



CARAM Asia

COORDINATION OF ACTION RESEARCH ON AIDS AND MOBILITY IN ASIA

2023 CARAM ASIA ANNUAL REPORT



+603 22827708



<http://caram-asia.org>



info@caram-asia.org











**ROBERT
CARR
FUND** For civil
society
networks

The CARAM Asia Project is funded by the Robert Carr Fund (RCF) for Civil Society Networks



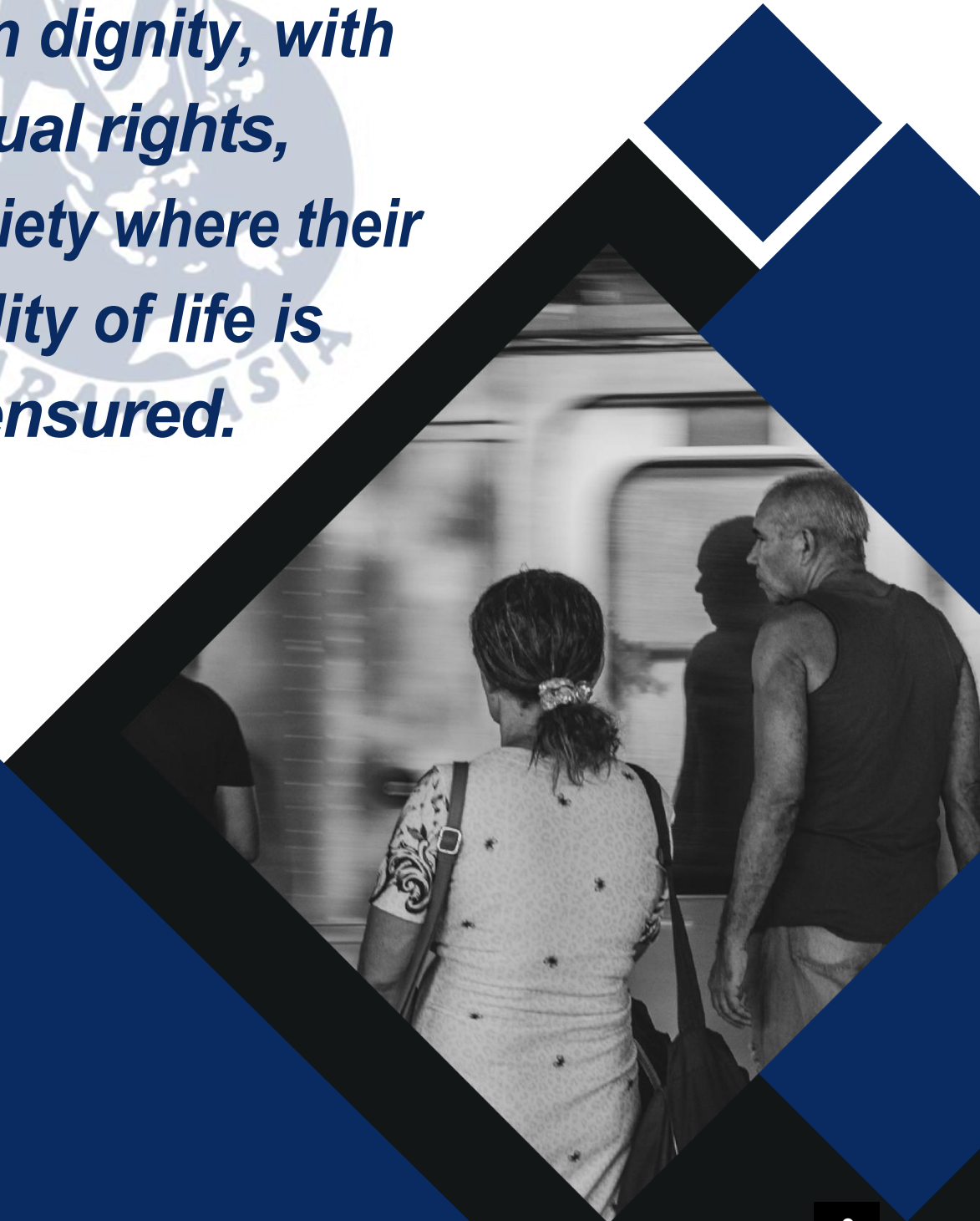
Table Of Content

1.0	Introduction.....	04
2.0	CARAM Asia Major Progression and Achievement in 2023.....	07
3.0	Task Force on Migration, Health, HIV and Well-being (MHH).....	12
	 CARAM Asia Project: Prevention & Advocacy on Migrant's HIV Issues, Enhancing Access to Health Services and Promoting HIV Positive Migrant's Rights in Asia (2022-2024).....	12
	 Project Activities.....	13
	 1.0 Advocacy.....	13
	 2.0 Awareness Raising on HIV Prevention among Migrant Workers.....	18
	 3.0 Enhancing Access to Services for Migrant Workers.....	23
	 4.0 Capacity Building of Partners, Stakeholders and Communities.....	27
	 5.0 Research.....	32
	 6.0 Organizational Strengthening.....	35
4.0	Task Force on Migrant Workers Rights (MWR).....	38
5.0	Task Force on Migration, Development and Globalization (MDG).....	42
6.0	Task Force on Migration, Climate Change and Humanitarian Crisis (MCCHC).....	45
7.0	References.....	50



CARAM Asia Vision

All people have the right to settle or migrate, and live and work in dignity, with equal rights, in a society where their quality of life is ensured.



1.0 Introduction



Migration is a global phenomenon, and part of human history. In many regions of the world, including Asia, migration occurs as a reaction to disparities and global inequalities, such as income differences and quality of life between countries (The World Bank, 2023). Furthermore, economic migration occurs due to various push and pull factors. The major push factors are related to poor labour standards, high unemployment, poverty, political unrest, and the overall health of a country's economy. The pull factors mainly include higher wages, better employment opportunities, and labour demand in receiving countries. Labour migration contributes to the economic development of migrant worker's sending and receiving countries across the world. It is undeniable that migrants from major sending countries in Asia such as Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Thailand contribute significantly to the countries' economy through remittance. Migrant workers fill sector-specific workforce shortage in receiving countries such as in construction, agriculture, services, and domestic sectors which locals have abandoned. By working in these sectors migrant workers not only support their families back home, and escape poverty, unemployment, and political instability in sending countries but also fill the gap in receiving countries. Though migrant workers contribute significantly to the development of sending and receiving countries; unfortunately, rather than taking a rights-based approach, governments at both ends commonly treat migrant workers as commodities without consideration of their fundamental human rights, labour, and health rights which make them vulnerable for violation of their rights, violence, abuse, exploitation. Moreover, the factors involved in migration process such as isolation, single entry visa, not allowed to marry in receiving countries, not allowed to bring spouses along and isolation in a foreign country put them at risk of HIV & AIDS, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) issues with largely lack of access to health information and services and criminalization (arrest, detention, and deportation) in case of getting infected with HIV, STIs and many other infections including pregnancy for women.

Globally, there are an estimated 281 million international migrants in 2020, with around 187 million attributed to labor migration (IOM, 2022) who have crossed borders to find work and improve their lives, of which, just under half are women. In Asian region, 106 million of the world's migrants were born in Asia, approximately 83 million people have migrated and have been a significant source of fulfilling labor migration, with South Asia accounting for 29.9 million migrants, Southeast Asia comprising 23.6 million, and East Asia consists of 13.7 million migrants (IOM, 2022). Likewise, a significant rise in new migrant workers in Asia, with 4.6 million in 2022 compared to and 2.2 million in 2021 (Seno, 2023), underscoring the pivotal role in global and Asia migration trends. As the number continues to rise, so does their vulnerability to labor and health rights' violations, despite the inextricable link between these rights for migrant workers and non-migrant workers.



Due to the persistent ignorance of labor rights violations against migrant workers over the years, migrant workers keep facing exploitative working conditions, including long working hours and unsafe environments, irregular wage payments, contract breaches upon reaching receiving countries, etc. This violation is attributed to the lack of effective national policies and implementation of existing policies, discriminatory practices by employers, and lack of labor rights awareness among migrant workers. Although incidences of labor rights violations have been persistently highlighted, the health rights of migrant workers are also being violated as mentioned above. The discriminatory health screening policies in receiving countries have led to a lack of access to healthcare, by excluding them from the national healthcare system, lead to criminalization, and denial from employment opportunities based on health conditions such as being HIV-positive, affecting those from challenging backgrounds with limited education, skills and lack of awareness on prevention of HIV & AIDS, SRHR issues and other preventable health conditions.

By looking at the situation and to address migrant worker's health rights at regional level with the focus on HIV & AIDS and SRHR issues, and labour rights with focus on women migrant workers mostly working as migrant domestic workers, Coordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility (CARAM Asia) started working in 1997. CARAM Asia is a regional network of 42 member organizations from 18 sending and receiving countries across Asia and the Middle East. CARAM Asia is a not for profit and Non-Government Organization (NGO), with its Secretariat based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (UN). CARAM Asia was set up in response to the above-mentioned growing global phenomenon of migration. The network is committed to educate, promote and protect migrant's labor and health rights with a focus on HIV/AIDS, SRHR issues and women migrant's rights. To date, CARAM Asia positioned itself as one of the leading organizations within the field of migration and health in Asia.

In order to address migrant worker's vulnerabilities, promote and protect their rights, CARAM Asia implements its strategic plan outlines five key strategic areas aimed at enhancing protection for migrant workers in Asian countries. These include undertaking participatory action research (PAR) and related activities to generate and disseminate knowledge for the advancement of migrant workers' rights, engaging in advocacy efforts at national, regional, and international levels, implementing capacity building initiatives tailored to the needs of stakeholders such as migrant workers, civil society organizations (CSOs), and networks for People Living with HIV (PLHIV), conducting media campaigns and publicity initiatives to raise awareness and support for migrant workers' rights, and facilitating access to justice and access to services for migrant workers, including free legal aid and health services, through the establishment of effective counselling and referral mechanisms including rescue services in case of need.



To implement the strategic plan, CARAM Asia has established four Task Forces (TFs) based on its membership that align with four main thematic areas. TF-1: The Migration, Health, HIV and Well-Being (MHH) was developed to promote the health rights of migrants through reforms of discriminatory policies and equity in provision and access to health services, including SRH and HIV/ AIDS. Under the MHH component, CARAM Asia is focusing to address the issues related to stigma and discrimination associated with HIV and People Living with HIV (PLHIV), HIV testing for migrants, access to treatment for HIV positive migrants, mental health of migrants, SRHR of migrants and policy provisions in relevant government programme. TF 2: Migrant Workers Rights (MWR) was initiated in response to the absence of legal protections, rights to redress, and access to justice for migrant workers as they frequently endure abuse, exploitation, and discrimination, exacerbated by the perception as a temporary, cheap labor force to fulfill the demands of destination countries. The focus issues include women migrant workers, particularly domestic workers, access to justice and legal frameworks, and the plight of undocumented migrant workers, with a focus on addressing modern-day slavery. TF 3: Migration, Development and Globalization (MDG) was initiated to bridge gaps in migration and development discussions by addressing the impact of globalization on migrant workers' labour and health rights. As migration is a global phenomena and heavily influenced by neo-liberal policies, it is affecting migrant workers' rights and well-being. TF 4: Migration, Climate Change and Humanitarian Crisis (MCCHC) was developed as a result of the increasing number of climate migrants, which were displaced due to climate or weather-related disasters. MCCHC TF is aiming to understand and provide input from the perspective of migration, climate change and humanitarian crisis. Each TF has its own set of objectives and specific key issues to be addressed and will be discussed in the following sections.



2.0 CARAM Asia Major Progression and Achievement in 2023



CARAM Asia, alongside its implementing partners in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East, has been working extensively for its ongoing project titled **"Prevention & Advocacy on Migrant's HIV Issues, Enhancing Access to Health Services and Promoting HIV Positive Migrant's Rights in Asia"**. CARAM Asia progress and accomplishments thus far are a result of continuous financial support by the **Robert Carr Fund (RCF) for Civil Society Networks**, an organization supporting the civil society networks in addressing HIV/AIDS and related concerns on both global and regional scales. RCF supports CARAM Asia in strengthening the capacity to advocate effectively for the rights and well-being of migrants affected by HIV/AIDS, in line with its purpose to empower inadequately served populations (ISPs) and CSOs to play pivotal roles in the global response to HIV/AIDS. RCF's financial support to CARAM Asia spanning the current 2022-2024 funding cycle and a few preceding funding cycles dedicated to project implementation, has been instrumental in enabling CARAM Asia to contribute to RCF's goal of improving health, inclusion and well-being for ISPs. Likewise, these achievements also be attributed to the dedication of CARAM Asia's project partners including SPEAK Trust from Pakistan, Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Programme (OKUP) from Bangladesh, Community Development Services (CDS) from Sri Lanka, POURAKHI from Nepal, Action for Health Initiatives (ACHIEVE) from the Philippines, North South Initiative (NSI) from Malaysia, and Migration Services and Development (MSD) from Lebanon.

