with migration

Migrant workers often need to know about the potential risks and opportunities associated with migration. The 2009 IFRC Policy on Migration emphasises that although the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement must remain neutral at all times, National Societies may undertake important work to raise awareness amongst potential migrants about the risks of migration, and thus enhance migrants’ resilience.

Awareness-raising can take many forms. For example, National Societies can contribute to raising awareness by undertaking activities within communities. National Societies can also help individuals and their families in making informed personal decisions about whether to migrate or not, and under what conditions. Many National Societies are active in regional, cross-regional and global efforts to promote the safety, dignity and rights of all migrants.⁴⁷

A number of National Societies in the Asia Pacific region offer support and guidance to prospective migrants. Often, but not always, information provision and guidance is connected to the Restoring Family Links (RFL) services of National Societies. RFL services are wide-spread and the RFL network of staff and volunteers across the Asia Pacific region has huge advantages over many other actors promoting safe migration - they are already trusted, culturally sensitive, and speak local languages.

Awareness Raising Activities in Countries of Origin

Philippine Red Cross, with support from the IFRC, launched the ‘Virtual Volunteer’ in 2017. An online application to provide information to Filipino migrants and to those planning to migrate, the ‘app’ contains information about services available from the Philippine Red Cross, what items to pack when going overseas, psychosocial advice for stress and hardship, and contacts abroad. It includes a link to a First Aid ‘app’, and answers questions about what to do if someone finds themselves in danger, has been recruited illegally or has had their passport confiscated, and who to contact if their family at home has an emergency. Crucially, migrants and their families can access this information both at home and while overseas.

Cambodia Red Cross Society undertakes outreach activities amongst communities in rural border areas of the country - areas of high out-migration to Thailand and Malaysia. In 2017 Cambodia Red Cross volunteers reached 37 villages and over 1,000 people with messaging about ‘safe migration’ including information about the importance of prospective migrants taking identify documents with them to prove their age, and other tips about how to migrate safely.

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society raises awareness about safe migration by broadcasting a ‘doco-drama’ in communities. This film includes six key messages on safe migration, as well as discussing the needs of irregular migrants. The film emphasises that migrants should always make the final decision about whether to migrate or not.

The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society, in collaboration with Sri Lanka’s Bureau of Foreign Employment, provides training to migrant workers before they leave. Training consists of first aid and RFL awareness, as well as contact details for Red Cross or Red Crescent National Societies and the Sri Lankan Embassy in countries of destination. ‘Safe migration’ messaging highlights that migrants should keep important documents safely in a plastic bag; leave copies with family members at home; inform their family of their workplace and accommodation address in the country of destination; memorise their passport number and family phone number and not rely on having these numbers stored in their mobile phone, as these are regularly confiscated by employers or recruiters.

Nepal Red Cross Society recognises that in the Nepali context, migration is a source of pride and an opportunity for increased livelihood opportunities. At the same time, the National Society knows that preventing ‘disasters’ in migration is as important as preventing natural disasters. With the support of the government, Nepal Red Cross Society distributes leaflets containing information about RFL services and where to get help if needed to migrants at passport offices and airports. Leaflets are also distributed by volunteers in border areas, particularly areas which the National Society has identified as departure points for irregular migrants. Nepal Red Cross Society also facilitates broadcasting of ‘safe migration’ messaging via the radio including information about help available to people in detention. Over 100 different radio stations play audio recordings developed by the National Society three or four times daily.

Myanmar Red Cross Society provides safe migration messaging while informing people in Myanmar about RFL services. A key message delivered to prospective migrants is the importance of maintaining contact with their family, and informing their family of their whereabouts while away from home - advice directly related to averting situations of migrants going missing. Myanmar Red Cross Society has given interviews with national media about safe migration, as a way to disseminate information widely to people across the country.

In order for National Societies to be able to mitigate the risks associated with migration, the conditions in countries along migratory routes must be adequately understood, and information provided to potential migrants must be up-to-date. Hence, it is of considerable value for National Societies to work with and for potential migrants, and for cooperation and exchange between National Societies in countries of origin, transit and destination to be strengthened.

⁴⁷For example through contributions to the IFRC statements delivered during the national, regional and global consultations and negotiations on the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

The Red Cross Red Crescent Asia Pacific Migration Network (APMN)

The APMN is a regional forum of Asia Pacific National Societies established in 2012 to explore critical issues and contribute to a growing body of knowledge for the benefit of migrants, based on the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement’s Fundamental Principles. Through the APMN, information can be shared between multiple National Societies on migration issues and activities, enabling knowledge exchange and mutual mentoring on good practices in the region. The APMN activities include peer-to-peer learning, online meetings, thematic Working Groups, research and an annual in-person meeting of the Network.

To better inform effective activities with and for migrants, National Societies may also engage with discussions and partnerships with external partners including, critically, migrant workers themselves.

Programming Principles: National Societies’ work with and for Migrant Workers in Countries of Origin

When working with and for potential migrants, National Societies should consider the following general programming principles:

1. National Societies maintain at all times their impartiality, neutrality, and independence. They do not encourage, prevent or dissuade migration, nor do they participate in the enforcement of government schemes to hinder migration or certain forms of it.
2. Action to reduce risks of migration is part of an integrated and impartial approach to address needs and vulnerabilities linked to migration.
3. National Societies engage with communities from which migrants originate; they have a thorough understanding of migratory pressures on them, and make efforts to alleviate conditions that induce people to migrate against their will and desire.
4. Information provided to potential migrants is comprehensive and includes possible risks of migration as well as relevant conditions in countries of transit and destination, their rights and obligations, and how to access humanitarian services.
5. National Societies in countries of origin, transit and destination work together to ensure that the needs of migrants, and the risks they are exposed to, are properly identified and taken into account, and that potential migrants receive correct and up-to-date information.
6. Gender-specific concerns and topics should be addressed in pre-departure trainings, some sessions of which could be gender-segregated. Good practice pre-departure messaging does not stigmatise sex workers, workers in any other sector, or women generally by portraying them as victims or in disempowering ways.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Topics could include: self-esteem, negotiation skills, leadership, women’s rights, financial literacy, sex and sexual and reproductive health and rights, family issues, and gender-based violence, including violence faced by men and LGBTI people.



