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Together We Can End Human Trafficking



WINROCK
INTERNATIONAL

Country:
Bangladesh; 32 Districts

Program Dates:
2008 - 2012

Program Division:
Empowerment & Civic
Engagement

Actions for Combating Trafficking-in-Persons (ACT)

Human trafficking takes several forms and has many faces. Its scope includes the exploitation of men, women and children into bonded or abusive labor or the commercial sex trade. Trafficking violates the human rights of its victims, damages lives, feeds corruption, exacts an economic toll on governments and taxpayers, and harms society at all levels.

The four-year Actions for Combating Trafficking-in-Persons (ACT) Program, implemented by Winrock International, connects local and national government representatives, non-governmental organizations, and citizens and community leaders to spearhead an effort to prevent trafficking-in-persons, protect and reverse damages to survivors, prosecute crimes of perpetrators, and engage all layers of society as change agents in curbing trafficking. The ACT Program works collaboratively to:



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- empower survivors of trafficking and those at-risk for trafficking;
- provide viable economic alternatives to unsafe internal and cross-border migration;
- expand public awareness and participation in prevention efforts and crime reduction;
- build the capacity of government institutions to identify and prosecute perpetrators; and
- eliminate social and gender biases that undermine basic human rights and help perpetuate trafficking.

Prevention activities focus on working with local non-government groups on public awareness initiatives in rural and semi-urban areas. ACT strives to expand the role of teachers, students, and community and local leaders as activists and role models for disseminating messages focused on equality and human rights, safe migration and employment practices, and stigmatizing perpetrators instead of victims.



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ACT outreach and public education efforts also expand the focus of anti-trafficking to include not only sexual exploitation of women and children but also labor migration abuses and victimization of men.

Protection activities feature comprehensive services to assist approximately 500 victims per year using a victim-centered approach to:

- identify trafficking victims whether in shelters or in communities;
- individually assess needs and provide an array of services in shelters and integrated into homes and village or city life;
- provide life skills and livelihood vocational programs and assistance in securing employment or creating a business; and
- create models and opportunities for reintegration in communities or for leading an independent new life without the risk of re-trafficking.



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Prosecution activities involve coordinated advocacy work among activists and with media, coupled with specific training for key government officials and law enforcement agents. Advocacy efforts focus on expanding government oversight, improving arrest and prosecution, and building government capacity to monitor labor recruitment agencies and prosecute malpractices. Working in collaboration with leading anti-trafficking and migrant rights organizations, ACT helps:

- develop and implement an advocacy agenda to improve enforcement of existing laws, policies and practices;
- pursue policy dialogue and legal reform to better address trafficking at the national and local government levels;
- enhance prosecutorial capacity of law enforcement agents and lawyers; and
- expand the legal framework to encompass the emerging issue of labor migration abuses.

Through the coordinated efforts of government and non-government actors, civic leaders and citizens at all levels, the ACT Program contributes to the abolition of human trafficking in Bangladesh.



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