CARAM Asia has demonstrated remarkable progress with key stakeholders in **Pakistan** as its partner, SPEAK Trust has continued to work on the priority areas that were identified during the 2022 national level stakeholder consultation for maintaining data and streamlining deportation process of HIV-positive deported migrants at Pakistan airport. Currently, Pakistan has made progresses in advancing policies to safeguard migrants' human and labor rights. However, health rights have not received adequate attention, significantly impacting the health and well-being of migrant workers, including their susceptibility to HIV throughout the migration cycle. To prevent the transmission of HIV within communities and to provide essential supports, including point of contact for medical and psychosocial services to deported migrants, a referral mechanism was initiated at Pakistan's airport. The development of terms of references (ToRs) for the proposed technical working group (TWG) members in 2022, and a draft of a referral mechanism framework marks the significant progress in streamlining the deportation process of HIV-Positive deported migrant workers to provide them with voluntary HIV testing services and ensure they are referred to appropriate health services they need at international airport. These efforts were achieved through several advocacy meetings with various stakeholders as they were sensitized and apprised about the next process and contribute to the subsequent actions.



CARAM Asia, through its project partners SPEAK Trust, has again made notable strides in advocating for curriculum amendment & stigma eradication surrounding HIV/AIDS by including the HIV de-stigmatization chapter in nursing curriculum in Pakistan. Research-based evidence showed that PLHIV often face stigma and discrimination from healthcare providers in health care settings, including negative attitudes due to misconceptions, fear of contagion, inadequate training and education of the providers, etc. This advocacy effort aimed to bridge the gap between knowledge and practical application of stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings by introducing a chapter of de-stigmatization of HIV/AIDS in nursing curriculum. A concept note and the drafted chapter were presented to the Vice President of the Pakistan Nursing Council (PNC). This effort successfully resulted in the official addition of the proposal for chapter inclusion to the agenda of the Pakistan Nursing and Midwifery Council meeting and the council members are proposing a study on HIV stigma in healthcare settings to support the integration of the chapter into nursing curricula in Pakistan.

Likewise, CARAM Asia has also demonstrated effective policy advocacy in **Nepal** by supporting POURAKHI in reviewing existing policies related to migrant issues in 2023. POURAKHI recognized the critical role of policy reviews in prioritizing migrants' health issues, essential for effective policy advocacy, which can be achieved through a clear documentation of major policy gaps in Nepal. Through a review, POURAKHI has identified that Nepal's legal framework such as Nepal's constitution of 2072 aims to regulate foreign employment and protect workers' rights, but health challenges abroad continue to be persistent issues due to inadequate provisions for insurance, treatment costs, etc. The government has overlooked migrant's health issues, and agreements with destination countries lacked implementation, resulting in a high number of annual workers fatalities. To address these issues, POURAKHI recommended the health examinations for returning workers, inclusion of health support in local government laws, and prioritization of mental health and tailored policies in Nepal. Government efforts are needed to address HIV/AIDS transmission, provide orientation training, and ensure bilateral agreements cover labor migration issues comprehensively. Following the review and recommendations, POURAKHI organized a session with media professionals to share insights from a policy review, resulting in a successful publication of national-level news articles highlighting the need for policy reform. The initiation of policy and law reform catalyzed by stakeholder engagement aimed to create a platform to document the implementation challenges related to foreign employment and migrant workers' well-being. This is considered as a major progression for CARAM Asia works in Nepal by POURAKHI as the findings will serve as a platform to develop further concrete advocacy action plan in 2024 with key stakeholders in Nepal, aiming to address the gaps and community mobilization within local governance structures.



In **Lebanon**, migrant workers face a range of human rights abuses, including denial of healthcare access, exacerbated by the economic crisis and the "kafala" sponsorship system, which establishes a legal and economic dependency of migrant workers on employers, exposes them to a multitude of dangers such as exploitative labor circumstances (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Recognizing this issue, extensive meetings were successfully coordinated between MSD, CARAM Asia project partners and foreign embassies/consulates in Lebanon to establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on working together to promote migrant rights. The SOPs distribution and endorsement by the embassies of Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, and Madagascar formalizes their commitment to cooperation. This achievement sets the stage for further diplomatic efforts, with more embassies/consulates expected to sign the SOPs in early 2024, ensuring a unified approach to enhancing migrants' rights in Lebanon. However, this effort required a lengthy process. Migrant workers continue to encounter hurdles in accessing healthcare, relying on expensive private options due to public system failures in Lebanon, often unaffordable to them. Many struggle to access basic health services, compounded by HIV/AIDS stigma, with a study by Lebanese Organization for Development (LOD) indicating 75% lacked adequate knowledge on prevention and treatment. Therefore, CARAM Asia through MSD continued to provide crucial medical assistance in 2023, focusing on HIV-affected migrant workers and extending support to prisoners and detainees. Despite facing obstacles, efforts were made to enable access to prisons, resulting in 37 medical interventions and 27 HIV/AIDS awareness sessions provided for migrants from various backgrounds, marked a continued increase compared to 2023. The significant participation in these sessions, within and outside detention centers, underscores the positive impact on migrant communities.

Sri Lanka's economic crisis threatened its HIV epidemic response, causing rising costs, procurement issues, and destabilized HIV prevention and care programs. By the end of 2022, the HIV cases in Sri Lanka rose to 609 from 439 in 2019, with a significant increase in transmissions among men who have sex with men (MSM), accounting for 56% of new infections in 2019, up from 4.5% in 2000. CARAM Asia project partner, CDS extended CARAM Asia dedicated efforts to educate unique community groups with lack of HIV/AIDS prevention awareness in Sri Lanka by effectively implementing compelling strategies. Forum theater on HIV/AIDS prevention for prospective migrants in technical colleges empowered 1360 young people with knowledge to protect themselves against HIV, based on their thoughts after the event. As potential migrants, students gained knowledge on HIV transmission, prevention, and treatment, the risks of unsafe migration, how to migrate safely, and began to emphasize the importance of not stigmatizing PLHIV. As the number of HIV-positive migrants keep increasing every year, CDS has again continued expanding more HIV & AIDS educational awareness activities to various communities by conducting 18 workshops to a total of 404 beneficiaries. The participants expressed the sessions were enlightening and engaging, with the content covering novel and informative topics. Insights were gained into the medical tests conducted prior to migration and learned about their rights concerning these tests, marking a valuable achievement in their knowledge and awareness.



In the **Philippines** under CARAM Asia project, there was a case concerning a migrant worker who was pressured by the clinic into undergoing a HIV test as part of his Pre-Employment Medical Examination (PEME), despite the fact that Hong Kong does not mandate HIV testing for entry. CARAM Asia's legal assistance program through a project partner, ACHIEVE, supported migrant workers' rights, who was forced to undergo HIV tests and improper disclosure of HIV status at the diagnostic center. ACHIEVE successfully assisted the clinic in developing the "HIV Workplace Policy" and all the clinic staff underwent an orientation on HIV and the laws as a corrective action, as they finally acknowledged the wrong treatments given to the client, which was referred to ACHIEVE. Also, following the enactment of the HIV&AIDS Policy Act of 2018, ACHIEVE, the CARAM Asia project, was reappointed by the President of the Philippines to advocate for migrant workers at the Philippine National AIDS Council (PNAC) from 2020 to 2023 as stipulated by the act. ACHIEVE has again strengthened ties with CBOs and government agencies, including the Department of Migrant Workers, continue to serve as a CSO delegate to the PNAC to represent migrant workers and successfully integrating migrants' concerns into key documents like the AIDS Medium Term Plan (AMTP) and Human Rights Road-map such as the amendment to the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the HIV and AIDS Policy Act. Despite challenges, ACHIEVE and CSO members promoted community engagement in the HIV response and significantly contributed to the Philippine Migrant Health Network's (PMHN) strategic plan. This represents a continuous progression of advocacy efforts in the Philippines to ensure the rights and well-being of migrant workers are incorporate into discussion and planning.

CARAM Asia also achieved several accomplishments in **Bangladesh** with notable one being the successful completion of another PAR on migration, health and HIV vulnerability issues titled "Health of Bangladeshi Migrant Workers: A cost analysis from a social and economic perspective". The research was prompted by the recognition that insufficient attention by duty bearers such as governments, employers, employment agencies, and healthcare providers, compromises migrant workers' access to necessary treatment and influenced by various factors both in Bangladesh and receiving countries. Aligned with CARAM Asia's core initiative to conduct a PAR for the integration of migrants' perspectives, OKUP, CARAM Asia project partner in Bangladesh, has spearheaded this research to assess the health complications throughout different phases of migration cycle, understanding healthcare disparities, analyzing social and economic costs, and exploring policy and institutional gaps that hinder the provision of adequate healthcare services to migrant workers. The outcomes indicated that migration imposes significant social and economic costs on migrant workers. Socially, separation from families and hostile environments can cause distress and depression, especially when combined with financial losses and gender-based discrimination, which worsen psychosocial issues. Economically, the initial costs of migration, payment issues, and the unpredictability of remittances put a tremendous strain on one's finances. Return costs and reintegration challenges further burden workers. These factors collectively undermine migrant health and well-being, necessitating comprehensive support and policy interventions. The research outcomes enabled CARAM Asia to



generate further evidence in support of the rights of MWs for future advocacy and awareness raising. PAR findings also provide valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders to address the urgent health needs of this vulnerable population and shed light on the considerable economic and social costs that Bangladeshi migrant workers faced in terms of their health, including HIV/AIDS vulnerability.

Malaysia is among at least 31 countries that deport migrants based on their HIV status. These deportations pose significant challenges for migrants in accessing healthcare, particularly HIV services, as they may be returned to countries where they face persecution, inadequate healthcare, or other serious human rights violations. Therefore, this year marked a notable achievement as CARAM Asia has successfully established a Community Migrant Health RESQ Team in Malaysia, operated by North South Initiative (NSI). The team is known as an emergency response team, addresses migrants' emergencies issues related to HIV/AIDS, accompany deported migrants through referral processes in sending countries, ensures access to proper health information, treatment, and offers invaluable emotional support for distressed migrants. In the first implementation year, six successful interventions has helped clients access treatment despite documentation issues, language barriers, or stigma. Through the RESQ team, the Comprehensive HIV Services for Migrants in Malaysia (CHSM) and Continuity in CCHSM Program were established, piloted in Klang and Surabaya respectively to provide comprehensive health services and support for migrant communities for further treatment. In 2023, out of 246 clients tested, 44 tested positive for HIV (17.89%). Of these, 34 received treatment, with 5 of them achieving viral suppression. The CHSM program's recognition by the government has led to the acknowledgment of its potential as an alternative solution to manage migrant's health issues, resulting in the waiver of hospital fees for ResQ Team clients, subsidized through a partnership with a local clinics.



CARAM Asia Project Partners across Asia

3.0 Task Force on Migration, Health, HIV and Well-being (MHH)



Migrant workers face unique challenges on health due to various migration factors such as discriminatory or lack of inclusive health policies, migration documentation status, language barriers, poor living conditions, and limited access to healthcare services. In addition, migrant workers often face neglect of their health and well-being throughout the migration cycle by both sending and receiving governments. MHH program through a regional project in seven Asian countries advocates for policy reforms, eliminating discriminating labor and health policies, ensuring equitable healthcare access, with a focus on HIV/AIDS and SRH care, supports undocumented migrant workers and those facing deportation due to health issues and empowering migrants living with HIV and their spouses, and encouraging active involvement in program development and policy advocacy to ensure their needs and rights are met.

CARAM Asia Project under MHH TF: Prevention & Advocacy on Migrant's HIV Issues, Enhancing Access to Health Services and Promoting HIV Positive Migrant's Rights in Asia (2022-2024)



CARAM Asia Project under MHH TF is Funded by the Robert Carr Fund (RCF) for Civil Society Networks

As mentioned above, CARAM Asia is presently working on a regional project titled “**Prevention & Advocacy on Migrant's HIV Issues, Enhancing Access to Health Services and Promoting HIV-Positive Migrant's Rights in Asia**”, funded by the **RCF for Civil Society Networks** to promote and protect migrant workers' health rights, concerning HIV/AIDS and SRHR issues, address stigma and discrimination against HIV-positive migrant workers, enhance their access to health services, and advocate for their health rights. CARAM Asia aims to create a more inclusive environment for HIV-positive migrant workers by collaborating with local stakeholders, raising awareness, and influencing policy changes that prioritize migrant workers' health and well-being. The member organizations from three Asian sub-regions—OKUP, SPEAK Trust, CDS and POURAKHI from South Asia, ACHIEVE and NSI from Southeast Asia, and MSD from the Middle East—remained engaged in this significant collaboration with CARAM Asia, leading to successful implementation of a wide range of project activities, achieving shared objectives.