Families Who Stay Behind

In the Asia Pacific region, migrant workers’ family members (including children) may choose not to migrate or be unable to do so due to restrictive conditions attached to work visas, and instead stay behind in the country of origin. A number of National Societies have identified support for families who stay behind, should humanitarian needs arise. These may include:

- In some cases, child abuse among children staying behind
- Lost family and community links
- Families who are dependent on remittances may not receive them for long periods of time, impacts of which may include encountering high-interest debt to pay for education and other basic services
- Psycho-social needs can be high, especially when family members who have migrated for work are missing, in detention, or caught in conflict or disaster situations
- Communities of origin may face situations where the majority of a certain age-demographic or many of the more educated people from the community leave to find work elsewhere. This may result in negative economic impacts, including cycles of poverty and high dependency ratios – with children, the elderly, and people with health needs remaining in the place of origin.

Support to Families Staying Behind

Philippine Red Cross combines providing psycho-social and RFL support to families who stay behind to cope with changes to their familial structure due to migration. Philippine Red Cross volunteers visit homes and schools to check if a migrant’s family is safe and well. They provide crisis intervention support to the families when needed, and through RFL services work to reunite family members who have lost contact with relatives who have migrated.

Asia Pacific National Societies’ Initiatives with and for Migrant Workers in Countries of Destination

Supporting the aspirations of migrant workers, as well as the protection, safety and inclusion of migrants, are important priorities for the IFRC and National Societies. National Societies can play an important role to “help overcome barriers of exclusion and discrimination and reduce the potential for community tensions.”⁴⁹ Community engagement is often recognised as the best method to prevent xenophobia and false narratives about the impact of migrants, and National Societies have an important role to play in fostering community engagement; promoting social inclusion and interaction between migrants and host communities is recognised as one of the key pillars of National Societies’ work with and for migrants.⁵⁰

The IFRC Policy on Migration notes that “Public authorities, other institutions, and the general public may have assumptions about migrants that differ from how the migrants themselves see their interests, needs and capabilities.” In other words, host communities in countries of destination may or may not be welcoming to migrant workers. Where host communities perceive migrants as a threat – whether economically, security-wise or culturally – this can result in xenophobia, social exclusion, discrimination, abuse and violence. In many instances, media and political discourse may play a role in how migrants are viewed by host communities. It has been reported that when policy and civil society initiatives promote social inclusion, levels of social integration tend to be higher.⁵¹

The integration of migrants into a host society is a two-way process requiring mutual commitment from both migrants and their hosts to respect and accept one another. Successful integration can also help build more secure, vibrant and peaceful communities. The promotion and recognition of positive aspects of migration, and ensuring that the rights of all migrants are respected, addresses misinformation and xenophobia around migration and emphasises the value of migration.⁵² Language-diversity and varied cultural norms may however be barriers to integration. Some National Societies in the region promote cultural awareness activities, community education, social cohesion forums, and engagement with host communities through humanitarian action.

⁴⁹ IFRC Policy on Migration, 2009.

⁵⁰ IFRC (forthcoming), Supplementary Guidance On The Policy On Migration - Advisory Note: Action to Create an Inclusive Society and an Enabling Environment for Positive Integration Opportunities for all Migrants.

⁵¹ In northern Thailand, Shan people have a long history of fluid cross-border movement between what is now Thailand and Myanmar. Language and customs of Shan people on both sides of the international border are similar, and the Thai government has formally (though not always in practice) extended education, health care, and social security including maternity protection, to Shan migrants. Mekong Migration Network, Permanently Temporary: Examining the impact of social exclusion on Mekong migrants, 2016. Available at: http://www.mekongmigration.org/?page_id=5171

⁵² IFRC, Changing the Dialogue on Migration: Why social inclusion? The importance of “belonging”, statement delivered at the 4th Global Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations entitled “New Strategies for Intercultural Dialogue, Understanding and Cooperation”, in Doha, Qatar, 2011.

Supporting the Aspirations of Migrants and Contributing to Social Inclusion

New Zealand Red Cross undertakes the ‘Pathways to Employment’ programme, which provides support to over 500 former refugees, asylum seekers and people with refugee-like backgrounds per year. The programme supports training, skills, education, and job matching. Although this programme is focused on refugees and people with a refugee-like background, the activities and programmes are highly relevant to migrant workers to support their aspirations.⁵³

Australian Red Cross recently launched a mentoring programme designed to assist newly arrived migrants find work in Australia. ‘In Work Australia’ uses Facebook and LinkedIn to connect new migrants with an online community of supporters from all backgrounds, who have experience and practical tips to share. The programme is designed for recent migrants who need support with finding or keeping a job.

Malaysian Red Crescent Society contributed to an ILO and government-led publication on ‘Guidelines and Tips for Employers of Migrant Domestic Helpers’. The Guidelines include information about First Aid mobile phone applications and First Aid/CPR trainings run by the Malaysian Red Crescent Society.⁵⁴

⁵³ IFRC Statement at the thematic consultation on the Global Compact on Migration: Contributions of migrants and diasporas to all dimensions of sustainable development, including remittances and portability of earned benefits, New York, 24 July 2017

⁵⁴ ILO and the Malaysian Ministry of Human Resources (MOHR), Guidelines And Tips For Employers Of Foreign Domestic Helpers, 2017. Available at: <http://apmigration.ilo.org/resources/guidelines-and-tips-for-employers-of-foreign-domestic-helpers/>

First Aid and Safety for Migrant Workers

Some Asia Pacific National Societies offer First Aid-specific information and support to migrant workers, for example practical training, smart phone ‘apps’, or translations of Red Cross Red Crescent materials into languages spoken by migrants.

