

## COUNTER-TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS



## Overview

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender and works to alleviate human suffering, seek justice, and promote sustainable human transformation through humanitarian operations and long-term development programs in nearly 100 countries on six continents.

World Vision adopts an integrated and holistic transformational development approach to programming for the most vulnerable children, rooted in desire for wholeness of life for children, their families, and their communities. World Vision seeks to strengthen local and national protection systems—partnering with government, civil society, and community stakeholders so that they are empowered, coordinated, and working together to create a protective environment that cares for and supports all children.

## Counter-Trafficking in Persons

Since 2003, World Vision has been a global leader in the counter-trafficking space, with programs addressing trafficking in persons (TIP) and labor exploitation in over 20 countries funded by the U.S. Department of State (J/TIP), U.S. Department of Labor, UNICEF, DFAT, DFID/FCDO, the EC, and multiple private foundations.

World Vision works across the “Four Ps” (Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, and Partnership) to:

- build skills and resilience of vulnerable people and community systems and structures to reduce exposure and risk of trafficking
- equip service providers to provide trauma-informed, victim-centered services tailored to their diverse needs and support the long-term reintegration of survivors in their communities
- promote the implementation and enforcement of law by building the capacity of justice system actors to employ appropriate and sensitive engagement of victims in prosecution proceedings
- support collaboration for a comprehensive response to this crime by formal justice and social welfare stakeholders, civil society organizations, and other protection partners

## Institutional strengths

**Sustainable systems strengthening:** Long-term sustainable change, including government and community ownership and leadership of counter-trafficking approaches, is a critical aspect of our work. Therefore, World Vision leverages long-term relationships and partnerships with national Ministries of Social Welfare, Labor, Health, Education and Justice as well as local social welfare actors, hospitals, schools, community leaders, faith communities, and law enforcement agencies to influence policy reform and implementation of counter-trafficking efforts to ensure sustainable results.

**Cross-border coordination:** World Vision’s operational presence in almost 100 countries worldwide allows for inter-country coordination on trafficking identification, reporting, referral, repatriation and reintegration. For example, through multi-country and cross-border counter-trafficking and migrant protection programs in the Mekong Delta

### THE FACTS

- » **Global estimates indicate that 49.6 million people are in modern slavery on any given day—1 in 4 of them children**

*ILO Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, September 2022*

- » **Child labor affects nearly 138 million children worldwide; 54 million of them are involved in hazardous work**

*ILO, UNICEF, Child Labour Global Estimates 2024, June 2025*

- » **Women and girls comprise over half of those in modern slavery, at 26.7 million (11.8 million in forced labor and 14.9 million in forced marriage)**

*ILO Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, September 2022*

- » **It's estimated that some \$236 billion per year profit is made by criminals who exploit trafficked victims for both sexual and economic purposes**

*ILO, Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour, March 2024*

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(Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia), Haiti-Dominican Republic, Venezuela-Columbia, and India-Bangladesh, World Vision successfully promoted trafficking laws, migrant rights and reporting mechanisms with migrant and displaced populations, and facilitated cross-border case coordination, repatriation, and reintegration of numerous victims across the migration cycle.

**Community based prevention, protection, and reintegration:** Leveraging our multi-sectoral, community-based programming in health, education, livelihoods development, and protection systems strengthening, World Vision advances last mile solutions for vulnerable populations where they live. Local community engagement allows for the promotion of improved early identification and response, risk mitigation with highly vulnerable groups, and more effective, coordinated, and responsive local victim assistance and reintegration services.

**Survivor-informed programming:** World Vision works to ensure that the lived experiences of survivors and vulnerable populations are actively sought and incorporated across the programming life cycle. During design; implementation; and monitoring, evaluation and learning, World Vision seeks the input and participation of vulnerable populations to inform relevant, contextualized interventions to TIP. For example, in Myanmar, Guatemala, and Bosnia, World Vision implemented Survivor Informed Prosecution Training, soliciting direct survivor inputs into development of training and practical tools for justice stakeholders based on survivors’ own lived experiences with the justice system.



Agricultural workers receive information on worker rights and protection in Mexico.

**Private Sector Engagement:** Acknowledging the role of the private sector in combating TIP, World Vision partners with large and small employers, suppliers, cooperatives, worker organizations, and third parties to advance improved worker rights as access to justice and remediation. Across construction, agriculture, mining, hospitality, telecommunications and other sectors, World Vision has partnered with private sector actors to advance the development of voluntary codes of conduct for producers, improved accountability through coordination with labor inspectorates, worker associations, and community protection committees, and has promoted occupational safety and health, fair wages, and mechanisms for reporting exploitation in the workplace.

## Selected current and recent projects

**Mongolia:** World Vision is partnering with the government of Mongolia and U.S. Department of State to implement the Mongolia Child Protection Compact (CPC) project. The project addresses all four of the U.S. Department of State’s programming objectives—interagency coordination and collaboration, prosecution, protection, and prevention. The project’s goal is to increase capacity and collaboration of the government, civil society, and private sector stakeholders to strengthen Mongolia’s efforts to effectively prosecute and convict child traffickers with a victim-centered approach, provide comprehensive trauma-informed care for child victims of trafficking (VOTs), and prevent child trafficking in all its forms. The project is targeted at building the capacity of national and local government, civil society, and private sector stakeholders engaged in counter-trafficking and child protection activities. To date, 67 unique victims have received



Five child-friendly spaces were established through the CPC project and over 100 police staff have received training based on the developed guidelines.