Key activities of the project encompass PAR and advocacy efforts at national, regional, and international levels, highlighting the urgent needs to support migrant workers' rights, particularly on HIV/AIDS and SRHR issues. Collaborations with partners across Asian sub-regions ensure tailored interventions to address the regional needs. Capacity building efforts targeting project partners, stakeholders and community leaders, improving their skills to manage the project activities in their organizations. Media campaigns and awareness sessions are also conducted to educate migrant workers about HIV & AIDS prevention. CARAM Asia facilitates access to essential services, including counseling, legal aid, and medical assistance, to uphold the health rights of migrant workers regardless of their status and address their vulnerabilities concerning HIV/AIDS and SRHR issues.

Project Activities

1.0 Advocacy

In our increasingly interconnected global landscape, there is a growing concern to address the rights and well-being of migrant workers through strategic advocacy efforts spanning national, regional, and international levels, integrating migrant health concerns. It was reported that migrant workers in many regions in the world face a myriad of challenges that heighten their vulnerability to HIV, including social isolation, economic hardships, discrimination, and limited access to healthcare, evidenced from a report (Migration and Skills Development, 2018). Given the prevailing discriminatory policies against migrant workers in Asia, CARAM Asia is committed to tackle the challenges, advocating for the inclusion of migrant rights including health, particularly focusing on HIV & AIDS, into governmental policies and programme.

CARAM Asia's continuous efforts to promote HIV awareness, migrant health rights, and policy reform, has led to a series of 2023 strategic advocacy activities involving key stakeholders. The goal is to work with government agencies, politicians, journalists, and other influential groups to raise awareness about funding for HIV, advocate for migrant labor and health rights, and improve labor and health policies. Advocacy activities are crucial for integrating the rights and protections of migrant workers into ongoing discussions and planning processes at various levels, creating environments that prioritize the protection and empowerment of migrant workers.

CARAM Asia utilized evidence-based data collected from research conducted from this project and other reliable sources to strengthen advocacy efforts and ensure the credibility and effectiveness of advocacy efforts. The advocacy strategies range from advocacy meetings and round-tables to sensitization sessions and consultations, all designed to drive meaningful changes in HIV/AIDS and migrant health policies & programs



achievable through collaboration with project partners in seven countries across Asia. In 2023, CARAM Asia has shown a well progressive effort in policy reforms and encouraged local government participation in migration's policy reforms, thereby amplifying migrant health concerns on the political agenda.

Advocacy Activities

Actively engage with stakeholders (ministries and relevant departments), organize meetings, round-tables, and other activities to do advocacy on migrants' rights;

- **Advocacy Meetings for Maintaining data and Streamlining Deportation Process of HIV-Positive Deported Migrants at Pakistan Airport:** The establishment of the HIV screening and referral mechanism at the Pakistan international airport by initiating the priority areas identified in the 1st 2022 national stakeholder consultation on the formation of TWG with various stakeholders and a draft strategy for HIV screening.
- **Advocacy Meetings to Increase Sustainable Financing on HIV Vulnerabilities of Migrants in Pakistan:** Advocacy for budget allocation on migrants health needs with governments, partnered with CSOs coalition and engaged in multiple forums to advocate for the integration of migrants' health needs into national strategies and budget allocation.
- **Advocacy Meetings for the Enhancement of HIV and AIDS-related Programs for Vulnerable Communities in the Philippines:** Engagement in consultations, advocated for migrant workers' rights, offered recommendations and technical input based on past research and consultations on HIV-related reintegration programs, played a key role in organizing the 4th National Symposium on Migrant Health Research, and participated in activities for the integration of migrant workers' concerns into HIV/AIDS policies, while fostering relationships with government and non-government agencies.
- **Observation on World AIDS Day (WAD) and International Migrants Day (IMD) for the Recognition of migrants' right in Bangladesh:** Celebration of IMD through discussions and rallies involving migrant workers, promoted the recognition of migrants' rights, and offered support for the protection of these rights. The involvement of the government's National AIDS and STD Program on WAD gathered the 2023 statistics on AIDS-related information.

Engage the governments particularly in receiving countries on the advocacy areas

- **Meeting Sessions with Migrant Workers' Embassies and Consulates to Create SOPs in Lebanon:** Development of SOPs for cooperative actions with embassies and consulates through agreements and establishment of a shared referral system. Also, promoted and safeguarded the rights and welfare of individuals from other countries by the SOPs endorsement from numerous embassies and consulates representing migrant workers, fostering transparency and inclusiveness.



Develop policy recommendations based on various findings and approach high-level government officials in sending and receiving countries on advocacy areas listed above.

- **Review & Compilation of Existing Policies in Nepal and Recommendation on the Need for Improvement:** Undertook a comprehensive review of existing laws and policies, engaged stakeholders at various government levels as a conducive platform to reforming these laws and policies while highlighting the implementation issues, and strategically influence journalists to disseminate key review insights catalyze policy and law reform.

Engagement with the Stakeholders in Pakistan



Advocacy meeting with IOM for TWG formation for the establishment of HIV screening and referral mechanism in Pakistan airport.

Engagement with the Stakeholders in Bangladesh



OKUP Executive Director delivered his speech at the prize giving ceremony on the occasion of observing IMD 2023.

Policy recommendations Based on Various Research Findings and other Reliable Sources



Discussion on Existing Law, Policies, Program for Migrants Health in Nepal

Engagement with the Stakeholders in the Philippines



PMHN Technical Working Group Meeting



Outputs from Advocacy Activities

High level government officials are engaged in the discussion and convinced for required changes in policies.

Project Activities	Countries	Stakeholders Involvement
Advocacy Meetings for Maintaining data and Streamlining Deportation Process of HIV-Positive Deported Migrants at Pakistan Airport	Pakistan	National AIDS Control Programme (NACP), Ministry of Health, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Border Health Services (BHS), Ministry of Aviation United Nations International Organization for Migration (UN-IOM) Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) PLHIV Association
Advocacy to Increase Sustainable Financing on HIV Vulnerabilities of Migrants		Ministry of Health (MoH) Ministry of Overseas NACP
Advocacy Meeting for the Enhancement of HIV and AIDS-related Programs for Vulnerable Communities	Philippines	Commission on Human Rights Public Employment Service Office (PESO) Philippine Migrant Health network (PMHN) Philippine National AIDS Council (PNAC) Department of Migrant Workers
Observe World AIDS Day and International Migrants Day	Bangladesh	Parliament members Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Review of Existing Polices by Consultant, Compilation and Recommendation on the Need for Improvement	Nepal	Policy consultants Media Entities and Journalists

Figure 1. Lists of Stakeholders Engaged in 2023 CARAM Asia Advocacy Activities



Highlights of Progress & Accomplishments from Advocacy Activities

- **Establishment of an Effective HIV Screening and Referral System at Pakistan Airport:** The development of the proposed ToRs of the TWG members, a draft referral mechanism framework and a draft strategy for the establishment of HIV screening and referral mechanism at Pakistan international airports and borders, signifies the progress made towards establishing an effective HIV screening and referral mechanism at the airports and borders.
- **Integration of Migrants' Health Needs into National Budget Allocation:** Migrants' HIV challenges becoming a key aspect of the draft National Level AIDS strategy, and currently awaiting approval from the Ministry of Health. Upon approval, this strategy will guide budget allocation for migrants' health, influencing government policies and resource allocation.
- **Incorporation of Migrant Health Rights into Policy Discussions and Planning:** The rigorous participation in consultations and establishment of partnerships with agencies in the Philippines on HIV, human rights, and migrant workers issues to voice out the migrants issues. As a result, the amendment of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of HIV and AIDS Policy Act will incorporate migrant workers' concerns into HIV policy/ act development to address their specific needs within HIV and AIDS programs.
- **Endorsement of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) by Diplomatic Missions:** The SOP was distributed to embassies and consulates representing Migrant Workers in Lebanon and the extensive dialogues led to official endorsement by Bangladesh's embassy, Burkina Faso's consulate, and Madagascar's consulate, setting the stage for further diplomatic efforts in early 2024 to reinforce a unified approach to enhancing migrants' well-being in Lebanon.
- **Initiation of Policy and Law Reform Catalyzed by Stakeholder Engagement:** A national-level news article in Nepal was crafted and published, emphasizing the need for policies and laws reform, while a targeted session with media professionals was organized to encourage spotlighting identified issues through articles and TV shows, reflecting the efforts to initiate policy and law reform aimed at addressing implementation challenges related to foreign employment and migrant workers' well-being.



2.0 Awareness Raising on HIV Prevention among Migrant Workers



Migrant workers often lack essential knowledge about HIV transmission, prevention, and treatment. This is mainly caused by factors, such as lack of sufficient access to comprehensive sexual education and healthcare services, language obstacles, and cultural stigmas. These factors were highlighted by Fauk et al. (2022) that Indonesian male ex-migrant workers living with HIV faced obstacles in accessing HIV care services while being in receiving countries such as Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, and Hong Kong, China, and the influential elements were limited host-country language proficiency, unfamiliarity with healthcare systems, far healthcare facilities, undocumented status, transportation challenges, and the transient nature of migrant work. These obstacles act as barriers to effective communication on HIV topics. As migrant workers are considered as vulnerable population to HIV, delayed access to HIV services resulted in poorer HIV-related health outcomes.

In our pursuit to combat HIV/AIDS among migrant workers and vulnerable communities, CARAM Asia has launched project activities in 2023 centered on enhancing awareness and prevention. Through a series of targeted activities, we aim to educate various potential migrant groups, including migrants' peer leaders, prospective migrant men through technical college students, commercial sex workers, and overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and families. Our initiatives range from media campaigns and workshops to specialized training sessions, ensuring a holistic approach to HIV education. Additionally, CARAM Asia are leveraging online platforms to disseminate information and provide support within and outside detention settings, with the support from its project partners in Asian countries.

CARAM Asia also believes the necessity to reach out to stakeholders to promote a greater understanding and awareness of health issues on HIV prevention, their right to equal protection under the law, and the practical accessibility of support and healthcare services. Under the strategy of undertaking media, campaigns, and related publicity initiatives aims to safeguard the rights of migrant workers, CARAM Asia focus on eradicating stigma and discrimination while preventing new HIV infections. Through targeted activities such as awareness session, campaigns and sensitization training, this strategy empowered migrant workers with vital knowledge on HIV prevention, foster stakeholder engagement, and dismantle barriers to accessing healthcare services. By fostering awareness, sensitivity among stakeholders, and breaking down discriminatory practices, this initiative creates a more inclusive and supportive environment for migrant workers' health and rights.



Awareness raising on HIV prevention among migrant workers

- **Social and Mainstream Media Campaigns for Awareness and Virtual Advocacy in Pakistan:** Digital advocacy, combining social and mainstream media on migration-related risks, health implications and migration as a human right, targeting migrant workers in Pakistan comprised of 4 concise and impactful contents;
 - Migration as a human right and migration as a human right & labor drain as a source of remittances
 - Irregular migration and challenges associated with it such as accessing health services
 - Sensitization of audience to stop using irregular migration channels and choose alternative migration channels
 - Information about Greece and Italy boat incident that led to massive death toll of carrying Pakistani irregular migrants
- **Provision of Awareness Raising Workshops/Sessions on HIV/AIDS Prevention to Educating Various Migrant Group:** Provided different groups of prospective, current, and former migrant workers of various nationalities with a comprehensive education on HIV/AIDS prevention (such as the use of contraceptive pills, condoms and lubricants) and encourages HIV testing. The migrant groups involved includes;
 - **Migrant's society peer leaders** in Sri Lanka to reach out to migrant workers and their families and educate their communities on HIV prevention and services.
 - **Technical college students** in Sri Lanka to educate them as prospective migrants because majority of the students choose to go abroad for foreign employment after completing their respective courses.
 - **Commercial sex workers** working in spas and street-based sex workers in Sri Lanka with an intention of migrating driven by economic crisis.
 - **Migrant workers inside and outside detention center** of different nationalities in Lebanon to ensure the widespread participation through comprehensive outreach and address an often marginalized group in public health initiatives.
 - **Returnee OFWs living with HIV** in the Philippines to share experiences of OFWs and their spouses tested HIV positive in receiving countries, build capacity of families left behind through interactive HIV topic session and receive inputs for the operational plan of the AIDS Medium Term Plan (AMTP).
- **Online Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) Materials on availability of Health Services in the Philippines:** To promote health services available to migrant workers in agreement and subjected to approval from agencies managing health services programs.