Many migrant workers, particularly those recently arrived in countries of destination, lack knowledge about safety in the workplace or industry-specific workplace hazards, and many employers are remiss in providing training and safety equipment. Having employees who are familiar with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policies, displaying important OHS information, and keeping employees’ health and medical records can make a substantial difference to a safe work environment, as employers can then respond more effectively (and more quickly) when medical emergencies occur, and employees are more likely to spot potential hazards for themselves and other workers.⁵⁵

First Aid and Safety Support for Migrant Workers

The Brunei Darussalam Red Crescent Society provides free First Aid and CPR training to migrant workers, as well as occupational First Aid and basic cardiac lifesaving training. Target groups for these programmes are migrant construction workers, domestic workers, and carers of the elderly and children. The National Society also provides public health awareness about non-communicable diseases including hypertension, diabetes, heart attacks, cardiac arrests and cancer, as well as diseases outbreaks.⁵⁶

Singapore Red Cross Society has a free-to-download First Aid mobile phone application which is available in the national languages of the Philippines and Indonesia (Filipino and Bahasa Indonesia, respectively) for migrant domestic workers in Singapore.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ IFRC, Meeting Report: Health and Care for Migrants and Displaced Persons: Strengthening Humanitarian Action, 2017. Available at: <http://www.rcrc-resilience-southeastasia.org/document/report-of-health-and-care-for-migrants-and-displaced-persons-strengthening-humanitarian-action-asia-pacific-regional-meeting/>
⁵⁶ IFRC, Meeting Report: Health and Care for Migrants and Displaced Persons: Strengthening Humanitarian Action, 2017. Available at: <http://www.rcrc-resilience-southeastasia.org/document/report-of-health-and-care-for-migrants-and-displaced-persons-strengthening-humanitarian-action-asia-pacific-regional-meeting/>
⁵⁷ APMN, Mapping National Society migration-related activities in the Asia Pacific Region, 2017 (internal).



The 2009 IFRC Policy on Migration notes, “migrants can have misperceptions or misunderstandings regarding the laws, customs and conditions in their host country. National Societies can reduce these gaps by promoting the participation of migrants in decisions that have an impact on their lives”. It also emphasises that National Societies should involve migrants in participatory processes within their host communities. This can help ensure that responses to their needs and aspirations are mutually acceptable and beneficial.

Linguistic and cultural barriers can prevent migrants from effectively representing their own needs, interests and aspirations. By adopting policies to ensure the diversity of their staff and volunteers, National Societies can help overcome such barriers and support social inclusion. To the extent possible, National Societies should include and integrate members of migrant communities as staff and volunteers. This would also help address the challenges faced by National Societies in accessing and communicating with migrants. Some National Societies employ community interpreters and/or utilise remote interpretation services.

Outreach to Migrants by Migrants

Migrants in the Maldives comprise approximately a quarter of the country’s total workforce. **The Maldivian Red Crescent** has recruited migrant workers from Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka who expressed an interest in participating in branch activities as volunteers. The relationships built between migrant communities and the National Society were crucial when the Maldives experienced an outbreak of the H1N1 Influenza virus in March 2017. The Maldivian authorities declared a national alert to prevent the spread of the virus, and National Society staff and volunteers supported national efforts by developing and disseminating information, including to migrants, on how to protect themselves from infection. Materials were developed in nine languages commonly used by migrants. Volunteers from migrant communities were involved in the development, translation, dissemination and explanation of the information, education and communications (IEC) materials.

Access to Essential Services

National Societies play a key role in some countries by supporting migrant workers’ access to essential services, including health care.⁵⁸ The ability of migrants (particularly irregular migrants) to access health services can be negatively impacted due to both formal and informal barriers.⁵⁹ These concerns are also very real for many migrant workers who move within their own country.⁶⁰

Access to Services for Irregular Migrants

The Republic of Korea National Red Cross provides a wide variety of services for all migrants, including irregular migrants and refugees, who face barriers to basic services. For example, the National Society has developed the ‘Windmill of Hope’ programme, which provides support to migrants in the following areas: livelihood, housing, education, and health and care,⁶¹ and a ‘Happy Mom’ project which provides maternity bags, and six hours of maternal training and care to expectant women, including migrants. In recognition of the limited access of some migrants to health care, the Republic of Korea National Red Cross established the Healthy Neighbour Centre in its Seoul Red Cross Hospital in 2002. The aim of the Healthy Neighbour Centre is to improve the quality of health and care for certain vulnerable people, including migrants. The Centre provides affordable or free medical services for migrants in need, irrespective of their legal status.

The Mongolian Red Cross Society has a STI/HIV prevention and treatment programme that targets people migrating within the country and particularly those in border regions, including truck drivers in mining and cargo industries, and sex workers. In 2016 the National Society delivered safe-sex awareness messages through mobile voluntary counselling, testing and treatment, condom promotion, and educational sessions for 12,815 truck drivers and 614 female sex workers.⁶² Migrants were supported irrespective of their legal status.

⁵⁸ IFRC, Health and Care for Migrants and Displaced Persons: Case Studies from the Asia Pacific Region, 2017.

⁵⁹ IFRC (forthcoming) Policy Paper ‘Access to assistance for all: Meeting the basic humanitarian needs of irregular migrants’

⁶⁰ Amgaa, O. Speech summarised in IFRC, Meeting Report: Health and Care for Migrants and Displaced Persons: Strengthening Humanitarian Action, 2017. Available at: <http://www.rcrc-resilience-southeastasia.org/document/report-of-health-and-care-for-migrants-and-displaced-persons-strengthening-humanitarian-action-asia-pacific-regional-meeting/>. See report for further details provided by National Societies in the region on their work on migration and health.

⁶¹ IFRC, Meeting Report: Health and Care for Migrants and Displaced Persons: Strengthening Humanitarian Action, 2017. Available at: <http://www.rcrc-resilience-southeastasia.org/document/report-of-health-and-care-for-migrants-and-displaced-persons-strengthening-humanitarian-action-asia-pacific-regional-meeting/>

⁶² IFRC, Meeting Report: Health and Care for Migrants and Displaced Persons: Strengthening Humanitarian Action, 2017. Available at: <http://www.rcrc-resilience-southeastasia.org/document/report-of-health-and-care-for-migrants-and-displaced-persons-strengthening-humanitarian-action-asia-pacific-regional-meeting/>

Access to essential assistance during disasters and crises

In some instances National Societies are also working to ensure that migrant workers are specifically included in disaster risk reduction and disaster response and recovery efforts. Migrants, particularly those with an irregular status may have unique vulnerabilities, needs, and capacities, which can be overlooked in crisis preparedness, emergency response, and recovery. For example, during a disaster migrants may face obstacles if evacuation instructions are not available in a language that they understand, or in a format that is accessible to them.⁶³

Support to Migrants during Disasters

During the floods in Bangkok in 2011, the **Thai Red Cross Society** ensured that hundreds of migrants originating from Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar who worked in factories and construction sites in affected areas received supplies.⁶⁴ At the time, an estimated 1 million migrant workers from Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar were living and working in flood-affected areas of the city. However, disaster management implemented during the flooding period had unclear lines of authority and no agency was the focal point for migrant assistance.⁶⁵

Protection

In partnership with the ICRC, many National Societies in the Asia Pacific region also provide protection services to migrant workers in countries of destination. Protection activities for migrants can include Restoring Family Links (RFL) and family reunion,⁶⁶ counselling, orientation, referrals and legal assistance; and social inclusion activities.

