



CARAM Asia

COORDINATION OF ACTION RESEARCH ON AIDS AND MOBILITY IN ASIA

2024 CARAM ASIA ANNUAL REPORT



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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 has long been a part of human development and is increasingly shaped by modern socio-economic inequalities and global disparities. In Asia, labor migration has emerged as a vital response to unequal access to income, employment, and public services across countries (World Bank, 2023). Structural "push" factors, such as political instability, poverty, climate-related displacement, and weak labor protections, drive individuals from their home countries, while "pull" factors, such as better wages, demand for low-skilled labor, and perceived opportunities—attract them to more developed nations (ILO, 2021). The economic contributions of migrant workers are undeniable: countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, the Philippines, Indonesia, and India rely heavily on remittances as a major source of national income. In 2023 alone, remittances to low- and middle-income countries were projected to reach USD 669 billion, with a significant share from Asian migrants (World Bank, 2024).

Migrant workers continue to fill labor shortages in key sectors such as construction, domestic work, and agriculture in receiving countries including Malaysia, Singapore, the Gulf States, and South Korea. While they power vital industries and support millions of families through remittances, many migrant workers are denied fundamental labor and health rights. Instead of adopting a rights-based approach, many governments treat migrants as temporary labor commodities, disregarding protections guaranteed under international labor standards (Amnesty International, 2023). Migrants, particularly women working in domestic spaces—often experience isolation, are denied family unification, and face restrictions that heighten their vulnerability to HIV, reproductive health issues, and exploitation. In numerous destination countries, mandatory health screenings exclude HIV-positive migrants from employment and subject them to arrest or deportation, further reinforcing stigma and barriers to care (UNAIDS, 2022).

Globally, the number of international migrants reached 281 million in 2020, with over 187 million migrating primarily for labor, nearly half of them women (IOM, 2022). Asia remains the largest source region for international migrants, hosting around 106 million migrants born in the region. South Asia accounts for approximately 30 million, Southeast Asia 23.6 million, and East Asia 13.7 million (IOM, 2022). The recent uptick in new migrant deployments, from 2.2 million in 2021 to 4.6 million in 2022, demonstrates the continued reliance on labor migration, even amid rising economic and political uncertainties (Seno, 2023). Yet, as numbers increase, so does the risk of labor exploitation and exclusion from healthcare systems, especially among low-wage and undocumented workers.

Addressing these intersecting vulnerabilities, CARAM Asia, a regional network established in 1997 has positioned itself as a key advocate for migrant worker's labor and health rights with focus on HIV and AIDS and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights for women migrants. Based in Kuala Lumpur and holding consultative status with the UN ECOSOC, CARAM Asia comprises 42 organizations across 18 countries in Asia and the Middle East. The network advocates for the

integration of HIV and SRHR into national migration policies to strengthen protections for migrant workers, especially women and Migrants Living with HIV (MLHIV).

To operationalize its mission, CARAM Asia implements a strategic plan structured around five core pillars: (1) conducting participatory action research (PAR) studies to generate knowledge and evidence in support of the rights of MWs and use the evidence for advocacy and awareness raising, (2) advocating for the progression of MWs' rights at different levels including national, regional, and international levels, (3) implementing relevant capacity-building activities in accordance with the needs of the stakeholders involved (MWs, CSOs, PLHIV networks, etc.), (4) conducting media campaigns and other relevant public relations activities and (5) increasing access to direct services for MWs, including health, legal, and other relevant services such as counseling sessions, referral services, self-support groups, service mechanism reconstruction, online psycho-social supports and medical assistance. These strategies are aimed at improving access to justice, legal aid, healthcare, and psychosocial support for migrant workers. In line with this strategies, CARAM Asia established four thematic Task Forces (TFs):

- TF1: Migration, Health, HIV and Well-Being (MHH) focus on stigma, treatment access, SRHR, and mental health;
- TF2: Migrant Workers' Rights (MWR) advocates for legal protections, with emphasis on domestic workers, undocumented migrants, and gender-based exploitation;
- TF3: Migration, Development, and Globalization (MDG) examine how global economic policies impact migrant well-being;
- TF4: Migration, Climate Change, and Humanitarian Crisis (MCCHC) explore displacement caused by environmental stressors.

Each task force plays a critical role in CARAM Asia's coordinated regional response to protect and promote migrant's labor and health rights under shifting migration dynamics. These include increasingly restrictive immigration and labor policies, the criminalization of migrant worker's based on health conditions such as HIV/AIDS, pregnancy, tuberculosis, etc., persistent stigma and discrimination, lack of access to health & social services, lack of access to justice, gender-based violence, and barriers to sexual and reproductive health services. Additionally, rising xenophobia, uncertain economy condition, and climate-induced displacement further exacerbate their vulnerability. In this context, the task forces serve as strategic platforms for advancing collective action, policy engagement and rights-based programming across the region.

2.0 CARAM Asia Major Progression and Achievement in 2024



Building on years of collective progress and regional solidarity, 2024 marked another significant milestone year for CARAM Asia and its implementing partners across Southeast Asia, South Asia and the Middle East, as they brought to fruition the final year of the project titled “Prevention and Advocacy on Migrant HIV Issues: Strengthening Access to Health Services and Advancing the Rights of HIV-Positive Migrants in Asia”. This regional project, which entered its final implementation phase in 2024, represented the culmination of years of coordinated action, capacity building and strategic advocacy. It was made possible through the generous and sustained support of the Robert Carr Fund (RCF) for Civil Society Networks. RCF’s financial support throughout the 2022–2024 funding cycle as well as in earlier phases was critical in empowering CARAM Asia and its partners to advance the health, rights and inclusion of inadequately served populations (ISPs), particularly migrant communities impacted by HIV. Throughout the project’s cycle, CARAM Asia worked to amplify the voices of HIV-positive migrants, increase their access to essential health services, and influence policy change at national and regional levels. The outcomes achieved were a testament to the strength of its partnerships and the collective commitment of civil society organizations across the region. Key implementing partners who contributed to these efforts included SPEAK Trust (Pakistan), Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Programme, OKUP (Bangladesh), Community Development Services, CDS (Sri Lanka), POURAKHI (Nepal), Action for Health Initiatives, ACHIEVE (Philippines), North South Initiative, NSI (Malaysia) and Migration Services and Development, MSD (Lebanon).

CARAM Asia has continued to make strategic advancements in Pakistan through an engagement of its project partner, SPEAK Trust, which built on the foundations laid in earlier years by deepening engagement with key stakeholders. In 2024, CARAM Asia made notable progress through addressing critical data gaps related to migrants living with HIV through the successful completion of a national-level research study. This milestone was achieved with direct collaboration with SPEAK Trust from the National AIDS Control Program (NACP) and Punjab AIDS Control Program (PACP), who provided access to key data. The findings shed light on the socio-economic and epidemiological profile of over 1,100 HIV-positive migrants and their families, as an essential step for informing national policy. This research served as a cornerstone for further advocacy efforts aimed at improving the management and health support for HIV-positive deported migrants at Pakistan’s airports. Building on the technical groundwork laid in 2022, the research outcomes were used to convene national stakeholders and push forward the nomination of a Technical Working Group (TWG), intended to formalize an HIV screening and referral mechanism at points of entry. This was accompanied by the appointment of a specialized consultant and coordination with NACP and the Ministry of Health. These activities reflect CARAM Asia’s sustained commitment to ensuring deported migrants are connected to voluntary HIV

testing and linked to healthcare services upon arrival, contributing to a rights-based, and health-focused migration governance framework.

In 2024, CARAM Asia continued to advance evidence-based advocacy in Nepal by building on its longstanding efforts to integrate migrant health into national and local governance agendas. Recognizing that a thorough review of existing policies is essential to prioritize migrants' health concerns and strengthen advocacy efforts, CARAM Asia in collaboration with its project partner, POURAKHI Nepal developed and launched a comprehensive policy brief that examined current laws, programs, and institutional gaps related to migrant health in Nepal. This initiative provided a clear foundation for advocacy by documenting critical shortcomings, particularly around access to healthcare for HIV-positive returnees. In support of this, POURAKHI convened a province-level policy dialogue in Chitwan in collaboration with the Provincial Policy & Planning Commission and local authorities. The event brought together government officials, civil society actors, and health professionals to collectively identify policy priorities and propose practical solutions. Key outcomes included recommendations for improved health infrastructure, anti-stigma initiatives, and the integration of HIV-related services into local governance systems. These proposals were formally submitted to Madi Municipality and the provincial commission, marking a significant milestone in CARAM Asia and its project partners, POURAKHI's ongoing advocacy to protect the health rights of migrant workers in Nepal.