Sensitization training for stakeholders including relevant government officers, health care providers, etc.

- **Awareness Raising among Hospital and Clinic staffs:** Created awareness about HIV transmission and prevention along with ethical treatment of HIV patients in healthcare settings in settings in Pakistan, the informative HIV awareness and stigma eradication boards has



been sent to hospitals across different cities, including Lahore, DG Khan, Sialkot, Gujranwala, and Faisalabad. In the Philippines, an orientation on the HIV law and human rights has been conducted to all medical staffs in My Healthway Laboratory Clinic.

- **Meetings with with Vice President of Pakistan Nursing Council (PNC) and Nursing Schools to Amend Curriculum to Eradicate Stigma and Discrimination surrounding HIV/AIDS:** Sensitized the council on the needs for stigma eradication in healthcare settings, share concept note for the inclusion of the HIV de-stigmatization chapter designed in the nursing curricula in Pakistan.

Provision of Awareness Raising Workshops on HIV/AIDS Prevention to Educating Various Migrant Group



HIV Prevention Education to Aspiring Migrant Men through Technical Colleges

Provision of Awareness Raising Workshops on HIV/AIDS Prevention to Educating Various Migrant Group



Educational video produced on migration as a human right

Provision of Awareness Raising Workshops on HIV/AIDS Prevention to Educating Various Migrant Group



Demonstrating how to use the HIV Self- Test Kit to commercial Sex Workers

Sensitization training for health care providers in the Philippines



HIV Education for My Healthway Laboratories in the Philippines



Outputs from Awareness Raising Activities

Large number of migrants are aware of HIV risk and risky behaviors

Provision of Awareness Raising Workshops to Various Migrant Groups	Countries	Number of Workshops	Number of Participants
Migrant's society peer leaders	Sri Lanka	09	293
Technical college students		04	179
Commercial sex workers		01	60
Migrant workers inside and outside defention centre	Lebanon	27	567
Former OFWs living with HIV	Philippines	04	93
Total		45	1192

Figure 2. Number of Participants Involved in Face-to-Face Awareness Raising Activities

Project Activities	Countries	Number of Materials	Number of Engagements
Social and mainstream media campaigns for awareness and virtual advocacy	Pakistan	04 Videos	>50k Views
Online Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) Materials on availability of Health Services	Philippines	03 E-Posters	>8.2K likes

Figure 3. Number of Engagement in Virtual Awareness Raising Activities



Health care providers are sensitized to provide health services to HIV positive migrants and PLHIV with proper care and in recognition of their health rights

As a result of disclosure of client's HIV status to other staffs of the diagnostic clinic in the Philippines, CARAM Asia project Partner (ACHIEVE) sensitized the health care providers with necessary knowledge on HIV law and human rights. The diagnostic clinic acknowledged that they treated the client wrongfully and as a corrective action, all their staffs underwent an orientation on HIV and the law. While in Pakistan, knowledge of hospital staffs, patients and visitors was enhanced knowledge on HIV/AIDS as a result of board displays at the prominent areas in hospital including emergency ward, out patient department (OPD) and patients waiting lounge. Vice president of PNC was also sensitized on the inclusion of the HIV de-stigmatization chapter in the nursing curricula.

Highlights of Progress & Accomplishments from Awareness Raising Activities

- **Enhanced Knowledge and Empowerment of Migrant Workers on HIV Prevention:** From a total of 45 workshops attended by 1192 migrant workers from diverse backgrounds, the positive outcomes were yielded, empowering migrant communities to safeguard themselves against HIV/AIDS and disseminate knowledge within their communities. The success is evidenced from different outcome measures; telephone interviews and pre-post tests that revealed a thorough progress in knowledge of participants on HIV transmission, prevention, and treatment and expressed confidence in educating their communities. These activities filled the knowledge gaps; previously, as many were previously unaware of where to access HIV testing but learned about testing facilities. As migrant workers were now aware on HIV prevention, they took necessary precautions and seek treatments on HIV, resulting from stigma reduction in accessing health services. Likewise, the online awareness raising also garnered substantial attention on Facebook and TikTok, accumulating over 50k views, leveraged its social media platforms to reach migrant workers remotely.
- **Removal of Discriminatory Practices in Health Sector:** The diagnostic clinic in the Philippines has developed their "HIV at the Workplace" policy in their effort to remove discriminatory practices in workplace under CARAM Asia project. Previously, one of the staff members disclosed a migrant's HIV positive status to other staffs after being forced to undergo PEME before going to Hong Kong where HIV test is not a requirement upon entering.
- **Inclusion and Advancement of HIV De-stigmatization Chapter in Nursing Education:** The idea of chapter inclusion in nursing curricula was added as an agenda point in the Pakistan Nursing and Midwifery Council meeting held in October 2023. The council members suggested a HIV stigma study in healthcare settings to make the inclusion of the chapter in nursing curricula possible.



3.0 Enhancing Access to Services for Migrant Workers

Despite the increasing healthcare needs of migrant workers, including illness prevention, treatment, and other important services, national health programs in most countries often overlook this crucial vulnerable population. A survey conducted among migrant workers in Malaysia utilizing hospitals in Kuala Lumpur, found that 79% of migrants had to make out-of-pocket payments for their health treatments (Noh et al., 2016). Another study revealed that 87% of Bangladeshi migrants did not receive any financial assistance from their employers for medical treatment (H.M. Zehadul Karim and Mohamad Diah, 2015). Despite documented migrant workers are covered by mandatory healthcare insurance (SPIKPA) in Malaysia, however, some are not aware of SPIKPA entitlements due to financial constraint and undocumented status (Loganathan & Pocock, 2020).

To address this issue, CARAM Asia and its partners are working together to bridge the gap and provide migrant workers with the care and support they need for their well-being and that of their families. This is also aim at safeguarding the health rights of migrant workers, regardless of their status, by intensifying the efforts to improve the accessibility and availability of essential services for migrant workers and families. CARAM Asia has initiated various project activities aimed at enhancing access to vital services. Acknowledging the distinct hurdles encountered by migrant workers and their families, our initiative centers around delivering counseling, psycho-social aid, medical support, and legal guidance. The activities include creating support groups, providing emergency response via digital media, and developing a comprehensive HIV services program tailored to migrants' needs. Through these initiatives, CARAM Asia, with project partners, works together and provides migrant workers with the essential care, support, and resources required for them to live healthy and dignified lives.

Activities to Enhance Access to Services

Providing HIV services in Malaysia through collaboration with organizations

- **Comprehensive HIV Services for Migrants (CHSM) Program and Continuity CHSM (CCHSM) in Malaysia:** Introduced in 2023, CHSM was piloted in Klang Valley, Malaysia and CCHSM was piloted in Surabaya, Indonesia aimed to enhance HIV services access for migrants and trained migrant community leaders to better serve their communities. It offers outreach, commodities and HIV/AIDS education to migrant workers, including testing and treatment options through collaboration with various local NGOs across Malaysia. CCHSM provided a referral service to hand over HIV-positive deported migrant workers to the RESQ Team's partner organizations in sending countries for further treatment.
- **Emergency Response via Digital Media and "Live Documentary" in Malaysia:** Formed a community-focused NSI Migrant Health RESQ Team, specialized in addressing emergency situations related to HIV issues such as This well-trained team provide direct outreach to



migrants, guiding them to healthcare providers for treatment and explaining available options. Also, the team offers emotional support and counseling to distressed clients while documenting healthcare processes in real-time for knowledge-sharing and advocacy through social media.

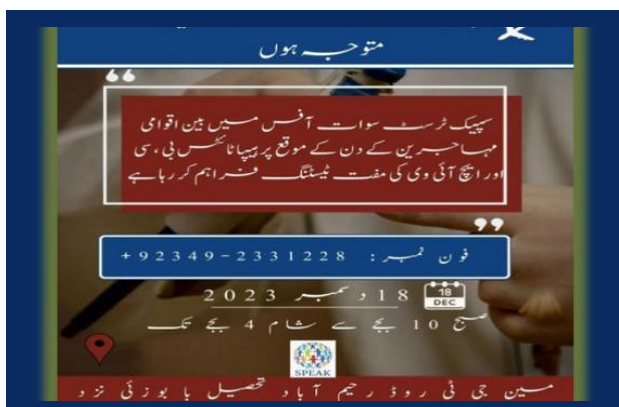
Providing psycho-social, counselling and referral services to hospitals, clinics, etc.

- **Provision of Psycho-social Support, Counseling and Referral for PLHIV, Returnee and Deported Migrants in the Philippines and Pakistan:** Provided a comprehensive pre-HIV and post-HIV test counseling, assessed the concerns of migrant workers and referred them to proper service providers in nearby treatment centers when needed.
- **Meetings of Self-Support Group (SSG) of Migrants Living with HIV in Pakistan:** Promoted a safe and confidential space where HIV positive migrants can share experiences and challenges, emphasized the importance of peer education in promoting awareness and understanding of HIV within their community and create a sense of responsibility and engagement among SSG members to make a well-informed environment about HIV by being the educators of peer education.
- **Medical Assistance for HIV Positive or Others MWs, and for Prisoners and Detainees in Lebanon:** Contributed to better health conditions and effectively reach the most vulnerable individuals and those in urgent need in their access to health services and medical assistance.

Coordinate with other organizations and link up with government processes to enhance access to services for HIV positive migrants

- Providing free legal facilitation to MWs in severe cases of health rights violations in Malaysia: Assisted migrant workers facing legal challenges, document the cases for advocacy purpose to prevent deaths in custody due to lack of legal support at government detention centers by monitoring healthcare access, and compiling necessary case information and documentation.

Providing psycho-social counselling, supports and referral services to hospitals, clinics, etc.



Social Media Campaign on Facebook, Promoting Available Health Services



Outputs of the activities from the OFWs from psychosocial support



Output from Activities to Enhance Access to Services

Migrant Workers Tested for HIV and they are Aware of their HIV Status.

Countries	Number of Migrant Workers Received HIV Testing	Number of Migrant Workers Tested Positive with HIV
Malaysia	246	44
Pakistan	122	17
Total	368	61

Figure 4. Number of Migrant Workers Received HIV Testing and with HIV Positive in 2023

Migrant Workers are Provided Counselling and Linked to Other Health Services

Countries	Number of Migrant Workers Received Health Services
Pakistan	136
Philippines	40
Lebanon	35
Malaysia	06
Total	217

Figure 5. Number of Engagement in Virtual Awareness Raising Activities



Highlights of Progress & Accomplishments under Activities to Enhance Access to Services

- **Expansion of HIV Testing Services and Access to Health Services to Migrant Workers in Multiple Countries:** The referral services in Malaysia resulting in expanded outreach and support for migrant workers. Governmental bodies and NGOs viewed the CHSM as a viable solution for maintaining the well-being. Through partnerships with local clinics, the rescue team provided subsidized HIV medications. Rapid assessment and extended outreach efforts in Pakistan led to an increase in the number of registered HIV-positive migrant workers from 62 to 79. The project sustained the delivery of psycho-social support in Malaysia and the Philippines, counseling, self-support groups, and referral services in Pakistan, as well as medical aid in Lebanon. In 2023, a total of 368 migrant workers underwent HIV testing, with 61 individuals testing positive and 217 migrant workers received health services, alleviating the mental and physical strains they faced due to their unfamiliarity with accessing support in receiving countries.
- **Establishment of ResQ Team in Malaysia:** This proposed well-trained team that were on the ground and hands-on in emergency situations related but not limited to HIV issues has successfully provided intervention to six migrant cases in its first year of establishment including direct outreach, facilitating access to healthcare, explaining treatment options, offering emotional support, and documenting healthcare processes.
- **Documentation of Success Stories and Video Footage for Advocacy:** From successful interventions by the emergency response team, the success stories and video footage from these interventions were developed with the consent of migrant workers to record and publish it for further advocacy. The issues include the fear to seek treatment for the client due to reasons ranging from documentation issues, language barriers and fears of stigma and discrimination from the intervention cases.
- **Increased Alliance with local NGOs and Migrant Community Leaders in Malaysia:** As many as 20 local NGOs in Malaysia and migrant community leaders from five countries has partnered with RESQ team in CHSM program who, despite not initially providing migrant services, now referred clients to the RESQ team through the CHSM program, expressing satisfaction with this comprehensive approach.