Due to the access that few, if any, other actors have, National Societies often play a significant role in detention monitoring, assessing treatment and the impacts of detention. Some National Societies also provide support to migrants in detention, both in terms of material goods and RFL via phone calls or messages passed to families.

⁶³ See, for example, the Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster developed through the Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative. Available at: <https://micicinitiative.iom.int/>

⁶⁴ IFRC, Thai Red Cross supports migrant families following floods in Bangkok, 22 November 2011. Available at: <http://www.ifrc.org/es/noticias/noticias/asia-pacific/thailand/thailands-invisible-flood-victims/>

⁶⁵ Case study from the Thai Red Cross Society detailed in IFRC, (forthcoming), Guidance Note on: Human Mobility In The Context Of Disasters And Climate Change: The Role Of Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies In Asia Pacific (draft). Also, Alessandra Bravi and Katharina Schaur ‘Migrants in the 2011 Floods in Thailand: Improving Migrants’ Access to Emergency and Rescue Services’ Migrants’, in Lorenzo Guadagno, Mechthilde Fuhrer and John Twigg (eds.) Disaster Risk Reduction: Practices for Inclusion (Council of Europe, IOM 2017) pp77-80; Thailand Case Study, Migrants and Natural Disasters: The Impact on migrants of the 2011 Floods in Thailand International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). Available at: http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Thailand_CS_FINAL.pdf

⁶⁶ The RCRC Family Links Network helps prevent people from disappearing or getting separated, and works to restore and maintain contact between family members whenever possible. It also tries to help establish the fate and whereabouts of people reported missing.

Services for migrants in Detention

The **Sri Lanka Red Cross Society** has access to the national immigration detention facilities for asylum seekers, as well as to irregular migrants in or transiting through Sri Lanka. With ICRC support, the National Society provides detained children with food and household items, a gap in authority-provisioning in the immigration detention centre. The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society also provide RFL services, including phone calls, to detained migrants.

Returning Migrant Workers

Migrant workers who experience trauma or abuse abroad may need support to address mental and physical health concerns as well as related social inclusion and reintegration challenges, upon return. A number of Asia Pacific National Societies provide support to returning migrant workers, including irregular migrants. National Societies work primarily to meet immediate shelter, food, medical, RFL, psycho-social, and transport needs upon return.

Support to Returning Migrant Workers

Nepal Red Cross Society disseminates information about services for particularly vulnerable returning migrants, for example for women and girls at risk. The National Society also provides referrals to other stakeholders, including local civil society organisations who manage shelters.

Indonesian Red Cross Society (PMI) works with migrant domestic workers upon return. Some come back with injuries, trauma or mental health needs, and it is often difficult for them to access health and psycho-social support services. In West Java the National Society, local authorities, and civil society actors organised women's Support Group Sessions utilising expertise from Indonesian Red Cross Society's psychosocial counsellors. Alongside Indonesian Red Cross Society volunteers, two professional psychologists worked to assess participants' needs and strengths, and identified specific services that returning domestic workers might need. The National Society hopes to extend the support group programme to other areas of Indonesia, including East Java, Central Java and Nusa Tenggara Barat.⁶⁷

The majority of migrants return independently. Others are returned forcibly as deportees, with some having spent time in detention facilities. Humanitarian needs may be particularly acute in these situations.



Deportation/Collective Return of Migrant Workers

Cambodian Red Cross Society has periodically provided humanitarian aid at points along the border with Thailand, when the Thai Government has initiated collective deportations of irregular Cambodian migrant workers.⁶⁸ The National Society provides phone calls to relatives, first aid, food and water to migrant workers upon return. This has complemented the Cambodian Government's efforts to provide transport, with Cambodian Red Cross volunteers from the local community accompanying migrants back to their home villages.

Philippine Red Cross supports migrants who have been detained and deported. In 2017, the Malaysian Government deported 4,658 irregular and/or undocumented Filipinos and stateless people from the East Malaysian state of Sabah. The Philippine Red Cross supports the deportees upon arrival in the Philippines with shelter, health, psychosocial and RFL support.⁶⁹

In June 2017, at reception camps set up by the government, **Myanmar Red Cross Society** offered food, water, first aid, health services, psychosocial support and assistance organising onward transportation to over 35,000 migrant workers who returned by land from Thailand.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ IFRC, Red Cross Lends a Hand to Overseas Domestic Workers, 2016. Available at: <http://www.ifrc.org/en/news-and-media/news-stories/asia-pacific/indonesia/red-cross-lends-a-hand-to-overseas-domestic-workers-70809/>

⁶⁸ IFRC, Migrant Workers Face New Labour Laws And Uncertainty In Thailand, 2017. Available at: <http://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/2017/07/28/migrant-workers-face-new-labour-laws-uncertainty-thailand/>

⁶⁹ IFRC, Final Report of Philippines: Returnees - DREF operation, 2017. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/MDRPH025FR.pdf>

⁷⁰ IFRC, Migrant Workers Face New Labour Laws And Uncertainty In Thailand, 2017. Available at: <http://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/2017/07/28/migrant-workers-face-new-labour-laws-uncertainty-thailand/>

Humanitarian Diplomacy

National Societies are often in a privileged position to conduct advocacy on behalf of migrants due to their role as humanitarian auxiliaries to the public authorities.