In 2024, Lebanon's compounding crises such as economic collapse, displacement, and ongoing conflict, further deepened the vulnerabilities of migrant workers, limiting access to healthcare and increasing exposure to exploitation, detention, and discrimination. Despite these challenges, CARAM Asia successfully delivered life-saving interventions through its comprehensive medical support and HIV awareness activities, in a joint collaboration with its partner, MSD. A total of 44 migrant workers, most of them women, received medical assistance including surgeries, diagnostic tests, medication, and hospitalization—often coordinated in partnership with NGOs and embassies. Notably, five beneficiaries were assisted at a shelter in Ghosta, established by MSD for displaced migrants during regional escalations. Alongside medical support, CARAM Asia through its implementing partners, MSD implemented 30 HIV/AIDS awareness sessions, 23 in community centers and shelters, and 7 in prisons, reaching 589 beneficiaries from diverse nationalities. These sessions recorded a 107% increase in knowledge, demonstrating measurable impact on awareness and prevention among migrant workers and detainees. Amidst severe service gaps and security barriers, CARAM Asia's work stands out as a vital bridge for migrant communities in Lebanon, ensuring continuity of care and empowerment through rights-based health education. However, due to limited resources the Network was not able to handle or cater the needs of large number of migrant workers in the country who also need immediate attention and support. The migrants in extremely critical conditions were given priority over others who are in dire need of health services but it requires more financial resources.

Sri Lanka continues to face challenges in its HIV response, particularly among young people preparing for foreign employment, many of whom lack comprehensive knowledge on HIV prevention, safe migration, and psychosocial support. This knowledge gap increases their vulnerability to health risks and exploitation throughout the migration cycle. In response to this, CARAM Asia worked jointly with its local partner, Community Development Services (CDS) to implement a key initiative in 2024 by training 31 youth peer leaders from diverse backgrounds,

including schools, universities, estates, and working youth on HIV, safe migration, and counselling skills. The training used engaging and interactive methods such as real-life testimonies from PLHIV, condom demonstrations, art and music therapy, and role-playing to build empathy and break stigma. Pre- and post-tests showed a substantial improvement in knowledge, with average scores rising from 5/10 to 9/10. Participants reported gaining practical skills and a deeper understanding of their role in spreading accurate information and supporting peers. This youth-led approach represents a significant achievement for CARAM Asia in advancing HIV awareness and migrant's protection at the grassroots level, empowering a new generation to take the lead in health education within their communities.

In the Philippines, Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) continue to face systemic challenges in accessing healthcare and HIV services, particularly those deported due to their HIV status. In 2024, under its regional project, CARAM Asia advanced key advocacy and policy outcomes in the Philippines through close collaboration with its project partner, ACHIEVE. This partnership led to significant progress in policy engagement, influencing national frameworks and strengthening government accountability on migrant's health. ACHIEVE played a central role in finalizing the strategic plan of the Philippine Migrant Health Network (PMHN), ensuring that HIV and mental health priorities for OFWs are embedded into national action over the next five years. It also provided technical inputs to the Philippine National AIDS Council (PNAC), contributing to the development of HIV messaging, improved guidelines for PLHIV insurance, and the drafting of new Implementing Rules and Regulations for the HIV and AIDS Policy Act. Through coordinated efforts, ACHIEVE facilitated the participation of OFWs and returnees in national consultations, ensuring their voices shaped prevention messaging and future policies. These advocacy efforts were reinforced by grassroots engagement, including psychosocial debriefings for 50 PLHIV OFWs and HIV orientations for 37 migrant leaders, bridging national policy and community realities. This multi-level achievement demonstrates CARAM Asia's impact in elevating migrant health rights in the Philippines, achieved through sustained national collaboration and civil society engagement.

Despite Bangladesh's economic reliance on labor migration, with over 900,000 workers deployed abroad in 2024 and remittances reaching a record USD 26.9 billion, migrant workers remain highly vulnerable to HIV and health-related risks due to inadequate pre-migration awareness, limited access to healthcare abroad, and systemic gaps in returnee reintegration). Many migrants, especially women and those returning from the Middle East and Africa, contract HIV while working under harsh conditions and face further challenges upon return due to the absence of health screenings and support systems. Responding to this urgent need, in 2024 under the regional project led by CARAM Asia, OKUP conducted 35 pre-departure orientation (PDO) sessions, reaching 880 outbound migrants with comprehensive & vital HIV and health education. The program included stress management, safe migration guidance, awareness of health rights, and myth-busting on HIV transmission. Pre- and post-test assessments showed a remarkable jump in awareness, for example, only 12% of participants initially understood what HIV is, compared to 100% after the sessions. Following the PDOs, 290 outbound migrants proactively contacted OKUP's helpline, reflecting a strong demand for continued support. This intervention, supported through CARAM Asia's regional framework, plays a vital role in strengthening preventive health measures and bridging access gaps among Bangladesh's migrant population.

Malaysia continues to be among the countries that deport migrants based on their HIV status, posing serious threats to migrant workers' access to healthcare and human rights. Migrants, particularly undocumented and refugee populations often avoid seeking medical attention due to fear of arrest, stigma, or deportation, resulting in delayed HIV diagnoses, untreated infections, and heightened mental health burdens. As part of its regional initiative, CARAM Asia worked jointly with North South Initiative (NSI) in 2024 to expand the Migrant Health RESQ Team, strengthening access to emergency and HIV care for highly marginalized groups. Under the Comprehensive HIV Services for Migrants (CHSM) and Continuity in CHSM (CCHSM) programs, the RESQ Team tested 246 clients in Malaysia, identifying 44 HIV-positive cases (17.89%), of whom 34 began treatment and 5 achieved viral suppression. In Indonesia, through the CCHSM program, 64 migrants were tested, with 28 testing positive and 4 reaching viral suppression. The RESQ Team also assisted individual cases, including a Syrian refugee and two Myanmar migrants living with HIV, by securing treatment, shelter, financial support, and even community reintegration through volunteer roles. Through partnerships with over 20 NGOs and health facilities across Malaysia and fee waivers from hospitals, the team ensured free testing and access to life-saving care. This integrated, rights-based model stands as a significant breakthrough in addressing the structural barriers that hinder migrants from receiving HIV-related services in Malaysia and the region. Large number of migrant workers in Malaysia are in need of these essential services, however, due to limited financial resources, CARAM Asia and NSI had to priorities the cases more critical in nature. Availability of more resources can help in supporting the rest who are in urgent need.



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 Participatory Action Research (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 2024 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 2024, 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

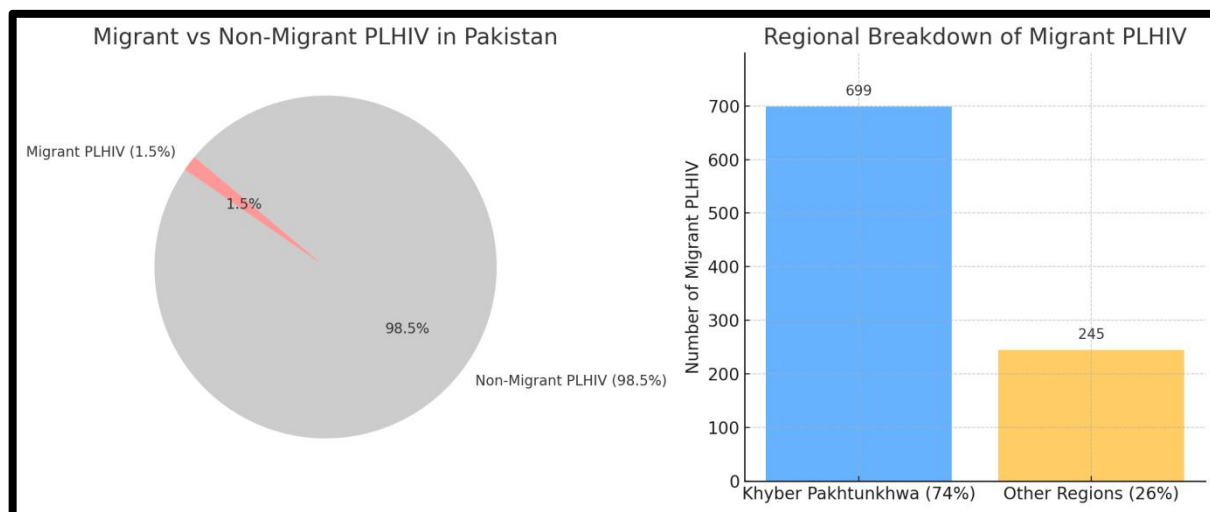
Activity 1: Advocacy meetings to integrate migrants in HIV interventions and sustainable financing



Description:

A national-level research study was conducted in Pakistan as part of CARAM Asia's regional project, in coordination with the partner SPEAK Trust, to determine the percentage of HIV-positive migrants among returnees, deported migrant workers, and their families. Data collection began in 2022 through collaboration with the National AIDS Control Program (NACP), Punjab AIDS Control Program (PACP), and the Health Services Academy (HSA), though access to data concerning spouses of HIV-positive migrants remained limited. In 2024, several advocacy meetings were held with NACP, PACP-KP, and HSA to seek more data access and share preliminary research findings. A comprehensive report was subsequently developed and shared with the Integrated HIV-AIDS, Hepatitis & Thalassemia Control Program (IHHTCP) and the Ministry of Health. Preparations have been finalized for the formal launch of the research report, which brought together key government stakeholders, civil society actors and public health institutions. Additionally, a Technical Working Group (TWG) is being established, comprising representatives from the Ministry of Health, NACP, PACP, HSA, and civil society organizations, to review the findings and develop concrete recommendations for integrating migrants, including returnees and deportees, into national HIV policies and intervention frameworks.