4.0 Capacity Building of Partners, Stakeholders and Communities



To successfully achieving its goals, CARAM Asia strives to enhance the capacity of its partners, stakeholders, and the communities involved in the project, leveraging the diverse range of skills and backgrounds within its network. This section emphasizes capacity-building initiatives that aim to enhance the capabilities of our partners, stakeholders, and communities as part of our ongoing efforts to empower and equip them with essential skills and knowledge. Capacity-building ensures that all stakeholders share a common knowledge base, addresses potential misperceptions, fosters collective ownership of the project, and strengthens local capacity for sustainability, ultimately aiming to establish a shared vision for project success and longevity (Stakeholders' Capacity Building Guidelines, n.d.). CARAM Asia believes that strengthening capacities through targeted training, technical support, and mentor-ship is crucial for achieving our collective goals.

CARAM Asia offers a wide range of activities, including training in monitoring and evaluation (M&E), board member training, and pre-departure orientations for outbound migrant workers concerning HIV/AIDS. Additionally, CARAM Asia emphasizes leadership development, network management, community mobilization, and life skills training for PLHIV and migrant populations. We also prioritize educating local government officers, conducting forum theaters, and organizing sensitization sessions for staff members at detention centers. Through these comprehensive activities, CARAM Asia and project partners strive to foster a more knowledgeable, skilled, and empowered network of partners and communities committed to supporting migrant workers and addressing their challenges.

Capacity Building Activities

Capacity Building Workshops of Key Stakeholders

- **Training Of Trainers (TOT) on pre-departure orientation in Bangladesh:** Educated the trainers on the information regarding the pre-departure preparation including before, during and after travelling for migration, shared working environment, laws, customs of the destination countries, the workers' rights in the destination countries and health issues for what migrant workers should be aware
- **Educating Grama Niladari (village leader) officers and other local level government officers in Sri Lanka:** Oriented them on the information on HIV/AIDS prevention and the importance of HIV testing to educate their communities on HIV
- **Sensitization of Staff Members at Prison and Immigration Detention Centers and Helping Detained Migrant Workers in Accessing Health Care in Malaysia:** Safeguarded migrants from abuse and uphold their human rights, especially concerning HIV services during imprisonment and detention and educated staff at prisons and immigration detention centers about migrant workers' rights to physical and mental health services and enhanced their knowledge on HIV-related issues.



- **Mass awareness raising at HIV high-risk areas in Nepal:** Convened various stakeholders and fostered discussions and knowledge sharing on healthcare access gaps and amplified awareness regarding available services, testing protocols, antiretroviral therapy (ART), and viral suppression for those living with HIV to better address the needs of individuals affected by HIV in Chitwan and Makawanpur districts.

Capacity Building Workshops of CARAM Asia Project Partners' Organizations including Board Members and Organization Staffs

- **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) training with CARAM Asia project partners in Malaysia:** Equipped project partners with basic understanding and necessary information about M&E processes, relevance to the project partners' context, provided guidance on preparing and rolling out an M&E plan and empowered them with the necessary tools to comprehensively evaluate the outcomes of their project activities in their respective countries.
- **Training of Board Members and SPEAK Trust's Staffs in Pakistan:** Sensitized board members and Staffs about the significance of advocacy activities and equipped them with necessary skills to advocate for their health rights with government

Capacity Building Workshop of Migrant Communities/Leaders

- **Pre-departure orientation for final stage outbound migrant workers on HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh:** Educated migrant workers on HIV/AIDS risks, prevention, treatment, legal rights, safe migration, workplace safety, and mental health due to heightened risk of migrant workers for contracting HIV/AIDS due to factors like unprotected sex, drug use, limited access to healthcare, and lack of awareness.
- **Capacity-building meetings with migrant forum members and community forum members on leadership, network management, and community mobilization in Bangladesh:** Shared the goals and objectives of the forum formation with the members, discussed the overall status of the forum (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), planned achievable future goals for Migrant Forums, and empowered them with discussions on leadership and community mobilization.
- **Life skill training for newly affected/infected PLHIV and PLHIV migrants in Bangladesh:** Oriented the newly affected/infected PLHIV on different life skills, including counseling, positive thinking, stress management. etc in aiding their peers and created a networking among the participants so they could share their experiences, demands, and the tricks they apply individually to sort out any problem.
- **Forum theater on HIV/AIDS prevention for migrant workers targeting youth in technical colleges for World AIDS day in Sri Lanka:** Educated students on migrants' issues such as women trafficking victimization in a foreign country, abuse by employers, being sold by friends to others, and the heightened risks of contracting HIV, as portrayed by youth from the National Youth Services Council.



- **Roll-Out Training, capacity building workshops on HIV 101, STI, SOGIE, and SRSH refresher training in Malaysia:** The "The ResQ Health Camp" fostered health awareness, promoted blood donation, and offered HIV/STI screenings, emphasizing prevention and early detection among migrant communities, schools, colleges, and community organizations.

Capacity Building of CARAM Asia Project Partner Organizations



M&E Training to CARAM Asia Project Partners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Capacity Building Workshops of Key Stakeholders



Saviya Bus trip activity during the capacity building workshop in Sri Lanka

Capacity Building Workshops of Key Stakeholders Various Migrant Group



One participant of Pre-departure orientation shared his understanding about HIV/AIDS

Capacity Building Workshops of Key Stakeholders Various Migrant Group



OKUP Program Coordinator provided life skill training of newly affected/infected PLHIV



Outputs from Advocacy Activities

CARAM Asia project partners, Stakeholders and Migrant Communities/leaders have been capacitated on Skills and Enhanced Knowledge

Activities	Countries	Number of Workshops	Number of Participants
Training Of Trainers (TOT) on pre-departure orientation	Bangladesh	1	29
Pre-departure orientation for final stage outbound migrant workers on HIV/AIDS		12	302
Capacity-building meetings with migrant forum members and community forum members on leadership, network management, and community mobilization		2	76
Life skill training for newly affected/infected PLHIV and PLHIV migrants		1	27
Educating Grama Niladari (village leader) officers and other local level government officers	Sri Lanka	04	135
Forum theater on HIV/AIDS prevention for migrant workers targeting youth in technical colleges for World AIDS day		06	1360
Training of Board Members and SPEAK Trust's Staffs	Pakistan	02	10
Mass awareness raising in HIV high-risk areas	Nepal	10	160
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) training with CARAM Asia project partners	Malaysia	01	07
Sensitization of Staff Members at Prison and Immigration Detention Centers and Helping Detained Migrant Workers in Accessing Health Care		03	03
Roll-Out Training, capacity building workshops on HIV 101, STI, SOGIE, and SRSR refresher training		01	142
Total		43	2251

Figure 6: Number of Participants involved in 2023 Capacity Building Activities



Highlights of Progress & Accomplishments under Capacity Building Activities

- **Strengthened Stakeholder Capacities for Migrant Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention:** Following the ToT program in Bangladesh, the participants reported a comprehensive knowledge of HIV/AIDS, including its transmission and prevention methods and expressed satisfaction with the training, highlighting its importance for the well-being of migrant workers and other individuals. The training sessions on HIV/AIDS conducted also empowered local government officers in Sri Lanka to educate their communities, resulting in increased knowledge and confidence among participants, although time constraints hindered some officers' ability to fully implement the knowledge gained. Feedback from participants highlighted the value of the training, to expand topics to cover safe migration, gender, sexuality, and sexual orientation. The rescue efforts in Malaysia led to lodging complaints leading to special passes, and improved relationships with immigration offices for the ResQ Team. The collaboration awareness in Nepal among returnee women, health volunteers, and Civil Society Organizations promoted healthcare awareness and support in the district, equipped participants with heightened awareness, empowered stakeholders to actively engage and educate their communities, and fostered a stronger network for collaborative healthcare efforts within the district.
- **Enhanced Capacity and Understanding of Project M&E and Advocacy among CARAM Asia Partners:** M&E training further enhanced project partners' understanding on M&E process and empowered them with necessary tools to comprehensively evaluate the results of their project activities such as log frame. The partners received training on developing log frame with indicators to the results of activity implementation, compulsory for project partners to develop and send the M&E log frame and indicators to CARAM Asia secretariat and monitor the results accordingly. In addition, SPEAK's board members were capacitated to advocate for rights of MLHIV as the advocacy training was enhanced their ability to actively represent SPEAK in advocacy interactions.
- **Empowerment of Health Knowledge and Support Among Migrant Communities:** Participants gained comprehensive knowledge on HIV/AIDS, safe migration, rights from the government and employers, and workplace safety. They committed in taking precautions against HIV/AIDS and pledged to share their knowledge within their communities and reduced stigma against PLHIV. Formation of Community Forum Bangladesh groups in each division, organize two central events annually, plan activities with KAP, set up stalls on World AIDS Day, launch 'Community Talk' programs, with OKUP leading the forum until September 2024. The life skill training created a platform for migrants to share their sufferings and demands, empowered and work for their communities and counsel their peers and live a healthy life while working together to claim their rights. Health screening camps provided essential services, identifying cases of HIV and STIs (Out of 200 attendees, 142 were screened for HIV/STI/Hepatitis C and general health, with 2 testing positive for HIV and 4 for STIs), and increasing engagement with healthcare resources.



5.0 Research

This section showcases CARAM Asia research on migration and health vulnerability, particularly on HIV/AIDS and SRH among migrant workers. It includes their perspectives and viewpoints on HIV vulnerabilities, migrants' health, and provides policy recommendations for advocacy. These activities encompass PAR, assessments, and other research-focused initiatives aimed at uncovering valuable insights and data. Through project partners, CARAM Asia

CARAM Asia research projects in 2023 encompass a national-level study in Pakistan aimed at determining the proportion of migrants among HIV-positive cases, an exploration of migration, health, and HIV vulnerability in Bangladesh, and a study in Malaysia that examines workers' perceptions of HIV and the challenges they encounter in accessing healthcare services. Through our research efforts, CARAM Asia and its project partners are dedicated to expanding their knowledge base, shaping policy-making, and implementing tailored interventions to effectively address the unique challenges faced by migrant workers when it comes to HIV and healthcare.

Research Activities

Rapid assessment or PAR on migrant workers' access to health in sending and receiving countries.

- **Research on the Proportion of Migrants among PLHIV Ever-Registered and on Treatment in Pakistan:** It was determined that there is a high proportion of HIV-positive migrants and their families in Pakistan found in the literature review. However, no recent and consolidated data on HIV-positive migrants and their families was found. The research aimed to determine the percentage of migrants among ever registered HIV positive patients in Pakistan and identify analyze socio-demographic variables of migrants and their families. The methodology was employed as outlined below;
 - **Secondary data:** HIV positive migrants data were obtained from NACP and Punjab AIDS Control Program (PACP) through the Management Information Systems (MIS) of national and the provincial AIDS Control Programme
 - **Key informant Interview:** Facilitated in obtaining the data of spouses and children through Anti-retroviral Therapy (ART) centers to determine the transmission rate and make the research more substantial and comprehensive
 - **Type of Data analysis:** Descriptive analysis



- **Research on Migration, Health and HIV Vulnerability Issues in Bangladesh titled “Health of Bangladeshi Migrant Workers: A Cost Analysis from a Social and Economic Perspective”:** The unexplored areas identified was the insufficient attention being paid by duty bearers – including governments, employers and employment agencies, as well as health care providers – to the health of migrant workers lead to compromising access to necessary treatment by a variety of factors both in destination countries and in Bangladesh. The research aimed to assess health complications during migration throughout different phases of the migration cycle, understanding healthcare disparities, analyzing social and economic costs, and exploring policy and institutional gaps that hinder the provision of adequate healthcare services to migrant workers. The mixed method was employed as outlined below;
 - **Literature review** on migrant workers’ health issues and barriers to accessing healthcare, with a specific focus on Bangladesh and Middle East corridor
 - **Analysis of migrant health-related data collected by OKUP since 2020 over the last decade**
 - **In-depth Interviews (Semi-structured) and focus Groups Discussions (FGDs)** with returnee migrant workers in Bangladesh on health issues and their experiences with the health care system
 - **Key informant interviews** with relevant stakeholders in the health care sector, academia and service providers in both sending and receiving countries

Outputs from Research Activities

All relevant stakeholders and government officers in MW’s sending and receiving countries are engaged in research process and aware of MW’s health and HIV related issues.