Humanitarian Diplomacy Initiatives in Favour of Migrant Workers

In 2017, the **Philippine Red Cross** lobbied the Government of the Philippines to strive to make ‘live out’ accommodation a viable option for migrant domestic workers who leave the Philippines to work overseas. Migrant domestic workers often find that they can maintain more regular and lower working hours, and have greater privacy and freedom of movement when they do not live in their employer’s house, although meeting the cost of external accommodation can be a challenge.

The **Maldivian Red Crescent** has successfully advocated for the involvement of migrants in public health campaigns and is now also considering how to make health care available to irregular migrants. The Maldivian Red Crescent has made an humanitarian appeal for public health provision for all people in the Maldives, including all migrants.



Regional and Global Humanitarian Diplomacy

The IFRC acts as the official representative of its member National Societies in the international field. At the regional level, the IFRC supports National Societies to coordinate humanitarian diplomacy efforts and engage in regional and global fora including, for example, through the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), and the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and its regional preparatory events.⁷¹

⁷¹ See IFRC Policy Paper: Global Compact on Migration, 2017. Available at: <http://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/document/ifrc-policy-brief-global-compact-migration/> and IFRC Asia Pacific Migration and Displacement: Framework for action, 2017-2022

Programming Principles: National Societies’ work with and for Migrant Workers in Countries of Destination

When working with and for migrant workers in countries of destination, National Societies should consider the following general programming principles:⁷²

1. *Focus on the Needs and Vulnerabilities of Migrants:* The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement strives to adopt an integrated and impartial approach, combining immediate action for migrants in urgent need with longer-term assistance and empowerment. It is therefore important that National Societies be permitted to work with and for all migrants, without discrimination and irrespective of their legal status.
2. *Include Migrants in Humanitarian Programming:* National Societies can opt for different approaches in assisting and protecting migrants. Some focus on migrants through special, targeted programmes or projects; others include migrants in their general humanitarian action, addressing the needs and vulnerabilities of the population in its diversity. Both approaches require sustained efforts by National Societies to guarantee impartiality and non-discrimination, taking into account the humanitarian needs of the host population.
3. *Support the Aspirations of Migrants:* Migrants have a legitimate claim to hope for opportunities to achieve their potential. Migrants are also an important social, economic and cultural asset. Their skills, experience, and resilience can be a valuable contribution to their host communities. National Societies will consider migrants’ own needs and interests, and support their social inclusion, integration, and their aspirations.
4. *Recognise the Rights of Migrants:* National Societies provide assistance and protection to migrants, irrespective of their legal status. Yet, the degree to which migrants are able to enjoy their rights is an important factor in assessing their vulnerability. By working with migrants to ensure that their rights are respected – including the right to the determination of their legal status – National Societies will also promote their social inclusion and their aspirations.
5. *Link Assistance, Protection and Humanitarian Advocacy for Migrants:* Assistance to migrants goes hand in hand with efforts to protect them against abuse, exploitation, and the denial of rights. In making these efforts, National Societies will respect the migrants’ own interest, and the imperative of doing them no harm. To enable migrants to overcome abuses and pressures, National Societies can provide legal advice, refer them to other relevant and competent organisations or entities, or undertake discreet or public forms of humanitarian advocacy.
6. *Build Partnerships for Migrants:* The humanitarian challenges of migration reach across borders, regions, and cultures. There is a Movement-wide responsibility for capacity-building, mutual support and coordination. Regional cooperation among National Societies is equally essential. In working with external partners on migration, a common and principled approach of the Movement is indispensable.
7. *Work Along the Migratory Trails:* The Movement is in a unique position to help bridge the gaps of assistance and protection for migrants. National Societies in countries along the migratory trails will work together to optimise their humanitarian action, including the restoration of family links. This requires a focus on situations and conditions in which migrants all along their journey are especially susceptible to risks. National Societies may sensitise potential migrants about risks of migration, but must not seek to encourage, prevent or dissuade migration.

⁷² IFRC Policy on Migration, 2009.

Human Trafficking

Trafficking in Persons is a global phenomenon, but its exact scale is difficult to quantify. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) suggests that any point in time, there are 20.9 million victims of trafficking worldwide.⁷³

At the regional level, the Asia-Pacific has also been recognised “as a significant source of trafficking in persons”, due to high levels of irregular migration, its porous land and sea borders and disparities in economic, employment and education opportunities.⁷⁴ It is important to recognise that although trafficking, labour migration, irregular migration and people smuggling can overlap, there are equally important distinctions between the phenomena.

Labour migration is movement for the purposes of employment. Often this is focused on cross-border movements, although there are important links with ‘internal labour migration’.

People smuggling is a sub-set of irregular migration. A common definition is that the “smuggling of migrants” shall mean the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.⁷⁵ Many people who wish to migrate and who cannot or choose not to use regular channels may rely on the assistance of others to migrate irregularly. Those who assist migrants may include friends or relatives, small-scale brokers, or groups associated with transnational organised crime. People smuggling can be for the purposes of employment, or not. Thus, people smuggling may intersect with labour migration, or it may not. For example, when seeking protection, refugees who are at risk in their home country may also utilise people smugglers to cross borders in order to gain access to safety and protection.

A number of different definitions of **Trafficking in Persons** exist in treaties and protocols developed by the United Nations and the International Labour Organization, as well as at the regional and national levels.⁷⁶

The 2000 UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children provides the following definition for trafficking in human beings:⁷⁷

Trafficking in persons shall mean “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat, use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, forced marriage slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs”.



In short, the definition contains three main elements:

1. **Action:** The recruitment, transportation, or receipt of persons
2. **Means:** Threat or use of force, coercion or deception; and
3. **Purpose:** Exploitation (e.g. sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or removal of organs)

Children⁷⁸ are defined as having been trafficked if they meet the first and third definition elements: e.g. Action and Purpose. It is not essential for to a child to have been forced, coerced or deceived in order to be defined as having been trafficked.