Outcome:



The research successfully revealed that **1.5% of Pakistan's 63,000 PLHIV are migrants, with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa accounting for 74% of these cases.** These findings strengthened collaboration between SPEAK and national health institutions, resulting in **recognition of the need to include migrants in national HIV responses.** The research provided a strong foundation for policy advocacy, with plans in place for national participation in the TWG to drive sustainable and inclusive HIV programming and financing.

Activity 2: Advocacy with key stakeholders to streamline deportation process of HIV-positive migrants at Islamabad airport

Description:

As part of CARAM Asia's regional project, a targeted advocacy meeting was conducted in Pakistan in coordination with SPEAK Trust to address gaps in health service access for deported HIV-positive migrants. The objective of the activity was to advocate for the establishment of a formal screening, referral and linkage-to-care mechanism at Islamabad airport, ensuring that returnees diagnosed with HIV receive timely support and are connected to appropriate health services. This advocacy was directed at key national and provincial health authorities, including the National AIDS Control Program (NACP), the Special Secretary of Health, and the Ministry of Health's Program Director, with whom direct consultations were held. As a result, there was formal agreement to engage a specialized consultant to design a national strategy, which will be submitted to the National HIV Technical Working Group (TWG) for review and adoption. This advocacy initiative was closely aligned with the findings of the national research study (Activity 6), strengthening the evidence base for migrant-inclusive HIV policies. To support broader system-level change, other critical stakeholders such as the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), UN-IOM, UNAIDS, and the Association of PLHIV were also engaged to ensure inter-agency coordination and sustained policy follow-up.

Outcome:

The meeting resulted in **strengthened coordination with NACP and the Ministry of Health, marking progress toward the establishment of an HIV screening and referral**

mechanism at points of entry. The hiring of a consultant, along with alignment to the national research findings, provided a clear strategic direction. This initiative also helped streamline inter-agency collaboration and elevated national-level dialogue on the rights and health needs of deported migrants living with HIV.

Activity 3: HIV-positive migrant board member's participation in advocacy activities

Description:

Through CARAM Asia's regional project in collaboration with SPEAK Trust, HIV-positive migrant board members in Pakistan were meaningfully engaged in advocacy actions aimed at amplifying the lived experiences of HIV-positive migrants. The objective was to raise awareness among national stakeholders about the specific challenges faced by this community and to promote inclusive, rights-based responses. These members participated in advocacy meetings with policymakers, using their personal experiences to highlight barriers in access to services. They also received training on HIV-related policies, stigma reduction, and advocacy strategies. In addition, their involvement in self-support group activities fostered peer engagement, mutual support, and community empowerment, helping to create a more inclusive platform for migrant voices in the national HIV response.

Outcome:

Their participation strengthened advocacy efforts by bringing authentic, lived experiences into policy discussions. It enhanced peer support networks and encouraged open conversations about stigma, discrimination, and healthcare access. As a result, the involvement of HIV-positive migrants helped promote more inclusive advocacy, reduce stigma and support collective efforts for improving migrant health services.

Activity 4: Comprehensive Policy Brief on Migrant Health



Description:

As part of CARAM Asia's regional project, a policy review initiative was undertaken in Nepal in coordination with its partner POURAKHI Nepal, with the objective of strengthening advocacy for migrant-inclusive health policies. The discussion focused on developing a comprehensive policy brief to assess Nepal's existing laws, policies and programs related to migrant health.

Targeted at national policymakers, including the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Health and Population and the Foreign Employment Board, the brief analyzed the increasing health vulnerabilities of migrant workers, particularly in Gulf countries and Malaysia, such as heightened risk of HIV, poor mental health, and unsafe working and living conditions. While recognizing constitutional commitments to health as a fundamental right, the brief highlighted major gaps in enforcement, limited access to healthcare for undocumented migrants, and inadequate budget allocation for migrant health services. It also reviewed existing welfare provisions and social protection measures, identifying critical shortcomings in addressing the comprehensive health needs of Nepali migrant workers.

Outcome:

The policy brief emphasized the urgent need for targeted health interventions for migrants, especially those living with HIV. It provided **a clear set of recommendations to policymakers, including enforcing bilateral health agreements, allocating sufficient resources for migrant healthcare, improving health education and raising awareness.** The brief positioned POURAKHI as a key factor in influencing health-related migration policies and advocating for stronger inter-agency coordination and accountability.

Activity 5: Stakeholder Consultation/Policy Drafting Meeting

Description:

As part of CARAM Asia's regional initiative to promote evidence-based policy change on migrant health, a stakeholder consultation and policy drafting meeting was organized, coordinated by POURAKHI Nepal, to gather expert input for the development of a national migrant health policy brief. The objective of the consultation was to ensure the policy brief captured the lived realities and health-related challenges faced by Nepali migrant workers, particularly in destination countries such as Malaysia and those in the Gulf region. The meeting brought together key stakeholders from the labor migration and health sectors, including civil society actors, health professionals, and community leaders. Facilitated by an external consultant, discussions focused on identifying critical gaps in current laws and programs, prioritizing actionable recommendations, and integrating migrant voices into national health policy planning.

Outcome:

The consultation **refined the content of the policy brief and ensured its alignment with the actual needs of migrants and insights from field practitioners.** It fostered greater collaboration between stakeholders and reinforced POURAKHI's participatory approach to policy development. The meeting also laid the groundwork for future partnerships and sustained advocacy efforts for migrant health rights.

Activity 6: Province-Level Policy Dialogue



Description:

The next activity under CARAM Asia's regional initiative to advance migrant health rights was a one-day policy dialogue organized by POURAKHI Nepal in Madi Municipality, Chitwan, in collaboration with provincial health authorities. The objective was to foster multi-stakeholder discussion on the health challenges faced by migrant workers—especially those living with HIV—and to gather actionable input for policy improvement. The event engaged key target audiences including local government officials, civil society representatives, provincial health department staff, and media professionals. Featuring an opening address by the Mayor, expert panel discussions, and an interactive session, the dialogue culminated in collaborative planning to develop practical recommendations for more inclusive and responsive migrant health policies.

Outcome:

The dialogue **produced key recommendations, including expanding HIV services, integrating migrant health in local planning, strengthening health infrastructure, training providers, and launching anti-stigma campaigns.** A report will be submitted to the Provincial Policy & Planning Commission and a follow-up meeting is planned within three months. The dialogue enhanced awareness, built consensus among stakeholders, and provided a clear roadmap for incorporating migrant health into local governance and healthcare systems.

Activity 7: Migrant Women's Health and Rights Forum at District Level



Description:

Another activity under CARAM Asia's regional initiative to promote the health and rights of migrant workers was two district-level forums in Madi Municipality, Chitwan, convened by POURAKHI Nepal. The objective was to address barriers to healthcare and increase the participation of returnee women migrant workers and women living with HIV in local decision-making processes. The forums provided a safe platform for 57 participants, including returnee women, women living with HIV, and local stakeholders, to share their experiences, identify challenges, and formulate collective advocacy strategies aimed at improving access to health services and ensuring inclusion in local governance and budget planning.

Outcome:

The forums **identified key issues such as inadequate healthcare access and HIV-related stigma**. Participants advocated for policy inclusion and greater representation in local planning processes. The events **also served as a capacity-building platform, equipping women with the knowledge and tools to influence governance and advocate for their rights**. A follow-up plan was proposed and a detailed report will be submitted to local authorities. The forums marked a critical step toward institutionalizing the health rights of migrant women in local policies and programs.

Activity 8: Advocacy Meetings on Migrants' Right



Description:

Moving into the Philippines, as part of the regional initiative to advance the rights and health of migrant workers living with HIV, CARAM Asia in partnership with ACHIEVE continued its targeted advocacy to improve HIV-related programs and services for migrants. As a civil society member of the Philippine National AIDS Council (PNAC) and part of the Steering Committee of the Philippine Migrant Health Network (PMHN), ACHIEVE actively engaged with community stakeholders and government agencies to ensure that national strategies are responsive to migrant realities. These efforts included the presentation of recent research findings and technical support to strengthen policy and program frameworks focused on migrant health and HIV.

Outcome:

CARAM Asia through its project partners, ACHIEVE remained a key influencer in the migrant health policy space, retaining its leadership role in PMHN post-restructuring and contributing to PNAC activities. **It raised concerns about TB among migrant workers at PMHN's 6th Migrant Health Conference and supported studies on health laws and mental health of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs).** Though its formal PNAC membership ended in November 2024, ACHIEVE continues to contribute as a technical expert, supporting improvements in HIV messaging, policies for people deprived of liberty, financing for HIV programs, and community engagement.

Activity 9: Advocacy Forum



Description:

Aligned with its strategic goal of improving migrant health rights, CARAM Asia in coordination with ACHIEVE conducted the “Comprehensive Health for Migrants” forum in November 2024, integrating outcomes from prior CARAM activities and its Challenge Facility for Civil Society (CFCS) TB project. The objective was to strengthen dialogue between communities, civil society organizations and government agencies on health service gaps affecting migrant workers particularly in the areas of HIV, TB and mental health. Informed by a community assessment reviewing three years of RCF activities, the forum engaged 24 participants to identify critical barriers and explore integrated strategies for improving healthcare access for migrants.