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care (physical accommodations, food, counseling, basic health care, etc.) in short-term victim protection shelters. In addition, 39 Smart Navigator (SN) and 45 Voice Up for Change (VUFC) children and youth clubs were established at schools to provide age-appropriate life skills and protective skills training. There are a total of 2,288 (837 M, 1,45 F) children who are now participating in SN and VUFC youth clubs in 39 schools and 19 TVETs (Technical Vocational Education Training Centers) in Ulaanbaatar.

**Philippines and Vietnam:** World Vision implemented the multi-country U.S. Department of Labor-funded Against Child Exploitation (ACE) project in the Philippines and Vietnam to strengthen the capacity of the government to address the worst forms of child labor (WFCL), including online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC), and violations of acceptable conditions of work. The project offered a process to develop country-specific and regional strategies to combat WFCL and OSEC that are informed by key stakeholders and resolve issues of leadership and coordination at all administrative levels of the child protection system. This was done through enabling a mapping and planning process with these stakeholders that led to the development of action plans in line with national policies, and provided technical assistance for stakeholders to implement these plans. Over 800 service providers completed trainings on addressing WFCL, including OSEC; 22 action plans and policies both at the national and local level were formulated, approved, and adopted to address the WFCL including OSEC violations of Acceptable Conditions of Work (ACW); and 46 community-led awareness raising activities were conducted on the existing services and programs for victims of WFCL, including OSEC.

**Thailand:** In Thailand, World Vision was an implementing partner on the Counter Trafficking in Persons Thailand Project led by Winrock International to deepen and strengthen evidence-based approaches to policy advocacy. The project instituted a two-way learning process from province to national level to improve migration management governance, migrant participation in the labor protection system, and policy implementation at the frontline practitioner level (law enforcement, labor inspectors, CSO staff, provincial social development, and social service workforce). In 2023, under the Thailand CTIP Phase II implementation, World Vision trained 33 practitioners on response and reintegration of human trafficking victims, and identified 261 participants as members of the project-supported ATIP (Anti-Trafficking in Persons) network.

**Armenia:** Through the U.S. Department of State-funded Together Against Trafficking in Persons (TATiP) project, World Vision worked in Armenia to develop and enhance the capacity of government agencies and actors to properly identify and adequately support trafficking survivors through improved policy, capacity, and coordination. World Vision partnered with the Armenian Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) and the Health and Labor Inspection Body (HLIB) to standardize identification and response protocols to improve quality of survivor support, while building the capacity of both formal and informal legal, health, and social welfare service providers to ensure timely and coordinated survivor-centered services and care. The project conducted trainings for 47 HLIB labor inspectors as first responders on forced and compulsory labor victim identification, which resulted in identification of 40 potential victims in the first six months following the training.



The "Together Against Trafficking in Persons" Project conducted TIP trainings for 47 labor inspectors of all regions of Armenia.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina:** From 2020-2023, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, World Vision's Enhance National and Local Capacities to Combat Trafficking in Persons project worked in close partnership with the national Office of the State Coordinator for Combating Human Trafficking to build government and local capacity to respond to trafficking in persons at all levels through improved protection, prevention, and prosecution. With support from the U.S. Department of State, the project worked with government and local institutions to ensure that anti-trafficking efforts were embedded in the work of those institutions, while sensitizing the public to traditional cultural practices and broader social norms/attitudes which unintentionally condone some forms of trafficking. This project established 30 operational protection groups (local referral mechanisms) for survivors of trafficking in

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local municipalities, and developed tools, training curricula, and guidance for adhering to national reporting and referral protocols for TIP cases.



Center for social welfare representatives from Canton Sarajevo regularly interview vulnerable populations

**Guatemala:** From 2018-2021, the Guatemala Anti-Trafficking in Persons (GATIP) project worked to improve the quality of victim-centered trafficking investigations by strengthening public institution coordination and supporting survivor-informed, victim-centered law enforcement, operations, and criminal justice proceedings. The project worked with service providers in two shelters and assisted 340 children and adolescents. GATIP also worked with the Secretariat against Sexual Violence, Exploitation, and Trafficking in Persons (SVET) to update official guides on the identification and referral of victims of trafficking in persons and to create an interactive virtual course on trafficking in persons for adolescents, and with the judicial system to produce protocols and training curricula on care for survivors of trafficking in persons and dignified and transformative reparation. Over the life of the award, the project trained 520 judges and magistrates.

**Myanmar:** The U.S. Department of State-funded Anti-Trafficking in Persons (ATIP) Project in Myanmar Phase II (2019-2022) was a follow-on to the original Burma ATIP Project that ended January 30, 2019. The goal of Phase II was to strengthen the support of comprehensive reintegration services for trafficking victims through coordinated local, national, and regional approaches. The project worked toward this goal by assisting over 300 survivors of trafficking to return from Thailand to Myanmar, training over 100 case managers and service providers, equipping survivors with livelihood assistance, and other reintegration support.