Although people smuggling and trafficking in persons may overlap, there are equally important distinctions. Critically, “trafficking in persons” is distinct from “people smuggling” in that it involves an element of exploitation (which may or may not be present in people smuggling) and the threat or use of force, coercion or deception (which may or may not be present in people smuggling). People who are smuggled into new countries may become victims of trafficking during transit or after arrival in a country of destination.⁷⁹

Trafficking trends vary widely across the Asia Pacific region, with most victims from South Asia trafficked for forced labour, and victims from East Asia and the Pacific trafficked for sexual exploitation. Data on human trafficking is widely debated and estimates are generally unreliable.⁸⁰

⁷³ IOM X is the International Organization for Migration’s (IOM) innovative campaign to encourage safe migration and public action to stop exploitation and human trafficking. For more information visit: <https://www.iom.int/iom-x>

⁷⁴ RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies, Consultative Roundtable on the Humanitarian Dimension and Protection Aspect of Trafficking in Persons, 26-27 June 2014.

⁷⁵ Article 3, Smuggling of Migrants Protocol supplementing the 2000 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Available at: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/intro/UNTOC.html>

⁷⁶ IFRC, European Migration Plan, 2018 referencing the European Red Cross Action for Trafficked Persons Network (ATN), a regional thematic which aims to contribute to the reduction of human trafficking and to the improvement of protection mechanisms for victims of trafficking. Although humanitarian concerns about trafficking not only pertain to the migration context, the ATN has significantly shifted its focus towards migration since 2015, due to the great importance of this issue within the European context. Available at: http://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/12/20171218_MigrationPlan_WEB.pdf

⁷⁷ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000.

⁷⁸ Pursuant to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the IFRC defines a child as a “human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. IFRC (2013) Child Protection Policy.

⁷⁹ IFRC and European Red Cross Action for Trafficked Persons Network (ATN) (2017) Action To Assist And Protect Trafficked Persons: Guidance for European Red Cross National Societies on Assistance and Protection to Victims of Human Trafficking

⁸⁰ Merry, S E, How big is the trafficking problem? The mysteries of quantification, Open Democracy, 26 January 2016: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/sally-engle-merry/how-big-is-trafficking-problem-mysteries-of-quantification>; Weitzer, R, Miscalculating Human Trafficking and Slavery, Open Democracy, 8 October 2014: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/ronald-weitzer/miscalculating-human-trafficking-and-slavery>; Mugge, D, 40.3 million slaves? Four reasons to question the new Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, Open Democracy, 17 October 2017: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/daniel-m-gge/403-million-slaves-four-reasons-to-question-new-global-estimates-of-modern>



Trafficking can be experienced by people of all genders and ages, and in a wide range of work sectors and other situations. Although a real and alarming issue, historically there has been disproportionate attention on trafficking into the sex industry. This attention to the sex industry is still high but is shifting to a more accurately proportional approach with trafficking also being recognised in a variety of other sectors.

Some forms of trafficking that exist in the Asia Pacific region include (inter alia):

1. Forced labour
2. Debt bondage
3. Trafficking for sexual exploitation
4. Child labour
5. Forced begging
6. Trafficking for organ removal
7. Forced marriage, including child marriage
8. Trafficking in domestic work
9. Child soldiers
10. Trafficking in fishing

In a study of women and men who were receiving post-trafficking assistance services in Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam, respondents reported having been trafficked into 15 different labour sectors. The three main forms of forced work, accounting for two thirds (67.2%) of respondents, were sex work (29.9%), fishing (25%) and factory work (12.3%). Among respondents under the age of 18, over half had been trafficked for sexual exploitation. Respondents also highlighted the violence that accompanies trafficking, with nearly half of adult men (49.3%) and most adult women (60%) reporting sexual and/or physical violence at the destination.

Migration and Trafficking in Times of Crisis

Since 2015, the needs of migrants, including migrant workers, in times of crisis has been increasingly on the international agenda – particularly as part of the ‘Migrants in Countries in Crisis’ initiative.⁸¹

Similarly, concerns have been raised about heightened risks of trafficking during and after disasters and crises. Since 2015, this has been on the agenda of the UN Security Council.

In 2015, the IFRC study ‘Unseen, Unheard: Gender-based violence in disasters’, found:

“Although interviewees in several countries said that trafficking was more likely after a disaster, they could identify very few specific cases, a finding consistent with some of the published academic research. [In the few specific cases] there seemed to be a lack of detail though as to whether people were actually trafficked or just moved into places [like Yangon]. It may well be that trafficking is occurring and that, because of its criminal and underground nature, researchers simply had no access to those who have been trafficked or who have been involved in trafficking. This implies that a range of organisations – women’s organisations, human rights groups, development actors – need to work together to address the needs, and support the recovery of those affected by disasters.”⁸²

It is widely acknowledged that evidence of and data on trafficking in the context of disasters and conflicts in the Asia Pacific region are relatively scarce.⁸³

Humanitarian concerns for people who have been trafficked

As with other migrant workers, people who have been trafficked may be subject to various forms of physical, sexual and emotional violence (including from authorities); fear of arrest, detention and deportation; fear of public authorities, as well as discrimination throughout any referral and support processes.

However, people who have been trafficked may also have specific fears and may be subject to particular treatment that migrant workers typically are not - including permanent control and/or monitoring, fear of physical retaliation, death, or reprisal against or harm to their loved ones.⁸⁴

⁸¹ See for instance: MICIC and IOM (2016) Integrating migrants in emergency preparedness, response and recovery in their host countries: Training Manual. MICIC (2016) Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disasters.

⁸² IFRC (2015) Unseen, Unheard: Gender-based violence in disasters, pp. 24-25

⁸³ Reuters (2017) Exclusive: \$6 for 38 days work: Child exploitation rife in Rohingya camps, 13 November: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-exploitation/exclusive-6-for-38-days-work-child-exploitation-rife-in-rohingya-camps-idUSKBN1DD05A>

⁸⁴ IFRC and European Red Cross Action for Trafficked Persons Network (ATN), Action To Assist And Protect Trafficked Persons: Guidance for European Red Cross National Societies on Assistance and Protection to Victims of Human Trafficking, 2017.

The Role of Asia Pacific National Societies in the context of Trafficking

The identification, support and treatment of people who have been trafficked varies widely in quality and consistency between and within countries. For many people who have been trafficked, knowing where to find help and safety, and having a referral is a critical factor in their protection⁸⁵ However, working with a survivor of trafficking before contacting the authorities is a crucial part of the work of Red Cross or Red Crescent National Societies who work in this area. Once someone has been identified as a victim of trafficking, and if there are no immediate risks to the person, they should be given time and space to consider their options. This will provide them the opportunity to make an informed decision about their options. Before contacting the authorities regarding a referral, you should obtain informed consent. In order to do this, the person must have capacity, it must be voluntary and informed.⁸⁶

Capacity: the person must be capable of giving consent, which means they understand the information given to them and they can use it to make an informed decision.