Outcome:

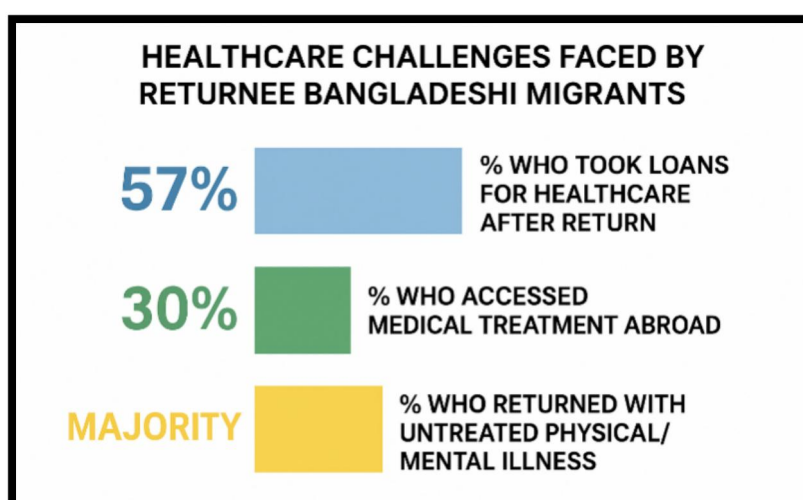
The forum provided **a collaborative space for stakeholders to identify key challenges in migrant healthcare**. It emphasized the need for better data collection, stronger HIV and TB programs, and inclusion of mental health services. Briefers developed by CARAM Asia's partner, ACHIEVE helped ground the discussion in evidence and highlighted ongoing deportations due to HIV or TB. The event reinforced advocacy for comprehensive and inclusive healthcare programs and encouraged continued cooperation among stakeholders to address migrant health needs.

Activity 10: Organizing Advocacy Meeting with the Stakeholders for the HIV Financing and Promotion of Migrants' HIV and Health Rights

Description:

The regional initiative to advance migrant health rights in Bangladesh was done by CARAM Asia in coordination with its partner OKUP by organizing an advocacy meeting in Dhaka to present findings from the research "The Hidden Cost of Migration: Socio-Economic Burdens of Health Challenges Faced by Migrant Workers Abroad." The objective of the event was to engage national stakeholders in meaningful dialogue on the health vulnerabilities of migrant workers and the need for responsive policies. The meeting brought together approximately 60 participants (16 women and 44 men) from government agencies, civil society organizations, NGOs, INGOs, academia, and the media. Key attendees included Mr. Mohammad Shaheen ndc, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment, who served as Chief Guest, as well as representatives from the National AIDS STD Programme, BMET, WEWB, ILO, IOM, and UNAIDS. National media outlets covered the event, further amplifying the findings and policy recommendations.

Outcome:



The research study revealed that **57% of returnee Bangladeshi migrants had taken loans averaging Tk 90,000 for healthcare needs after being denied treatment abroad**. Only **30% of migrant workers accessed medical treatment while working overseas**, while the **majority returned home with untreated physical or mental health conditions**. The advocacy meeting successfully created consensus among stakeholders that health challenges faced by migrants remain unaddressed in current migration governance. It

emphasized the urgent need for stronger implementation of national, regional, and global policies to ensure health protection for migrants throughout the migration cycle.

Activity 11: Observe World Aids Day and International Migrants Day



Description:

CARAM Asia's regional project continued with the aim to highlight the intersection of HIV and migration, through coordination with its partners OKUP (Bangladesh) and CDS (Sri Lanka), they observed World AIDS Day (1 December) and International Migrants Day (18 December) in 2024 through coordinated national and grassroots activities. These efforts aimed to raise awareness, engage stakeholders, and advocate for stronger HIV responses for migrant communities.

In Bangladesh, OKUP mobilized around 100 migrants (60 men, 40 women) through rallies, discussions, and outreach events at both national and local levels. On World AIDS Day, OKUP participated in a national rally and meeting in Dhaka organized by the National AIDS/STD Programme (NASP), where the government reaffirmed its commitment to the 95-95-95 targets. On International Migrants Day, OKUP joined national-level celebrations with the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and organized local events including rallies and prize-giving ceremonies. Outreach activities also included distributing t-shirts to departing migrants at the airport.

In Sri Lanka, CDS and its Life Integrators Coalition (LIC), in partnership with local organizations, led an awareness and petition campaign across Batticaloa, Ampara, and Kandy. Peer leaders conducted door-to-door outreach and collected 1,291 petition signatures urging the government to strengthen HIV services for migrants.

Outcomes:

The World AIDS Day and International Migrants Day activities served **as effective platforms for raising awareness and building momentum around the health rights of migrants and people living with HIV**. Participants gained updated knowledge on HIV and migration-related issues, while strong rapport was established with key stakeholders, including government agencies.

In Bangladesh, **the visibility of CARAM Asia's partner OKUP in national programs contributed to policy dialogues**, reaffirming the government's commitment to achieve global HIV targets and to recognize migrants' contributions through the newly celebrated National

Expatriate Day. The engagement with migrants at field and airport levels also demonstrated solidarity and raised awareness within communities.

In Sri Lanka, **the petition campaign led by CARAM Asia's partner, CDS created direct engagement between migrant communities and local authorities.** In Batticaloa, ESCO and migrant leaders met with District Secretary Mrs. J.J. Muralitharan, who expressed support for forming a District Migration Forum and committed to advocating voluntary HIV testing for returnee migrants. The campaign highlighted the potential of community-led advocacy to influence local-level policy and health program planning.

Activity 12: Develop an advocacy video with a message for World AIDS Day (WAD)

Description:

As part of CARAM Asia's regional advocacy efforts around World AIDS Day 2024, CARAM Asia with CDS in Sri Lanka, and in collaboration with its Life Integrators Coalition (LIC) partners, including YMMA (Kandy), SWOAD (Ampara) and ESCO (Batticaloa) produced an advocacy video highlighting the health rights of migrant workers, with a focus on HIV. Aimed at policymakers and the general public, the video called for increased investment, stronger policies, and improved healthcare programs for migrants. It was widely disseminated via social media and coalition partner websites and formally shared with key stakeholders, including the directors of the National STD/AIDS Control Program and the National TB Control Program.

Outcome:

Feedback from key policymakers highlighted the video's value as an advocacy tool. Dr. Kanthi Ariyaratne noted it was effective but suggested including Sinhalese language to better represent all migrants and emphasized basing claims on evidence. She also pointed out that existing Migrant Health Policies already cover many issues raised, so efforts should focus on implementation. Mr. Nikaril Kanth welcomed the initiative, stressing the need for broad advocacy including HIV prevention and voluntary testing, while cautioning against discriminatory mandatory screening. **He requested the video be officially submitted to the Ministry for further action.** Time constraints limited further feedback from policymakers.



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 2024 centered on enhancing awareness and prevention. Through a series of targeted activities, we aim to educate various potential migrant groups. 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 Activities

Activity 1: Awareness Raising among Hospital Staff through IEC Material and Curriculum Advocacy

Description:

With the objective of reducing stigma toward people living with HIV in clinical settings, CARAM Asia through partnership with SPEAK Trust, worked directly with the Pakistan Nursing Council (PNC), nursing schools, and regional health facilities to advocate for curriculum reform in nursing education. The activity aimed to institutionalize HIV destigmatization training among future nurses. Between 2022 and 2024, advocacy efforts included meetings with PNC and curriculum committees, along with the distribution of HIV awareness materials in health facilities in Peshawar and Batkhela. Though a survey at PIMS Hospital Nursing School was not approved, SPEAK successfully gathered input from over 250 healthcare respondents across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through alternative surveys and digital campaigns.

Outcome:

These sustained efforts have **brought the issue of HIV-related stigma in healthcare education onto the agenda of the Pakistan Nursing and Midwifery Council. Awareness materials have been widely disseminated, and engagement through surveys and campaigns has helped generate valuable data on stigma in nursing.** SPEAK's advocacy has laid groundwork for curriculum reform and sensitization among healthcare workers, contributing to a gradual reduction in HIV-related stigma in healthcare settings.

Activity 2: Social and Mainstream Media Campaigns for Awareness and Virtual Advocacy



Description:

As part of CARAM Asia's regional project, a digital advocacy campaign was implemented in Pakistan by SPEAK Trust with the objective of raising awareness about HIV and the unique challenges faced by migrants living with HIV. Targeting the general public, youth audiences, and online communities, the campaign aimed to reduce stigma and promote empathy through storytelling and accurate information. A total of 37 multimedia posts, including infographics,

videos, and graphic visuals, were created and shared across Instagram, Facebook, and X, reaching approximately one million users. The content focused on the experiences of migrants at different stages of the migration cycle and the stigma they face in healthcare systems. The campaign also featured a short documentary highlighting the financial hardships of a widowed woman living with HIV and included thematic content for World AIDS Day and International Migration Day, amplifying key messages of inclusion and rights.