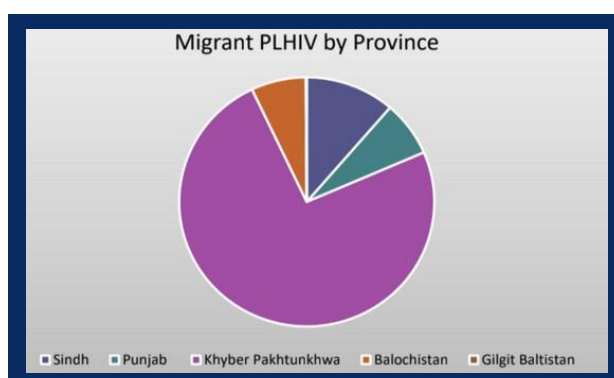
- **Research on the Proportion of Migrants among PLHIV Ever-Registered and on Treatment in Pakistan:** 10 Meetings with NACP and 01 IEC meeting with PACP conducted were conducted, briefed them with the significant of the research and request for data and 03 meetings with Health Services Academy (HAS), for Research Ethics Application submission under their guidance to NACP.
- **Research on Migration, Health and HIV Vulnerability Issues in Bangladesh titled “Health of Bangladeshi Migrant Workers: A Cost Analysis from a Social and Economic Perspective”:** To add value on the research outcomes, key informant interviews (KIIs) with relevant stakeholders in the health care sector were included as the methodology which include academia and service providers in both receiving and sending countries.

Highlights of Progress & Accomplishments under Capacity Building Activities



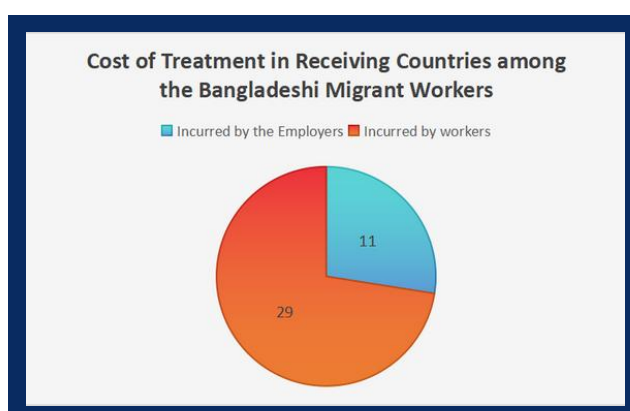
Updated and evidence-based information and knowledge is generated to be used for awareness and advocacy.

- **Short research draft on the Proportion of Migrants among PLHIV Ever-Registered and on Treatment in Pakistan has been developed outlining the statistical data analysis.** The report indicates that out of 63000 active cases of PLHIV registered in Pakistan, 935 accounts for migrants. The proportion of migrants is 1.5% among the registered PLHIV in Pakistan with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ranking above the other provinces of Pakistan in terms of HIV positive migrants registered i.e. 74%.



Percentage of Migrant Workers among Registered PLHIV (Taken from SPEAK's short research report)

- **Research report of statistical and thematic analysis on Health of Bangladeshi Migrant Workers: A Cost Analysis from a Social and Economic Perspective has been drafted:** The outcomes were that migration imposes significant social and economic costs on migrant workers. Separation from families and hostile environments can cause distress and depression, especially when combined with financial losses and gender-based discrimination, which can worsen psychosocial issues. Economically, the initial costs of migration, payment issues, and the unpredictability of remittances put a tremendous strain on one's finances. Return costs and reintegration challenges further burden workers. These factors collectively undermine migrant health and well-being, necessitating comprehensive support and policy interventions.



Percentage of cost of treatment incurred either by employers or migrant workers in receiving countries



6.0 Organizational Strengthening

This section highlights CARAM Asia dedication to organizational strengthening and active participation in programs, meetings, and activities related to the health of migrant workers. At the national, regional, international, and global levels, CARAM Asia actively participates in a wide range of activities that aim to strengthen organizational performance and enhance the quality of services we provide. Through our network of members and partner organizations, we strive to provide exceptional benefits to migrant communities. The activities outlined below demonstrate our continuous commitment to making an impact. These involved conducting impact reflection meetings with project partners, coordinating board meetings to address organizational matters, carrying out monitoring visits, administering satisfaction surveys, and actively participating in conferences and meetings related to our projects. CARAM Asia is also committed to mobilizing resources for funding proposals. These activities contribute to our mission of advocating and supporting the health and well-being of migrant workers.

Organizational Strengthening Activities

- **CARAM Asia Impact Reflection Meeting with RCF Funded Project Partners in Malaysia:** Used evidence from project partners and reflective thinking to have a consolidation on what the project has achieved in terms of outcomes and impact. The meeting focused on three topics: Overall legal, political and community environment in partners' countries to carry out development work; general impact of development work with regards to the migrants' health and HIV related in the countries; and key achievement & impact of CARAM Asia project on advocacy on migrant's HIV issues, enhancing their access to health services, Promoting and Protecting HIV Positive Migrants' rights.
- **Monitoring visits for the project activities in Pakistan and Bangladesh:** Assessed field activities including the quality of HIV testing and counseling services provided and evaluated the adherence to established protocols and guidelines by the field staff in order to maintain the quality of the program
- **Conduct satisfaction surveys and pre and post tests and produce monitoring report to highlight the impact of the intervention in Lebanon:** Evaluated the impact and effectiveness of interventions provided and gauge the effectiveness of the awareness sessions and ascertain the increase in knowledge among participants joining the sessions in Lebanon



Output from Activities to Enhance Access to Services

Monitoring Visits to Access and Evaluate the Quality of Services

Activity	Country	Number of Visits
Monitoring visits for the project activities	Pakistan	08
	Bangladesh	12
Total		20

Figure 8: Number of Monitoring Visits Conducted

Satisfaction Survey to Evaluate the Effectiveness of Services

Activity	Country	Number of Participants
Conduct satisfaction surveys and pre and post tests and produce monitoring report to highlight the impact of the intervention in Lebanon	Lebanon	546

Figure 9: Number of Participants involved in Satisfaction Survey

Highlights of Progress & Accomplishments Organizational Strengthening Activities

- **The Effectiveness and Impact of HIV-Focused Interventions on Migrant Workers' Lives in 2023 were Determined:** Project partners discussed their project related accomplishments. Result highlights include CDS in Sri Lanka's recognition for migrant health rights, SPEAK Trust's advocacy on HIV budget allocation, OKUP's role as the secretariat for the "Community Forum" in Bangladesh, and POURAKHI's empowered migrant leaders with HIV knowledge. Additionally, NSI's ResQ team initiatives led to improved access to health services for migrant workers, demonstrated by successful assistance, enhanced HIV testing and treatment in of migrant workers Malaysia and Indonesia. Lastly, ACHIEVE in the Philippines influenced policy changes, ensuring the inclusion of migrant workers in HIV prevention programs. A discussion was held on how partners can seek more information to document outcomes of implemented activities and to what extent the activities carried out by CARAM Asia and project partners had impact on migrant workers (MWs), especially in improving and bringing changes to their lives, particularly on HIV issues. Most of CARAM Asia year 1 project activities were successfully resulted in beneficial outcomes, despite difficulties in terms of legal, political and community environments in their respective countries.



- **Improved service delivery at field for migrants:** Field staff adhered to established protocols and guidelines, and migrant communities. Migrant community inputs offered valuable insights for improving field work and the services. Medical staffs were assessed on their attitudes and behaviors towards HIV-positive patients and were well aware of the ethical treatment required. Intending migrants received information through distributed IEC materials through monitoring visits. Regular monitoring visits helped track activities accurately and maintain the quality of events. Lastly, the satisfaction survey results confirmed the project's success in exceeding beneficiary expectations and effectively addressing community needs, indicated the effectiveness of the interventions in increasing participants' HIV/AIDS awareness and Well-being.



4.0 Task Force on Migrant Workers Rights (MWR)



Migrant workers face abuse and exploitation, often seen as temporary cheap labor for destination countries' needs. Rising migration costs and employers withholding documents, refusing to renew permits, and withholding wages force many into undocumented status. CARAM Asia advocates for comprehensive legal protections for all migrant workers, regardless of their status. The Foreign Domestic Workers (FDWs) program seeks to recognize domestic work as an economic activity and include it under labor laws. Activities include advocacy, public campaigns, and regional cooperation to protect FDWs' rights. CARAM Asia also formed the United for Foreign Domestic Workers Rights (UFDWRs) coalition to address the lack of legal recognition and protection for FDWs, who face significant risks of violence and exploitation. The coalition provides legal services and support to survivors of violence. Most recently, CARAM Asia involved in formation of the the Network for the Protection of Women Migrant Workers' Rights (NPWMMR) in 2022 to address arising issues related to the rights of women migrants, defend and fight for the rights of women migrants by working together with the partners through activities including campaigns by women migrants organizations, provide a platform for the engagement of the network partners in joint activities/projects and strengthening capacity building of the network partners working to protect the rights of women migrants.

CARAM Asia Activity under MWR TF: The Network for the Protection of Women Migrant Workers' Rights (NPWMMR)

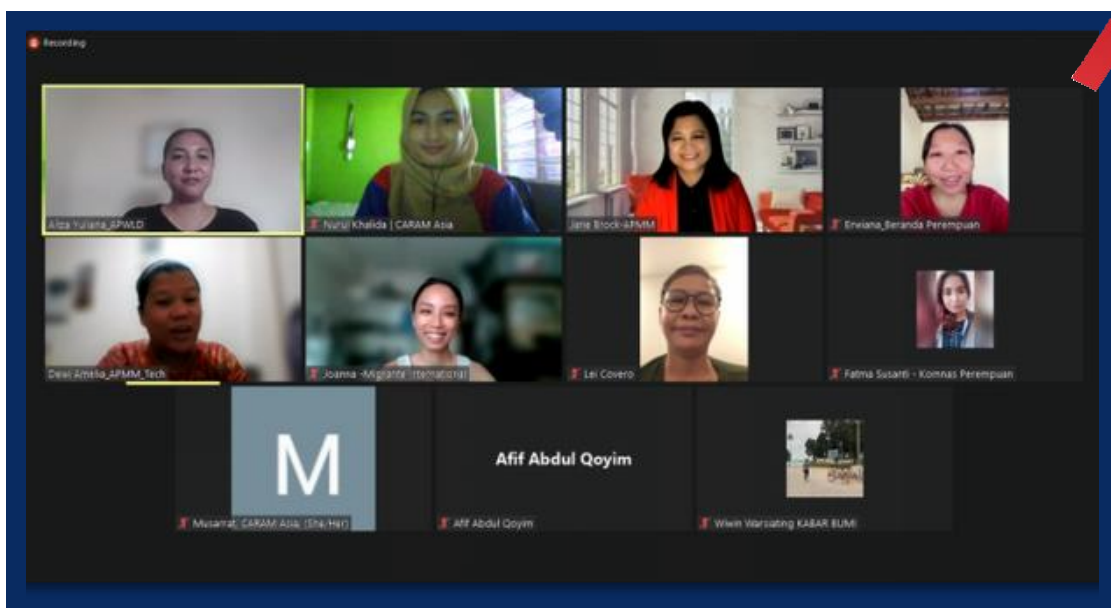


CARAM Asia, in collaboration with the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), Global Alliance against Traffic in Women (GAATW), International Women's Association (IWA), Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM), Migrante International, IBON International and GABRIELA Philippines collectively advocated for Mary Jane Veloso (MJV) case, a human trafficking victim in Indonesia by undertook various actions such as a campaign in 2022 concerning the efforts to seek for clemency from the Indonesian government as the victim was found innocent. The activities undertook in 2023 include the following;



Activities	Progress	Outcome
<p>Development ToRs to streamline the network's operations and establish a structured framework for planning, execution, and evaluation</p>	<p>Developed by CARAM Asia, the ToRs encompasses details, including the network's background, objectives, list of partners, core functions, working modalities, methods of operation, decision-making processes, avenues for complaints and suggestions and contact information This collaborative approach ensures that the ToRs accurately reflect the collective vision and goals of the network and allows for any necessary revisions or additions to be made before its official adoption.</p>	<p>It is currently in the final stages of refining the ToRs to ensure clarity, accountability, and alignment among all network partners. Once the final draft of the ToRs is completed, it will be circulated among all network partners for official discussion, review and feedback.</p>
<p>Submission of Human Trafficking Case (MJV) to the the Commission on the Status of Women and the United Nations Human Rights Council</p>	<p>Complaint submission to the special rapporteurs on human right trafficking through the special procedure communication on MJV case on July 25, 2023 to reach out to the UN rapporteurs on human trafficking and ask to consider providing intervention to the Indonesia president to accept the clemency for the release of MJV she was found innocent Case submitted to the members of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) via email on August 01 2023, include the essential information of victims, a summary of her trafficking case, and updates on the case's progress in both the Philippines and Indonesia and seeking clemency for MJV case</p>	<p>No update from the UN rapporteurs on human trafficking through the special procedure communication The CSW members responded positively to the email by forwarding our communication to the Indonesian government. However, a subsequent response on clarified that the commission does not make decisions on case merits and suggested reaching out to human rights mechanisms in Geneva, such as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, which can respond with various actions to communications received.</p>
<p>Network Meeting to Discuss the Progress of MJV Case</p>	<p>On October 20, 2023, CARAM Asia participated in an online meeting with the partners to discuss the continuation of the MJV case, a Filipino trafficking victims in the Philippines and Indonesia with the following agenda; To share the main updates on the current situations of MJV campaign To exchange strategies with the network partners To advance an ongoing campaign to free MJV To synchronize the campaign efforts from different organizations</p>	<p>Campaign update from founding members in the Philippines and Indonesia Collective Recommendations provided for Synchronizing the Work on MJV Cases Network Suggestions discussed on Strengthening the networks' efforts to advocate for migrants' rights</p>

Figure 10. Activities Conducted Under the NPWMR



Network Meeting to Discuss the Progress of MJV case, a Filipino Human Trafficking Victim in Indonesia

CARAM Asia Activity under MWR TF: Call for Input: Preparation of the Secretary-General’s Report on the Human Rights of Migrants

Following the call for input in preparation of the Secretary-General’s report on the Human Rights of Migrants, CARAM Asia has shared the views and recommendations to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on 09th May 2023 via email. CARAM Asia acknowledges that due to the challenges faced by during migration, migrant workers are more vulnerable to HIV infection. It is crucial to have health policies that are inclusive and address their needs. Migrant workers often do not receive adequate attention in their home countries, which makes it challenging for them to access important HIV prevention information and comprehensive health screenings upon their return. Discriminatory policies, high healthcare costs, and mandatory HIV testing leading to deportation further exacerbate their challenges. This calls for urgent action to eliminate discriminatory practices, enhance health rights, and reform the recruitment system. Governments and the global community must make the health and well-being of migrant workers a top priority by reallocating funds and guaranteeing equal access to healthcare services.