Voluntary: the decision to either consent or not consent must be made by the person themselves, and must not be influenced by pressure from any professionals or others.

Informed consent: the person must be given all the information available about why you are concerned about them, an explanation of support available to them and, crucially, what accepting this support would mean. This should include exploring the benefits and risks and the likelihood of both benefits and risks. In addition there should be a discussion about reasonable alternative options, to allow the person concerned to make a fully informed choice.

However, supporting people who have been trafficked is not always straightforward. Some trafficked people knowingly choose to stay in their situations, because they believe it is time-bound, or they are earning enough money to justify enduring the conditions. Some people may consider these situations preferable to the precarious living conditions they had left behind.

Furthermore, when assisting victims of trafficking it is important to be mindful of the fact that when authorities are alerted, people who have been trafficked may be removed from their workplace in an ‘anti-trafficking raid’, which may result in the person losing their livelihood. These raids may be dehumanising, demoralising and criminalising, and may take place without a follow-up plan for the workers and trafficked people affected. There are reports that anti-trafficking raids may result in physical or sexual abuse of the people who have been trafficked.⁸⁷ Authorities may detain or deport people who have been trafficked, or may impose penalties for immigration infringements. This may also happen at a pace that restricts access to justice.⁸⁸



Considerations for National Society Support in the Context of Trafficking

Addressing human trafficking is primarily the role and responsibility of relevant authorities.⁸⁹ The physical and psychological effects of trafficking on victims, and those who assist them, requires special attention and specialised support services. Even though National Societies may be in a privileged position to reach out to trafficked people, they may not always be best placed to initiate action in this arena. The IFRC’s and National Societies’ programmes need to be assessed according to the local context as well as considering the multi-lateral nature of protection for people who have been trafficked, and the work already being carried out by other stakeholders and partners, which National Societies may be able to complement.

The support provided by National Societies to migrants, including migrant workers, may increase the likelihood of encountering people who have been trafficked or are at risk of trafficking and in need of assistance. This may also occur in the context of post-disaster and post-crisis response and recovery efforts. National Societies should always uphold the humanitarian principle to ‘do no harm’. Where National Societies’ have safeguarding policies in place, these should be revised to include consideration for survivors of trafficking.

⁸⁵ See for instance, GAATW (2010) FPAR Series: <http://www.gaatw.org/resources/publications>. TWC2 (2017) Escaping from Ruthless Employer: Amzad gets help at every turn: <http://twc2.org.sg/2017/11/15/escaping-from-ruthless-employer-amzad-gets-help-at-every-turn/>
⁸⁶ See, for example, the British Red Cross’ support for survivors of trafficking and exploitation: <http://www.redcross.org.uk/What-we-do/Emergency-response/Modern-slavery-and-trafficking>
⁸⁷ Ahmed, A. and Seshu, M., “We have the right not to be ‘rescued’...”: When anti-trafficking programmes undermine the health and well-being of sex workers, Anti-Trafficking Review, Issue 1, 2012: <http://www.antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/28>; Ditmore, M. and Thukral, J., Accountability and the Use of Raids to Fight Trafficking. Anti-Trafficking Review, Issue 1, 2012: <http://www.antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/27>; Empower, Hit and Run: Sex workers’ research on anti-trafficking in Thailand, 2012: <http://www.nswp.org/sites/nswp.org/files/Hit%20and%20Run%20%20RATSW%20Eng%20online.pdf>
⁸⁸ R Napier-Moore, R, FAQ2: Smuggling and Trafficking Intersections, GAATW, 2011.

⁸⁹ OHCHR, Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking, 2002. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/publications/recommended-principles-and-guidelines-human-rights-and-human-trafficking_en



Trafficking-specific Programming by Asia Pacific National Societies

The **Maldivian Red Crescent** trained migrant volunteers to provide information to other migrants as part of an anti-trafficking programme. The information package delivered was developed with IOM and the Maldivian government, and included health prevention information as well as anti-trafficking messaging.

The **Australian Red Cross** 'Support for Trafficked People' programme provides intensive casework support to people identified by and referred to the Australian Federal Police as people suspected to have experienced trafficking, slavery or slavery-like practices which, under Australian law, includes servitude, forced labour, deceptive recruiting, debt bondage, and forced marriage. Support includes access to accommodation, financial assistance, legal and immigration advice, training and social services.

Programming Considerations for National Societies' work in the context of Trafficking

Types of Support that National Societies could consider in the context of Trafficking

National Societies may:

- Develop a basic understanding of **human trafficking referral mechanisms** in their country, as well as the positive and negative impacts of trafficked people being referred to various State or civil society bodies, and the primacy of the informed consent of the person who has been trafficked. When referring trafficked people to other agencies and organisations, Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement staff and volunteers should note that some trafficked people may have strong preferences to return to their countries of origin, rather than wait in destination countries for the completion of a - usually lengthy - criminal trial process. Under national law, there may be restrictions on their ability to work, and on where they can reside during the trial process, and there may not be witness protection systems in place.
- Play a role in **raising awareness of the risks of trafficking**, in providing assistance and protection to victims of trafficking, and in promoting improved identification and protection initiatives, as well as promoting the benefits of and pathways for 'safe migration'.⁹⁰ However, before undertaking any awareness-raising activities, National Societies must consider how they will respond to self-disclosures or incidents of identification.
- Consider providing **targeted and relevant 'safe migration' messaging** to those considering onward secondary movements.
- In the context of disaster and crisis response and recovery, offer protection and assistance through **provision of essential services** (such as health, psychosocial, and livelihood support), with attention given to gender, diversity,⁹¹ and child protection concerns, which may be effective in terms of trafficking prevention.⁹²
- Recognise the role that **livelihoods support** can play in preventing distressed migration and trafficking, and prioritise livelihoods projects for those most at risk, in crises and in countries of origin for labour migration.