Outcome:

The **campaign significantly raised public awareness and empathy regarding HIV and migrant challenges, engaging a broad audience across multiple social media platforms.** It fostered understanding and dialogue around stigma and discrimination, providing educational content that helped dispel misconceptions about HIV. The real-life storytelling approach enhanced the impact and helped position HIV issues prominently within public discourse.

Activity 3: No-Face Video Testimonies on Health Issues Faced by HIV-Positive Migrant Women

Description:

As part of its mission to uplift the voices of marginalized migrant workers living with HIV, CARAM Asia partnered with POURAKHI Nepal to gather confidential video testimonies from five HIV-positive women who returned to Nepal. Filmed in Chitwan with strict attention to anonymity, the stories reflect painful encounters with social stigma, healthcare neglect, emotional isolation, and legal invisibility. These narratives aim to spark empathy and action among stakeholders, pushing for responsive policies and equitable healthcare rooted in dignity and human rights.

Outcome:

These video testimonials have become **a critical component of POURAKHI's advocacy efforts, helping to illuminate the gaps in healthcare services and legal protections for HIV-positive women.** The personal stories challenge stigma, promote greater acceptance, and push for policy reforms. By sharing these testimonies with policymakers and stakeholders, CARAM Asia and its partner, POURAKHI strengthens calls for improved healthcare access, psychosocial support and community-based networks to support this vulnerable group.

Activity 4: HIV Education for OFWs and Their Families



Description:

In support of CARAM Asia's efforts to enhance HIV education among migrant populations, the organization partnered with ACHIEVE to collaborate with recruitment agencies and migrant-centered civil society groups—KAKKAMPI and KAIBIGAN ng OCW—to deliver HIV awareness initiatives in line with Republic Act 11166, which requires HIV orientation for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). A focused education session was held for 37 participants, including women migrant workers and community leaders from Pasay, Mandaluyong, and Quezon City. These individuals, who serve as key influencers within OFW networks, engaged in discussions aimed at increasing knowledge of HIV transmission, reducing stigma, and encouraging informed dialogue among OFWs and their families.

Outcome:

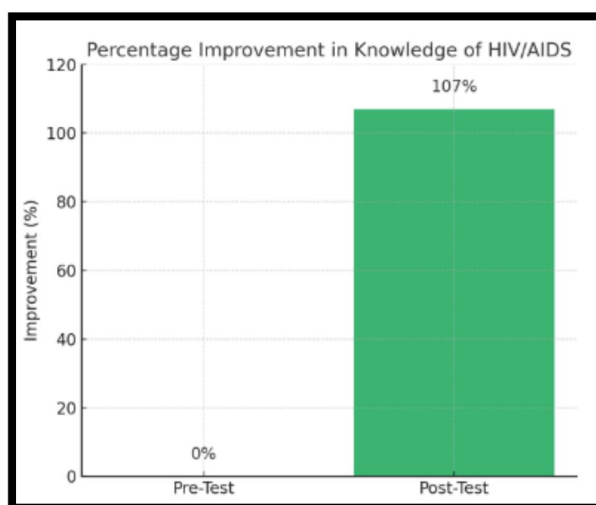
The session effectively **increased awareness among community leaders, many of whom had limited knowledge about the heightened HIV vulnerability of OFWs despite their experience in labor-related issues**. By the end of the training, participants committed to initiating localized HIV education activities in collaboration with local government units, ensuring that HIV awareness would be integrated into grassroots migrant support. ACHIEVE plans to further strengthen this work by conducting a training-of-trainers program to maintain the quality and sustainability of HIV education for OFWs and their families.

Activity 5: HIV Awareness Sessions for Migrants in and out of Detention in Lebanon

Description:

To advance CARAM Asia's regional commitment to equitable HIV education, a series of HIV/AIDS awareness sessions were rolled out across Lebanon. Delivered in collaboration with MSD and local NGOs and social workers, the sessions reached migrants in both community and detention settings, which were the groups often excluded from mainstream health services. A total of 23 community-based sessions were held in Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Batroun, and Ghosta, covering essential information on HIV transmission, prevention and treatment. Pre- and post-tests helped gauge improvements in participants' understanding. An additional 7 sessions inside prison facilities extended outreach to detainees across age groups. Despite obstacles such as language barriers, limited mobility, and access restrictions in prisons, the initiative played a critical role in improving health literacy among migrants in marginalized and high-risk conditions.

Outcome:



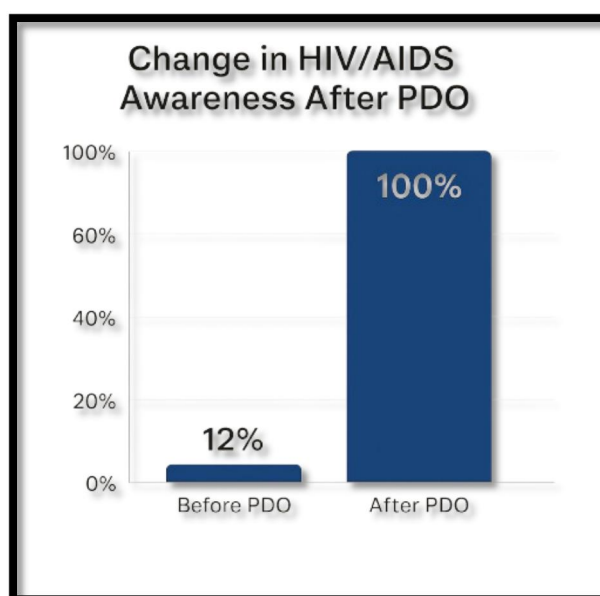
The sessions successfully **increased participants' knowledge of HIV/AIDS, as evidenced by a 107% improvement between pre- and post-test scores, reflecting substantial learning gains.** Feedback indicated that participants found the sessions clear and informative, with many expressing interests in further awareness activities. Despite logistical and security challenges, the program managed to reach a significant number of migrants and detainees, raising awareness and equipping them with knowledge to better protect themselves against HIV risks. The initiative also highlighted areas needing improvement, such as multilingual resources and expanded access in insecure regions.

Activity 6: Pre-departure Orientation for Final Stage Outbound Migrant Workers on HIV/AIDS

Description:

In line with CARAM Asia's continued advocacy for the health and rights of migrant workers, CARAM Asia in partnership with OKUP organized 35 Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) sessions throughout 2024 at the Bangladesh-Korea Technical Training Center, reaching 880 outgoing migrants—700 men and 180 women. Designed for both first-time and returning migrants from various districts, the sessions focused on enhancing understanding of HIV/AIDS, including modes of transmission, prevention strategies, and treatment options. The curriculum also addressed key issues such as workplace safety, mental health, and migrants' legal rights and obligations. Using a mix of interactive discussions, multimedia presentations, testimonials from returnee migrants, and knowledge assessments, the program aimed to equip skilled workers with essential information prior to their overseas deployment.

Outcomes:



The PDO sessions **significantly improved participants' knowledge of HIV/AIDS, with awareness rising from 12% before the sessions to 100% after.** Common misconceptions about HIV transmission were corrected, and participants learned about health risks at their destinations, mental health challenges, and stress management techniques. The training also strengthened understanding of migrant rights and government resources, with many participants committing to comply with local laws abroad. The PDO fostered open dialogue, encouraging participants to share personal experiences and seek ongoing support through the CARAM Asia partner, OKUP helpline, which served 290 migrants in 2024. Participants

gave positive feedback, recommending more frequent and longer sessions to benefit a wider audience.



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, medical support, and legal guidance. The activities include creating support groups, developing a comprehensive HIV services program and more, 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.

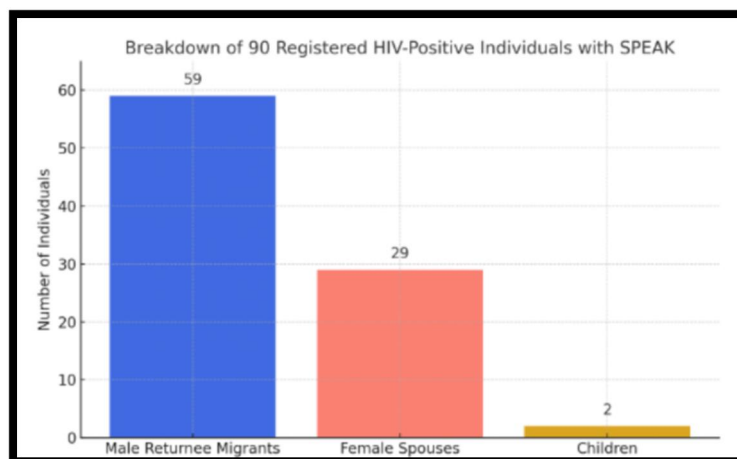
Activities to Enhance Access to Services

Activity 1: Counseling and Referral for PLHIV and Returnee/Deported Migrants



Description:

As part of CARAM Asia's regional project, SPEAK Trust carried out a community-based HIV testing initiative in Swat, Pakistan, aimed at increasing early detection among returnee and deported migrants and their families, a population often excluded from mainstream health services. The objective was to identify HIV-positive individuals, link them to care, and provide psychosocial support. **A total of 275 individuals were tested across various villages and districts, resulting in the identification of 17 HIV-positive returnee migrants, 7 spouses, and 1 female child.** All were referred to Butkhela and Saidu Sharif Hospitals for follow-up treatment and regular care.