1	Acknowledging that migrant workers remain to be among the most vulnerable communities to HIV infection because of the various factors that they encounter in the various stages of migration. However, more often than not, migrant workers are left behind in the HIV programs of their origin countries because of non-recognition of their vulnerability to HIV and other infections. They are not provided with information on HIV prevention and other health and well-being areas. When they return to sending countries there is no comprehensive health check for returnee migrants
2	Acknowledging that mandatory health and HIV testing of migrants is a rights violation. Therefore, urging all the governments of the destination countries to curb this practice/policy.



3	<p>Encourages all States to eliminate discriminatory policies and legislation at all levels of government that deny migrant workers access to health services and the removal of barriers to their health rights in receiving countries and countries of origin. For example, in workforce sending countries, migrant workers and their intimate partners still do not receive proper attention in the National AIDS Plan. Moreover, migrants face exorbitant costs for health services and undocumented migrant workers may be denied access to health services due to their documentation status.</p>
4	<p>There is criminalization of migrant workers based on HIV positive status. Every year, in order to renew work permits in receiving countries, migrant workers have to undergo mandatory health and HIV testing. As a result of testing in case they are found with HIV infection, even treatable infections like Tuberculosis and pregnancy in women migrants; they immediately get arrested, detained and deported. In many cases, migrant workers do not know the reason for deportation, and authorities do not refer them to any health services in sending countries. After deportation or return, there are no health checkups for returnees or deported migrants in sending countries. They go back to their hometowns, villages or communities and transfer the infection to their spouses unknowingly.</p>
5	<p>Emphasizing the donor contributions which are vital for the AIDS response. Therefore, urging the global community to realign its priorities and to increase the international donor's funding for AIDS.</p>
6	<p>Acknowledging the high migration cost borne by the migrant workers due to the role of labour agents and private recruitment agencies. Therefore, the governments of sending and receiving countries should reform the recruitment system. The recruitment should be done with greater government oversight in the management of the selection and placement of workers.</p>



5.0 Task Force on Migration, Development and Globalization (MDG)



Migration, heavily influenced by Neo-liberal policies, significantly affects migrant workers' health and well-being. This program aims to address gaps in migration and development discourse, focusing on health impacts in globalization. Through analyzing the effects of globalization, World Trade Organization (WTO), and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) policies on migration and health, investigating health challenges due to healthcare privatization and developing global strategies for debt and poverty alleviation to reduce migration vulnerabilities, CARAM Asia enhances its impact in 2023 by participating in events organized by international organizations and UN agencies, such as the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Asia and the Pacific in the preparation for the 7th Asia Pacific Population Conference (7th APPC), the involvement in Global Health Council (GHC) Multilateral Engagement Working Group and Budgets & Appropriations Working Group and membership with Asia Pacific Alliance (APA).

CARAM Asia Activity under MDG TF: The CSO Steering Committee (SC) member for the preparation of the 7th Asia Pacific Population Conference (7th APPC)

Throughout the year 2023, CARAM Asia was actively engaged for organizing and participating in the 7th Asia and Pacific Population Conference as a CSO Steering Committee member. The 7th APPC meets once in 10 years and bring together governments from Asia Pacific region for:

Progress Review	The implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development and the ICPD Programme of Action, focusing on key actions for further progress.
Thematic Discussion	<p>Discussion on achievements, challenges, gaps and emerging issues in the implementation of Declaration on Population and Development and Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population dynamics, sustainable development, and climate change • Health, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights • Inequalities and social exclusion, and rights • Partnerships and regional cooperation



<p>Four CSO Consultations</p>	<p>Held before the 7th APPC on various thematic issues, with outcomes considered official documents for the 7th APPC. The thematic areas were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing Human Rights, Intersecting Forms of Discrimination and Exclusion: Leaving No One Behind in Sustainable Development” • Achieving Climate Justice for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific • Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Asia and the Pacific: equality, quality & accountability • Regional Cooperation, Accountability and Modalities for Implementation of Actions on Population and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific
--------------------------------------	---

<p>CSO & Youth Consultations</p>	<p>Held a day prior to draft official statements. CARAM Asia contributed to all consultations, raised migrant’s issues and encouraged & facilitated members to join meetings.</p>
---	---

In these advocacy platforms, CARAM Asia raised migrant workers’ HIV & AIDS, Sexual and Reproductive and other health issues which has been taken into account and covered in the 7th APPC official report in paragraph 87 for the first time in the history.

CARAM Asia Activity under MDG TF: Engagement with Global Health Council (GHC)

<p>New Membership with GHC</p>	<p>CARAM Asia was officially announced as a new member of GHC. CARAM Asia’s inclusion in GHC presents the opportunities to broaden its reach and engage with stakeholders, advocating for the healthcare concerns of labor migrants on various platforms. CARAM Asia involved in two Health Equity working groups at GHC, in which Budget & Appropriations Working Group and Multilateral Engagement Working Group. CARAM Asia aims to leverage the membership benefits, including advocacy opportunities such as engaging with the broader community in the US and participating in GHC-led roundtables on global health issues.</p>
---------------------------------------	---

<p>Regional Research on the Universal Health Coverage for MWs and Advocacy in Motion (AIM) Grantee Webinar</p>	<p>CARAM Asia received a small grant from GHC in 2022 to research "Universal Health Coverage for Migrant Workers" in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. In February 2023, CARAM Asia presented their findings and recommendations at the GHC Advocacy in Motion (AIM) Grantee Webinar, focusing on health rights for migrant workers, particularly HIV-positive migrant workers and SRHR services.</p>
---	---



<p>Civil Society Health Equity Focus Group</p>	<p>CARAM Asia, other GHC grantees and CSOs attended this focus group discussion and came up with concept and established the Health Equity Round table. CARAM Asia also registered to participate in the Health Equity Round table. The round table focused on co-creating an advocacy strategy to address priority health equity issues, linking global health equity initiatives to national and regional level policy and advocacy, providing Round table members with opportunities to meet and interact with global health leaders and other stakeholders that influence or inform health policies and sharing information and knowledge about the global health landscape and pathways for CSO engagement.</p>
---	--

CARAM Asia Activities under MDG TF: Other CARAM Asia Participation and Engagements in the Meetings

1	As a member of Asia Pacific Alliance (APA), CARAM Asia filled out surveys related to sexual and reproductive health rights, provided feedback on reports, and participated in APA members' meetings.
2	Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue: Gender-Based Violence Services Mapping for Women Migrant Workers in Malaysia organized by Women's Aid Organization (WAO)
3	World Aids Day Celebration organized by North South Initiative (NSI)
4	WHO' Global Research Agenda on Health and Migration organized by World Health Organization (WHO) and Health and Migration Programme (PHM)
5	"DOCUMENTARY FILM", screening of "Trapped People" organized by Selangor Friends Of Women Association
6	Webinar on "UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women – 2022 Annual Report" organized by UN Trust Fund
7	Report Launch: Insights from Inter-sectional Dialogues on Migration organized by Women in Migration Network (WIMN)
8	International Dialogue on Migration (IDM) titled 'Think about Tomorrow, Act Today: The Future of Human Mobility and Climate Change' organized by the International Organization of Migration (IOM)
9	Round-table on "The Future Remedy For Migrant Workers in Asia" organized by the International Organization of Migration (IOM), Department of Migration Workers (DMW), Government of Philippines and Migrant Forum Asia (MFA).

6.0 Task Force on Migration, Climate Change and Humanitarian Crisis (MCCHC)



The climate migrants are forced to leave their homes due to sudden or gradual environmental changes caused by climate change, adversely affecting the living conditions, whether they choose to move temporarily or permanently, within their country or abroad (IOM 2008 definition). The variations in the world's climate have been happening for all of human history with the passage of time. It cause by rising temperature, decreasing rainfall, rising sea levels, and increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather conditions and become significant drivers for climate migration as these climate changes are leading to massive flooding, earthquake, landslides, and droughts, causing extensive damage to property, assets, and human life. In 2020, there were an estimate 30.7 million displaced people due to climate or weather-related disasters and Asia-Pacific is the most affected region. Countries like India, China and the Philippines recorded the highest number of displacement in Asia which account for 12 million people due to natural disasters. The science of climate change indicates that these trends are likely to get worse. Asia is most at risk as it continues to be exposed to climate change impacts and as a home to the majority of the world's poor, the population of this region is particularly vulnerable to dangerous climate impacts that push people to migrate. Therefore, urgent actions needed to find drivers, impacts and solutions to adapt with the continuous change of climates.

CARAM Asia Activities under MCCHC TF: Call for input: Thematic Priorities of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons

CARAM Asia shared the views and perspective on the issues of the human rights of internally displaced persons through the Call for input: Thematic Priorities of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons and contributed to the development of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons to the 78th session of the General Assembly. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Ms. Paula Gaviria Betancur, sought input from a wide range of stakeholders regarding her proposed thematic priorities, formed the basis of her report to the General Assembly. The report explored various impacts of displacement drivers, looking at obstacles to protecting human rights, and identifying factors that lead to lasting solutions. Key themes include the multifaceted effects of climate change on internal displacement, the significance of criminal violence in displacement, the connection between internally displaced persons and peace processes, and strategies for long-term community integration or reintegration. The input submitted by CARAM Asia on 12th June 2023 was published in the mandate website, accessible [here](#).



Climate change and internal displacement

Questions	Responses
<p>What issues related to internal displacement and climate change are most serious in terms of protecting human rights, reducing barriers, and fostering conditions for progressively achieving durable solutions that would warrant the Special Rapporteurs attention and reporting?</p>	<p>Climate change causes many serious issues especially to the vulnerable groups. When climate change affects people and areas already subjected to weak institutions, political and socioeconomic marginalization, and conflict, it has profound humanitarian consequences, particularly in terms of its effect on livelihoods, health, and migration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Livelihood.</i> Global warming impacts on agriculture and fishing livelihoods, by causing shorter crop cycles, reduced yields, insect pest production, deteriorating coastal ecosystems, and extreme weather events that can damage life property, and live-stock. • <i>Health.</i> By increasing food insecurity, water stress, morbidity, mortality, and the likelihood of water- and vector borne diseases, while decreasing nutritional contents in food, climate change threatens to undermine the last fifty years of progress in public health. • <i>Migration & international labour migration.</i> Climate change also elevates international labour migration. This is because the survivors of natural disasters will be looking for job opportunities to support their families desperately which can put them at risk of trafficking in persons. In consequence, people who are displaced by natural disasters are at high risk of exploitation and need support to resettle their lives. Thus, these vulnerable communities need attention and strategies to prevent trafficking in persons. Moreover their left behind family members of labour migrants are vulnerable to deteriorated living conditions, violence, abuse and exploitation due to lack of protection for women and children.
<p>What specific groups or populations are particularly or differentially affected by climate change and internal displacement? Is their meaningful and full participation ensured and if so, how? If not, what are the main obstacles</p>	<p>The most affected groups are those group which are marginalized, institutions are weak and/or conflict that stretched people's coping capacities to the effect of climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Weak governance and institutions.</i> Governmental and informal institutions in general play an important part in shaping climate vulnerability and coping capacity. "Failed" governments are often unable to meet basic standards of human security for citizens and struggle to provide support or response to crises or disasters, especially for more marginalized people. Corruption also hinders effective adaptation policies and crisis response strategies. Cases from Somalia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Haiti demonstrate examples of governments that have struggled to deal with droughts, storms, or floods, with ensuing negative humanitarian consequences. (Oppenheimer et al., 2014). • <i>Marginalization.</i> Systematic findings highlight the particular structural challenges that make women, indigenous people, and children more vulnerable to climate change than other parts of the population, even where institutions are generally strong. Besides, people whom dependent on agricultural and fishing livelihoods face higher risks from climate change, particularly smallholder farmers that rely on rainfall. In addition, the humanitarian consequences of climate change are expected to be most severe in poorer countries, in large part due to weaker coping capacity and structural challenges. Overall, Africa and Asia are expected to be the most vulnerable regions in terms of humanitarian consequences of climate change. The impacts on smallholder farms are more pronounced in arid and semi-arid areas, and rising sea level particularly threatens farms in the low-lying coastal plains of Southeast Asia. • <i>Conflicts</i> (especially protracted conflicts) erode and challenge institution building, and states', groups', and individuals' ability to handle, adapt to and plan for climate change. (Adger et al., 2014).