⁹⁰ IFRC and European Red Cross Action for Trafficked Persons Network (ATN), Action To Assist And Protect Trafficked Persons: Guidance for European Red Cross National Societies on Assistance and Protection to Victims of Human Trafficking, 2017.

⁹¹ IFRC Strategic Framework on Gender and Diversity Issues 2013-2020; and IFRC Minimum Standard Commitments to Gender and Diversity in Programming, 2015.

⁹² Reuters, Exclusive: \$6 for 38 days work: Child exploitation rife in Rohingya camps, 13 November 2017: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-exploitation/exclusive-6-for-38-days-work-child-exploitation-rife-in-rohingya-camps-idUSKBN1DD05A>



Programming Principles: National Societies’ work in the context of Trafficking

When considering work in the context of trafficking, National Societies should consider the following general programming principles:

1. Decisions in determining appropriate activities for National Societies should be based on:
 - The needs and strengths of trafficked people
 - The capacities and capabilities of the National Society including skills, specialised knowledge, resources (e.g. access to trained interpreters) and psycho-social support expertise to assist both trafficked people, and National Society staff and volunteers.
2. National Societies should consider the specificities and the risks associated with work related to trafficking, the risks associated with not undertaking trafficking-related work in their specific local context:
 - Risks to staff and volunteers when working in an area unfamiliar to them
 - Risks to trafficked people from the ill-effects of otherwise well-meaning anti-trafficking projects
 - Security risks to staff and volunteers can be partly mitigated including through an emphasis on independence, neutrality and confidentiality and a clear distance and distinction from law enforcement authorities.
 - Risks of not taking any action in situations where there are no other actors in this field of work.

3. Assistance and support should only be provided with the trafficked person’s consent and on a free, prior and informed basis, with exceptions made in cases of safeguarding a child.⁹³
4. Assistance and support should be extended to all people who have been trafficked, and to survivors of attempted trafficking, without discrimination and irrespective of legal status.
5. National Societies should ensure that any interventions in the context of trafficking do not encourage or discourage migration.
6. Messaging, and all migration-related programming, should be neutral and humanitarian in focus. Messaging should avoid victimisation, and preserve the dignity of the individuals involved.
7. A sex-, gender-, and age-sensitive approach includes ensuring that assistance, messaging, and advocacy address sex- and gender-based discrimination and violence, and promote gender equality and the realisation of human rights for people of all genders and all ages.⁹⁴
8. National Societies should seek respect for the rights of trafficked people under international and domestic law.
9. IFRC and National Societies’ actions should always focus on assistance to and protection of the trafficked person (and the agency of the trafficked person themselves), not on prosecution of the perpetrator. National Societies should avoid engaging and cooperating in criminal investigations, prosecution or judicial cooperation.
10. National Societies should offer support services to help staff and volunteers deal with the impact of working with and supporting people at risk.⁹⁵
11. IFRC and National Societies’ staff, volunteers or members must not be involved in any way, shape or form in human trafficking or any exploitation or abuse.⁹⁶
12. The best interests of the child should guide all decisions regarding children. Because of their heightened vulnerabilities, unaccompanied and separated children require particular and urgent protection.⁹⁷
13. The humanitarian imperative of ‘doing no harm’, including to trafficked persons, should be respected and upheld at all times, with specific aims to ensure that:

- While being supported, trafficked peoples’ freedom of movement is not restricted, such as in ‘closed’ shelters.
- Assistance and support is not conditional on the individual’s cooperation in a criminal investigation
- Stigma is not created or enhanced in communities or families, through messaging, advocacy, or any programme.
- Trafficked people are not labelled as such if they do not wish to be.⁹⁸
- Assumptions should not be made about trafficked people wanting to return to, or being safe in, their communities and families of origin.⁹⁹
- The principle of non-refoulement must be observed.
- The decision of a trafficked person to refuse assistance is respected.
- A trafficked person should be referred for assessment of protection needs and other status determination.

⁹³ States Parties shall protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, Article 19 (UNCRC). Safeguarding children’s legislation, context and practice in countries the moment work in varies greatly, however the UNCRC 1989 should inform all National Societies work with children.

⁹⁴ UNODC, International Framework for Action to Implement the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. New York: UNODC, 2009.

⁹⁵ IFRC Migration Policy 2009, and IFRC Strategy on Violence Prevention, Mitigation and Response 2012-2020: <http://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/53475/IFRC%20SoV%20REPORT%202011%20EN.pdf>; Child Protection Action Plan 2015-2020 http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/principles/IFRC-Child-Protection-Action-Plan_2015-2020.pdf; and IFRC Strategic Framework on Gender and Diversity Issues 2013-2020. <http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Documents/Secretariat/201412/IFRC%20Strategic%20Framework%20on%20Gender%20and%20Diversity%20Issues-English.pdf>. Text drawn from IFRC and European Red Cross Action for Trafficked Persons Network (ATN), Action to Assist and Protect Trafficked Persons: Guidance for European Red Cross National Societies on assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking, 2017.

⁹⁶ Irrespective of the legal status of sex workers, the IFRC Code of Conduct is clear that no staff may pay for sex, but this does not preclude assisting sex workers (whether they are trafficked or not) as recipients of assistance, and as volunteers or members in the National Society. However, it should be noted that the presence of a National Society at a brothel is problematic due to the Code of Conduct.

⁹⁷ Adapted from IFRC Position Paper: Protection and assistance for Children on the Move, 2017.

⁹⁸ See for instance SEPOM & GAATW, ‘Trafficked’ Identities as a barrier to community reintegration: Five stories of women re-building lives and resisting categorisation, 2010. Available at: <http://www.gaaww.org/resources/publications/164-fpar-series/fpar-series/651-the-realities-and-agency-of-informal-sector-workers-the-account-of-migrant-women-workers-in-nairobi>.

⁹⁹ This is particularly pertinent in the context of the Movement’s work in ‘Restoring Family Links’. Sometimes traffickers are parents/relatives/friends of victims. Although family members may prompt the process of trafficking (e.g. by recommending their relative to someone else), they may not be aware that their loved ones will be trafficked. Before launching an RFL procedure, it is crucial to assess the individual needs of the trafficked person, and take into account the possible relationship to and/or dependence on the offender.



The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Humanity The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

**International Federation of
Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

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