In total, **90 HIV-positive individuals, including 59 male returnee migrants, 29 female spouses, and 2 children, are now registered with SPEAK and have received both pre- and post-test counseling to support informed decision-making and mental well-being.** To broaden community reach, WhatsApp and other social media platforms were used to encourage testing and registration among returnees in surrounding areas.

Outcome:

The intervention **significantly strengthened community trust in SPEAK's services and improved early detection of HIV among vulnerable populations.** By linking diagnosed individuals to hospitals and providing psychosocial counseling, SPEAK ensured both medical care and emotional support. The innovative use of social media and community mobilization strategies successfully increased HIV testing and registration, allowing SPEAK to broaden its reach and address stigma associated with HIV within migrant communities.

Activity 2: Meetings of Self-Support Group of Migrants Living with HIV



Description:

Under CARAM Asia's regional project facilitated by SPEAK Trust, a targeted support group meetings were conducted to provide emotional and social support for HIV-positive male and female migrants. The objective was to create safe, stigma-free spaces for open dialogue, emotional support, and community empowerment. One Female Self-Support Group (FSSG) meeting and one male-focused session were organized, providing confidential environments where participants could share experiences related to health concerns, financial hardship, social stigma, and emotional well-being. In addition, two home visits were conducted with FSSG members to document their coping strategies and daily challenges, highlighting the resilience of HIV-positive women in migrant communities. These sessions fostered peer solidarity, encouraged open communication, and promoted collective well-being and community-building among people living with HIV.

Outcome:

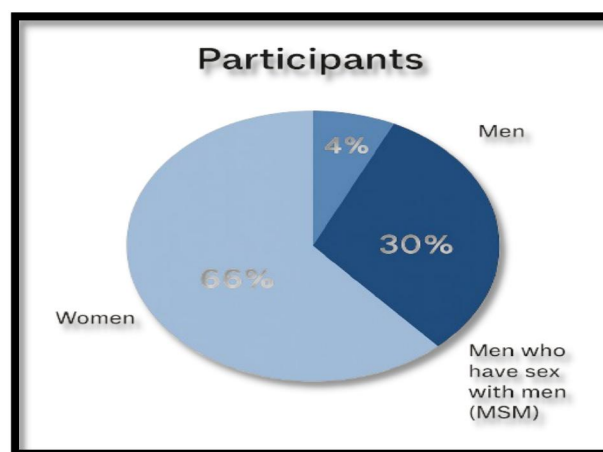
These support group **activities enhanced participants' sense of belonging and mutual understanding**. The open, judgment-free spaces empowered individuals to share their stories, learn from one another, and explore coping strategies together. Participants reported **emotional relief and emphasized the importance of continuing such initiatives to reduce isolation and stigma**. The meetings also underscored the need for regular peer support gatherings to strengthen collective resilience and improve mental health outcomes among migrants living with HIV.

Activity 3: Provision of Psychosocial Support for OFWs and Their Families



Description:

To address the often-overlooked mental health needs of HIV-positive migrant workers, CARAM Asia in coordination with ACHIEVE, under CARAM Asia's broader regional initiative, conducted four psychosocial debriefing sessions. A total of 50 Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and family members participated, including 33 women, 2 men, and 15 men who have sex with men (MSM).



The sessions offered a confidential and supportive environment where participants could process emotional trauma and connect with others facing similar struggles. Many shared experiences of deportation, rejection by loved ones, economic difficulties, substance use, and survival through transactional sex. With the guidance of a registered psychologist, each session was tailored to the unique emotional realities of the group, highlighting the critical need for holistic, mental health-centered support in HIV programming for migrant populations.

Outcome:

The psychosocial sessions **proved to be a crucial emotional outlet for participants, allowing them to release stress, share vulnerabilities, and gain strength through peer interaction.** Participants reported feeling validated and supported, emphasizing the therapeutic value of hearing similar stories and coping strategies. The sessions fostered emotional healing and reinforced the importance of ongoing psychosocial support in reintegration programs for OFWs affected by HIV and related hardships.

Activity 4 Provide Medical Assistance for HIV-positive or Other Migrant Workers, and for Prisoners and Detainees

Description:

In response to the escalating conflict in Lebanon, CARAM Asia, in partnership with MSD, provided critical healthcare and HIV-related support to vulnerable migrant communities, including women, children, and detainees. Throughout 2024, **MSD delivered medical assistance to 44 migrants of diverse nationalities, covering surgeries, medications, diagnostics, and HIV testing.** while supporting displaced individuals at the Ghosha Shelter. Recognizing the urgent need for coordinated action, CARAM **facilitated the delivery of emergency HIV testing kits, medicines, and consultations for an additional 111 migrants.** Rising healthcare costs and limited local resources underscored the importance of multi-NGO collaboration in ensuring life-saving care for conflict-affected migrants.

Outcome:

The activity ensured life-saving healthcare access for vulnerable and displaced migrants in a highly unstable and resource-scarce context. Despite funding limitations and rising costs, effective coordination with other NGOs enabled surgical and emergency medical support. **The intervention protected the health and dignity of migrants, including women, children, and detainees, through critical HIV testing and treatment, while also raising awareness**

among 77 adults through education sessions. The response showcased the value of partnerships and emergency preparedness in migrant health service delivery during crises.

Activity 5: HIV Services – Comprehensive HIV Services for Migrants in Malaysia (CHSM)

Description:

Under the CARAM Asia regional initiative, the CHSM program was conducted by implementing partner, NSI in Malaysia to address systemic barriers to HIV services faced by migrant workers. In a context where HIV-positive or undocumented individuals risk arrest or deportation when seeking care, CHSM focused on improving service access through strategic advocacy, data-sharing, and collaboration with key institutions such as the Indonesian Embassy and Immigration Office. The program also delivered HIV testing, treatment, and health education, while building a peer-support network by training migrant leaders to serve as community health advocates.

Outcome:

CHSM successfully served 17 clients in 2024, surpassing its projected target and demonstrating the effectiveness of outreach and advocacy. The initiative played a vital role in challenging harmful policies and enhancing access to healthcare for migrant workers, many of whom feared criminalization due to their HIV status. Through community-based service delivery and collaboration with stakeholders, CHSM made measurable progress in building safer, more inclusive health systems for migrants.

Activity 6: HIV Services – Continuity in Comprehensive HIV Services for Migrants (CCHSM)

Description:

As part of CARAM Asia's broader efforts to protect the health rights of migrant workers, CCHSM initiative led by NSI aimed to ensure uninterrupted HIV care for migrants returning from Malaysia to their countries of origin. Utilizing a protocol-based approach, the program facilitated the confidential transfer of medical records and guaranteed continuity of treatment for up to six months post-return. In collaboration with local NGOs and district health offices in key regions such as Sabah, Sarawak, Penang, and Kuala Lumpur, NSI's ResQ Team provided essential HIV-related services and strengthened cross-border referral systems—ensuring sustained care throughout the return and reintegration process.

Outcome:

In 2024, the **CCHSM program successfully managed treatment continuity for 10 migrant clients, reflecting the strength and reach of its partnerships and referral networks.** By maintaining HIV care across borders, the initiative minimized treatment interruptions and supported reintegration into home-country health systems. This approach demonstrated a practical model for migrant-sensitive HIV service delivery that safeguards health outcomes across migration cycles.

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

Activity 1: Training of Board Members and SPEAK's Staff



Description:

As part of CARAM Asia's regional project, SPEAK Trust conducted a targeted internal training session for staff working on its migration program, with the objective of enhancing their understanding of the

specific vulnerabilities faced by migrant workers, particularly in relation to HIV risk. The session covered key data, patterns of socio-economic hardship, and health-related challenges, including HIV transmission risks during the migration cycle. The training aimed to strengthen staff capacity to provide informed, rights-based support to migrants and their families.

In addition to internal strengthening, CARAM Asia through a coordination by SPEAK also actively participated in key national advocacy platforms, including a consultation by the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) on the rights of Pakistani prisoners abroad and the Pakistan Civil Society Forum convened by APLHIV and UNAIDS. These spaces provided opportunities to advocate for the protection of migrant rights, address stigma and discrimination faced by people living with HIV, and engage national and international stakeholders in dialogues toward sustainable policy and programmatic solutions.

Outcome:

The training enhanced the empathy, awareness, and capacity of staff to implement more effective and inclusive migration programs. Participation in national-level consultations strengthened SPEAK's advocacy for protecting Pakistani migrants, particularly those detained abroad. Furthermore, its engagement in the Civil Society Forum deepened collaboration with key populations and stakeholders, fostering collective efforts to combat HIV stigma and improve prevention and care services. These initiatives reinforced SPEAK Trust's commitment to human rights, capacity building, and cross-sector partnerships.