Questions	Responses
<p>What actions would you suggest the Special Rapporteur take to address these issues, within the purview of her mandate and complementary to the actions of her predecessors?</p>	<p>Based on the research by Boano et al. (2008), we recommended few comprehensive actions that Special Rapporteur can consider enforcing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting high-level dialogue to develop, strengthen and harmonize international understanding of concepts, knowledge-base, vocabulary and experience related to the multiple cause-effect links between environmental degradation, socio-economic impacts and environmentally-induced forced migration• Promoting the identification and mapping of potential environmental 'hotspots', 'tipping points' and internal displacement trends in relation to climate change• Enhancing knowledge of livelihood resilience, successful adaptation, preparedness and coping strategies used by local populations to mitigate the impacts of environment change• Commissioning research on potential governance models for areas experiencing degradation and migration pressures.• Fostering institutional reform and enhancing policy responses and competences by advocating the clarification of international institutional responsibilities for promoting and coordinating policy responses to climate change and internal displacement• Adopting proactive development policies to address the potential migratory impacts of climate change which stress coping capacities, adaptation and sustainability and which strengthen the incorporation of resilience strategies in programmes and projects• Promoting the integration of environmental policies and responses in relief, recovery and development programmes in situations of conflict and forced displacement• Urging developing countries to integrate the impacts and responses to climate change into Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and conflict reduction strategies, developing principles and practices for 'environment proofing' development strategies programmes and projects and requiring donors and development agencies urgently to adopt them.
<p>What are the main elements of effective preventive strategies for internal displacement driven by climate change, including adaptation measures and planned relocation policies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Knowledge</i> is the first step to action. Therefore, the stakeholders should focus on educating the public especially, the vulnerable communities as it is the most important factor in the success of any program, policy, framework, law and organisation. People from communities that are poor, illiterate, unable to access basic needs and live in remote locations need to understand that they have rights and those rights are protected by the law; that justice and aid is provided to victims of climate change and that can be the last option.• There is urgent need to invest in the warning systems to inform people about expected floods and earthquakes. There should be resources available for advanced level of research to enhance capacity of relevant government departments to issue flood, cyclone/typhons, and earthquake warnings to public. Governments need to have support systems in place to help people in relocating quickly when there is risk of any natural disaster.• Following that, ensuring a continuous funding and educating is crucial to ensure the sustainability of actions taken by the stakeholders. The public needs to be reminded constantly of the negative effect of climate change. Fines and penalties need to be imposed by local governing bodies to ensure negative behaviour that cause climate change does not reoccur. Education on the effects of climate change and various ways to combat it needs to be taught to children in schools and all educational institutions to ensure people understand the impacts of climate change, Therefore, empowering them with skills, knowledge, attitudes and values that will act as proxies of change in the long run.• There is need to conduct a research on the preventable measures which can reduce the climate disasters for example help developing countries to build more dams which probably can reduce the events of floods.



(Re)integration of internally displaced persons

Questions	Responses
<p>What issues related to integration or reintegration of internally displaced persons are most serious in terms of protecting human rights, reducing barriers and fostering conditions for progressively achieving durable solutions that would warrant the Special Rapporteurs attention and reporting?</p>	<p>According to the article by O’Neil (2009), there are few serious issues related to integration or reintegration of internally displaced person which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Security.</i> Creating or maintaining an environment that is safe enough for displaced persons to return to their homes and places of origin is important matter. Therefore, the presence of armed groups, whether belonging to regular forces or militias, may create a serious obstacle to return and may be considered as a threat by potential returnees due to their past behaviour, ethnic origin, or lack of discipline. This is especially true where these forces have caused the displacement suffered by returnees. In such cases, it is necessary to either disarm such groups or to integrate them into the post-conflict armed forces of the country concerned. (O’Neill, 2009). • <i>Property.</i> Tensions usually develop between local communities and displaced persons and returnees which may be couched in ethnic, religious, or political terms but are often related to disputes over resources and property. Population movements usually create conflicts over land and dwellings. Lack of reconstruction of destroyed houses or non-return of property left behind which are taken over by either the local population or persons who themselves have been displaced - create serious obstacles to return. The judiciary may be overburdened or otherwise unable to solve property disputes. Female heads of household may face additional problems. They often lack property titles in their own names, have lost access to their pre-displacement property due to divorce or because their husband have abandoned them, or cannot inherit their deceased husbands' property. These factors can prevent them from submitting claims for both repossession and reconstruction of their houses. (O’Neill, 2009). • <i>Reconciliation and transitional justice.</i> In certain situations, displaced persons cannot return to their places of origin and homes or their return is not sustainable because they are not welcomed by local communities and encounter discrimination or even acts of violence. Inter- and intracommunal tensions over access to land and water may further exacerbate IDPs' and returnees' fear for their physical safety and lead to out breaks of violent clashes. In all these situations, robust steps aimed at reconciling communities and restoring justice should be considered. Mechanisms of reconciliation and transitional justice should be without prejudice to displaced persons' rights to restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, reparation, and guarantees of non-repetition. (O’Neill, 2009).
<p>What specific groups or populations among internally displaced persons face particular challenges in integrating or reintegrating, and what are these challenges? Which challenges are faced by host communities and how to address them?</p>	<p>One of the challenge faces by host communities is getting back their property. This affect more to the certain minorities or indigenous peoples,, especially when they were holding traditional but informal titles not recognized by the authorities. Specific problems also arise where persons cannot return to their original lands, such as those who have been displaced for two or more generations and are no longer considered entitled to particular areas of land, or where land has become unusable due to landmines or ongoing occupation by militias.</p>



Questions	Responses
<p>What actions would you suggest that the Special Rapporteur take to address these issues within the purview of her mandate and complementary to the actions of her predecessors?</p>	<p>Peace agreement alone is not enough. Therefore, we suggest Special Rapporteur to call the concerned governments to take action on the issues mentioned below based on the article by Kälin (2008):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ensuring voluntariness of return.</i> Return should take place voluntarily based on an informed decision by the persons concerned without coercion of any kind. IDPs are usually citizens of their country and enjoy like all other citizens the rights to liberty of movement and to choose their residence, and thus are entitled to choose whether they want to return to the place of origin, integrate locally where they were displaced, or resettle in another part of the country.• <i>Ensuring the safety of returnees.</i> Returnees must not suffer from attacks, harassment, intimidation and persecution or any other form of punitive action upon return to their home communities, or from the dangers of landmines and UXOs.• <i>Returning property to the displaced and reconstruction of their houses.</i> At a minimum returnees must have access to mechanisms for property restitution or compensation.• <i>Creating an environment that sustains return, including through appropriate funding mechanisms.</i> Returnees must have access without discrimination to basic public services, documentation and employment and income-generating opportunities.



8.0 References



- A/HRC/2006/4/38/Add.3 (Colombia), para. 57.
- Adger, W. N., J. M. Pulhin, J. Barnett, et al. (2014), supra note 5.
- Berman, E., M. Callen, JH. Felter, & JN. Shapiro (2011), “Do Working Men Rebel? Insurgency and Unemployment in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55(4): 496–528. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002710393920>.
- Boano, C., Zetter, R., & Morris, T. (2008). *Environmentally displaced people: understanding the linkages between environmental change, livelihoods and forced migration*. Environmentally displaced people: understanding the linkages between environmental change, livelihoods and forced migration.
- Buhaug, H., TA. Benjaminsen, E. Sjaastad, & OM. Theisen (2015), “Climate Variability, Food Production Shocks, and Violent Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *Environmental Research Letters* 10(12): 125015. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/10/12/125015>.
- Busby, J. (2018), supra note 22
- Das, Tuhin K.; Haldar, Sushil K.; Das Gupta, Ivy; Kundu, Sangeeta (August 2016). *Deprivation of Internally Displaced Persons: Case Studies in India* (First ed.). India: Power Publishers. p. 130. ISBN 978-93-85892-71-4.
- Dirikgil, N. Addressing the Prevention of Internal Displacement: the Right Not to Be Arbitrarily Displaced. *Int. Migration & Integration* 24, 113–138 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-022-00935-4>
- E/CN.4/2006/71 /Add.4 (Bosnia-Herzegovina), para. 39; A/61/276, para. 34 (Northern Uganda).
- E/CN.4/2006/71 /Add.6 (Sudan), para. 47.
- Fauk, N. K., Gesesew, H. A., Seran, A. L., Raymond, C., Tahir, R., & Ward, P. R. (2022). Barriers to accessing HIV Care Services in Host low and Middle Income Countries: views and experiences of Indonesian male ex-migrant workers living with HIV. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(21), 14377.
- Human Rights Watch. “UAE: Migrant Worker Abuses Linked to Broader Climate Harms | Human Rights Watch.” Human Rights Watch, November 21, 2023. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/11/21/uae-migrant-worker-abuses-linked-broader-climate-harms>.
- International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2022). *Asia–Pacific Migration Data Report 2022*. <https://publications.iom.int/books/asia-pacific-migration-data-report-2022>
- Kälin, W. (2008, March 13). *Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons: An Essential Dimension of Peacebuilding*. Brookings; Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/durable-solutions-for-internally-displaced-persons-an-essential-dimension-of-peacebuilding>
- Loganathan, T., Chan, Z. X., & Pocock, N. S. (2020). Healthcare financing and social protection policies for migrant workers in Malaysia. *PLoS One*, 15(12), e0243629.



- Migration and skills development. (2018, May 24). Bangladesh.iom.int. <https://bangladesh.iom.int/news/migration-and-skills-development>
- Noh NA, Wahab H Abd, Bakar Ah SHA, Islam MR (2016). Public health services for foreign workers in Malaysia. *Soc Work Public Health*. 31(5):419–30. DOI: 10.1080/19371918.2015.1125321.
- O’Neill, W. “Internal Displacement and Peacebuilding: Institutional Responses.” *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 1, 1 Jan. 2009, pp. 151–180, <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdp018>.
- Oppenheimer, M., M. Campos, R. Warren, et al. (2014), “Emergent Risks and Key Vulnerabilities.” in C. B. Field, V. R. Barros, D. J. Dokken, et al. (eds.) *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change*, Cambridge
- Pocock, N., Suphanchaimat, R., & World Health Organization. (2021). *Moving towards culturally competent, migrant-inclusive health systems: a comparative study of Malaysia and Thailand*.
- Raleigh, C., HJ. Choi, & D. Kniveton (2015), “The Devil Is in the Details: An Investigation of the Relationships between Conflict, Food Price and Climate across Africa,” *Global Environmental Change* 32(May): 187– 99. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2015.03.005>.
- Seno, S. (2023, July 6). Migrant workers in Asia approach pre-pandemic levels. *Nikkei Asia*. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Work/Migrant-workers-in-Asia-approach-pre-pandemic-levels>
- Stakeholders’ Capacity Building Guidelines. (n.d.). https://reginproject.eu/website/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/D4.3_CapacityBuildingGuidelines.pdf
- Zehadul Karim AHM, Mohamad Diah N (2015). Health seeking behavior of the Bangladeshi migrant workers in Malaysia: some suggestive recommendations in adjustive context. *Asian Soc Sci*. 11(10):348_57. DOI: 10.5539/ass.v11n10p348.
- The World Bank. (2023). *World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees, and Societies*. World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2023>

CARAM ASIA BERHAD
Wisma Hamid Arshat,
12-5, Jalan Bangsar Utama 9, Bangsar Utama
59000 Kuala Lumpur
MALAYSIA
Tel: +603 22827708
<http://caram-asia.org>