Activity 2: Advocacy and Capacity Building Training for Community/Migrant Leaders in Nepal



Description:

CARAM Asia's ongoing effort to promote migrant health and HIV rights led POURAKHI Nepal to conduct a two-day advocacy and capacity-building training for community and migrant leaders. Guided by advocacy expert Mr. Lubha Raj Neupane, the sessions focused on building skills in strategic campaigning, movement development, effective communication, organizational planning, and local governance. Using participatory tools like problem tree analysis and peer-led learning, the training empowered leaders to launch local advocacy efforts and strengthen community support for HIV-positive migrant workers.

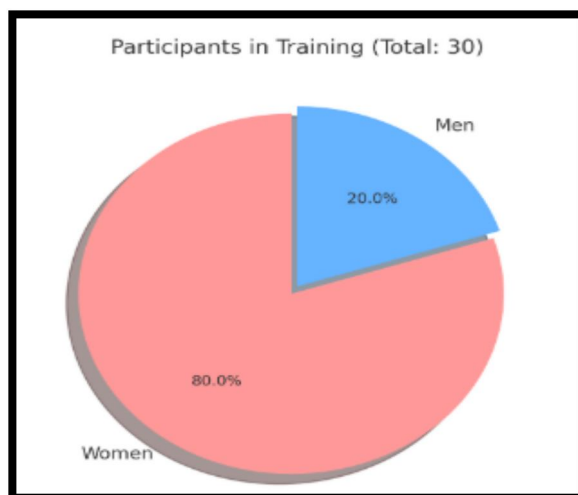
Outcome:

Participants emerged with stronger advocacy and planning skills, practical tools for organizational development, and increased capacity to influence local policy and resource allocation. District leaders developed actionable advocacy plans to improve access to HIV-related services for migrant workers. The training also strengthened local networks, fostering collaboration and solidarity across districts.

Ultimately, the initiative empowered migrant communities to become more self-reliant and vocal in championing their rights and health, particularly in the context of HIV prevention and care.

Activity 3: Orientation Training for Foreign Service Officers on HIV and the HIV and AIDS Policy Act

Description:



In the Philippines under the CARAM Asia regional project, ACHIEVE as CARAM implementing partner held an orientation training in November 2024 for personnel from the Philippines' Department of Migrant Workers (DMW). The session aimed to equip foreign service officers with a stronger understanding of HIV, tuberculosis (TB), and human rights to better support Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). Supported by the Challenge Facility for Civil Society (CFCS) and delivered in collaboration with ACHIEVE's TB Project, the training brought together 30 participants (6 men and 24 women) from multiple DMW units. Key discussions centered on rights-based, inclusive service delivery at the intersection of migration, health, and legal protection.

Outcome:

The training fostered a deeper understanding of how health issues, particularly HIV and TB, intersect with migration and human rights. It prompted participants to critically evaluate existing policies and led to the development of workplans to improve health and migration programs. The session also emphasized the need for coordinated, informed responses from DMW and related agencies, ultimately enhancing institutional readiness to address HIV/TB vulnerabilities among OFWs and reinforcing a human-rights-based approach in public service delivery.

Activity 4: Capacity Building Meetings with Community Forum Members on Leadership, Network Management, and Community Mobilization



Description:

As part of its contribution to CARAM Asia's regional advocacy for community-led sustainability, CARAM Asia implementing partner, OKUP held two capacity-building meetings in 2024 to strengthen the Community Forum of Bangladesh (CFB) amid declining HIV/AIDS donor funding. The first meeting gathered 34 representatives from seven key populations including PLHIV, transgender persons, sex workers, and migrants to discuss leadership, network expansion, and sustainability strategies. Participants explored plans to formally register CFB, broaden membership, establish a grievance redress system, and develop a 2024–25 work plan. The second session in Cox's Bazar engaged 28 local union-level participants, focusing on forum ownership, safeguarding policies, and future directions for the Migrant Forum.

Outcome:

These meetings significantly strengthened the Community and Migrant Forums by enhancing members' leadership skills and strategic planning capabilities. Participants took key decisions toward institutional development, including legal registration and internal policy reform. The events promoted stronger network collaboration, increased ownership among members, and raised awareness about safeguarding and ethical practices. As a result, the forums are now better positioned to continue HIV/AIDS prevention activities independently and advocate more effectively for the rights of key populations.

Activity 5: Life Skill Training for Newly Affected/Infected PLHIV and Migrant PLHIV



Description:

As part of CARAM Asia's regional strategy to promote the health and rights of HIV-positive migrants, CARAM Asia in coordination with OKUP organized a life skills training on in Dhaka for 24 newly diagnosed or affected people living with HIV (PLHIV), including returnee migrant workers. The training responded to the urgent need for psychosocial support and empowerment for PLHIV particularly migrants who often face stigma, isolation, and limited access to health services upon return. Designed to enhance their ability to manage life post-diagnosis, the training covered essential topics such as HIV transmission, stress management, disclosure, health planning, and interpersonal communication. Facilitated by a SOGI expert, the interactive format encouraged peer sharing and created a safe, supportive environment to build resilience, self-advocacy, and community solidarity.

Outcome:

The training had a transformative impact on participants, many of whom expressed increased confidence in managing their HIV status and supporting others in similar situations. It fostered a sense of community and reduced feelings of isolation by enabling peer networking and mutual understanding. Participants gained practical knowledge about self-care, nutrition, mental health, and how to effectively disclose their status. The feedback highlighted the training's emotional relevance and practical value, underscoring the need for more such initiatives to empower PLHIV and enhance their resilience.

Activity 6: Training of Trainers (ToT) on Pre-departure Orientation for Outgoing Migrant Workers on HIV/AIDS for Migrant Forum Members



Description:

Aligned with CARAM Asia's mission to empower migrant workers as community educators and advocates, OKUP conducted a two-day Training of Trainers (ToT) program on 30–31 July 2024 at the Technical Training Center in Narsingdi. The training targeted 31 members (8 women, 23 men) of the Migrant Workers Forum—returnee migrants committed to sharing knowledge with peers preparing for overseas employment. Recognizing the lack of accessible, migrant-led pre-departure education, the program aimed to equip these trainers with practical skills and information to promote safe, informed, and rights-based migration. Key topics included pre-departure planning, legal rights abroad, HIV/AIDS and other STDs/STIs, mental health, and workplace safety. Using interactive sessions, multimedia tools, and peer learning methods, the training enhanced participants' capacity to support prospective migrants with accurate, relevant, and timely guidance.

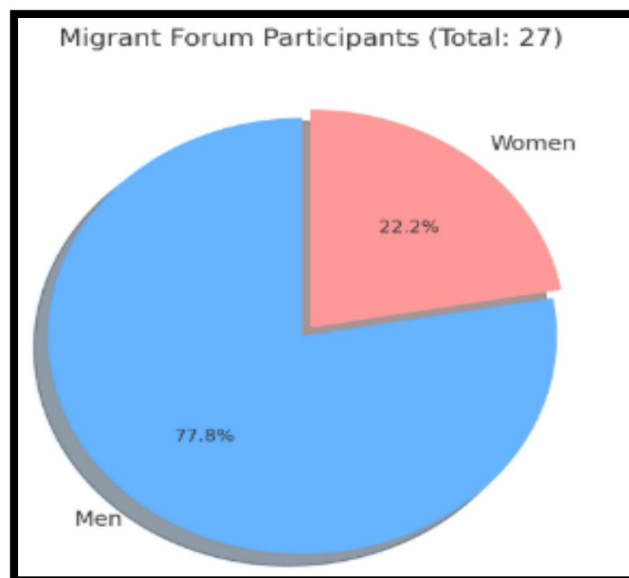
Outcome:

The impact of the ToT was evident through post-training assessments, which **showed significant improvement in participants' knowledge of HIV/AIDS, including its modes of transmission and prevention.** All participants reported a better understanding of HIV/AIDS risks, and interviews revealed strong appreciation for the training's relevance and effectiveness. Many participants recommended holding similar sessions more frequently to further raise awareness within their communities. Overall, the training successfully empowered returnee migrants to serve as advocates for health and safe migration among their peers.

Activity 7: Capacity Building Training of Migrant Forum Members on Migration, Health, Network Management, Leadership, and Community Mobilization



Description:



To promote stronger grassroots leadership in migration and health rights advocacy, CARAM Asia in coordination with OKUP organized a three-day capacity-building training in Cox's Bazar under the broader CARAM Asia effort. The training engaged 27 members (21 men and 6 women) of the Migrant Forum from Cumilla, Narsingdi, and Manikganj—local leaders actively working to protect and advance the rights of migrant workers. Aimed at building sustainable, community-led structures, the sessions focused on leadership development, forum organization, member recruitment, communication strategies, documentation practices, and advocacy planning. The training also introduced OKUP's safeguarding policy, reinforcing the importance of ethical, inclusive engagement within migrant communities.

Outcome:

The training enhanced participants' understanding of forum roles and helped identify challenges such as weak documentation, communication gaps, and low member engagement. Through group work and participatory discussions, forum members proposed practical solutions and developed action plans for 2025, including committee formation, better documentation practices, and the establishment of Migrant Desks at union level. The session on safeguarding policies further ensured that forum members are equipped to uphold ethical standards. As a result, the migrant forums are now better prepared to function as empowered, self-sustaining platforms advocating for the rights and welfare of migrant workers.

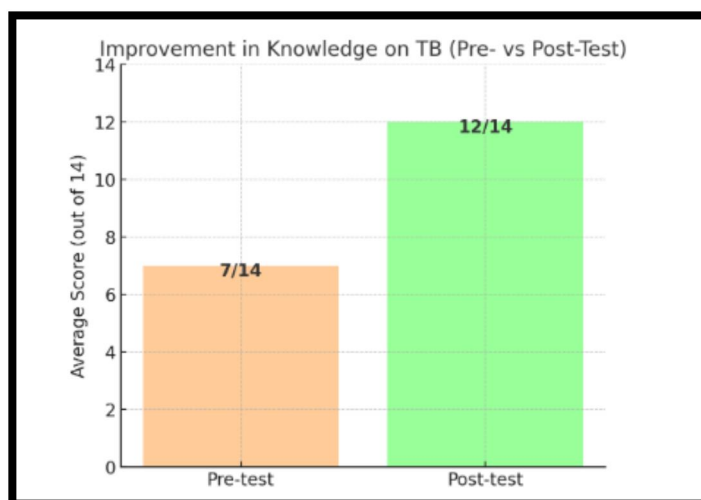
Activity 8: Capacity Building Workshop for Life Integrators Coalition (LIC) Network Partners on TB



Description:

CARAM Asia in coordination with implementing partners, CDS conducted a one-day capacity-building workshop on tuberculosis (TB) at the Center for Banking Studies in Colombo. The event gathered 18 partner organizations from the Life Integrators Coalition (LIC) network to enhance their ability to promote TB awareness, prevention, testing, and treatment among migrant workers and their families. Aiming to strengthen grassroots outreach, the workshop featured technical presentations from the National Programme for Tuberculosis Control and Chest Diseases (NPTCCD) and CDS-led sessions exploring TB risks specific to migrant contexts. A key output was the rollout of a user-friendly training module to support localized education and engagement efforts.

Outcome:



The workshop significantly improved participants' knowledge on TB, demonstrated by pre- and post-test scores increasing from an average of 7 to 12 out of 14. Participants expressed a newfound confidence in their ability to educate others and appreciated the clear, accessible delivery of content. They committed to integrating TB awareness into their ongoing community work. CDS also used this opportunity to hold a LIC review meeting and appoint a new executive committee, reinforcing the sustainability of the network and its health education efforts.

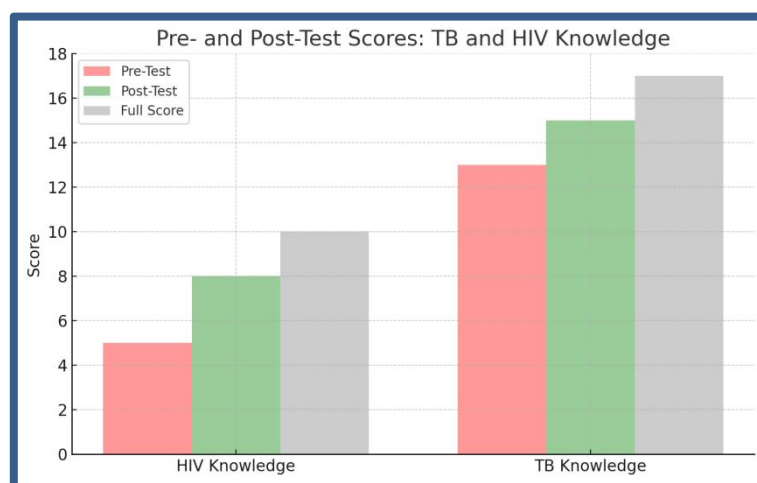
Activity 9: Capacity Building Workshop for CBOs in the National TB/HIV Network – Central Province



Description:

As part of CARAM Asia's regional initiative to strengthen community-level responses to migrant health, CARAM Asia coordinated with CDS and with collaboration with YMMA Kandy, conducted a capacity-building workshop, for 23 non-governmental and community-based organizations (CBOs) in Kandy. The workshop aimed to equip these organizations with the skills and knowledge to integrate TB and HIV education into their ongoing community outreach, particularly for migrants and their families who face heightened health risks. Technical sessions, led by doctors from the Kandy Chest Clinic and STD Clinic, focused on disease statistics, testing, prevention strategies, and the specific vulnerabilities of migrant workers, alongside a segment on rights-based advocacy to promote equitable access to healthcare.

Outcome:

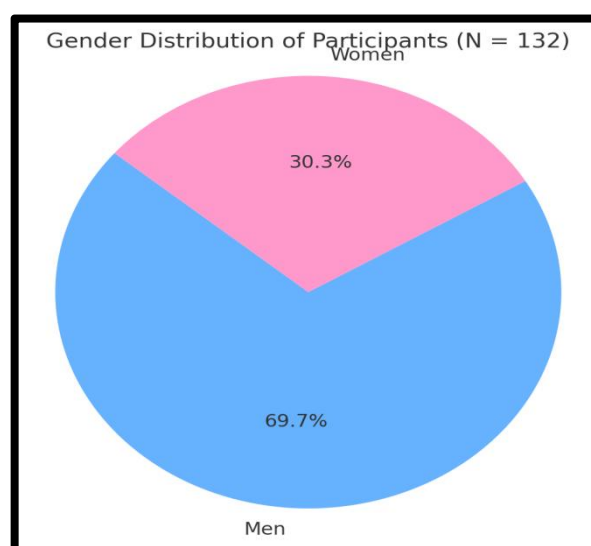


The workshop effectively enhanced participants' understanding of TB and HIV. Pre- and post-test results showed improvement in HIV knowledge (from 5 to 8 out of 10) and TB knowledge (from 13 to 15 out of 17). Participants praised the interactive and well-organized sessions, the relevance of the content, and the practical application of what they learned. The inclusive and supportive environment encouraged active participation, and several attendees expressed interest in applying the training in their communities and suggested more interactive and case-based learning in future events.

Activity 10: Educating Prospective Migrants Through Technical Colleges on HIV and TB Prevention



Description:



To advance health rights and raise awareness of HIV and tuberculosis (TB) among migrant populations, CARAM Asia through its implementing partner, CDS collaborated with three LIC network civil society organizations including Mithuru Mithuro (Gampaha), FIRM (Vavuniya), and HNRDF (Galle) to deliver focused educational workshops in technical colleges during November and December 2024. A total of 132 students (92 men and 40 women) preparing for overseas employment participated in sessions held across the three districts. The workshops responded to the critical need for early education on HIV and TB, covering key topics such as modes of transmission, risk reduction strategies, and access to healthcare. Led by CSO facilitators alongside experts from the National TB Control Unit, the National STD/AIDS Control Programme (NSACP), and the Public Health Inspectors network, the sessions were designed to equip young migrants with essential, practical knowledge before deployment abroad.

Outcome:

A post-workshop telephone survey of 16 randomly selected participants revealed that **many had gained valuable knowledge about HIV and TB that they had not previously received**. Participants acknowledged the importance of such education and expressed interest in further learning on sexual and reproductive health. However, some limitations were observed in the evaluation process, as respondents were hesitant to speak freely during phone calls conducted at home. It was suggested that future evaluations consider group Zoom sessions to create a more comfortable and confidential

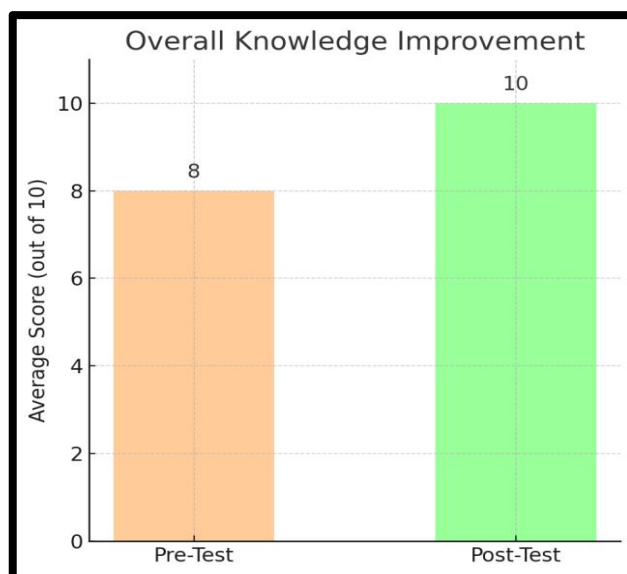
Activity 11: Capacity Building Program for Abhimana Union on HIV Risks to Transgender and Queer Migrant Workers



Description

CARAM Asia through its implementing partner, CDS held a capacity-building workshop for members of the Abhimana Workers Union for Transgender and Queer Workers at the Mandarin Hotel in Colombo. The workshop focused on increasing awareness of HIV risks encountered by LGBTQI individuals throughout the migration process—including during medical examinations, travel, and post-arrival integration. Expert speakers from the National STD/AIDS Control Programme (NSACP), Parivartan, and Venasa led sessions on HIV prevention, transgender rights and policies, migration legislation, and the specific health and social vulnerabilities faced by LGBTQI migrants, particularly in destinations across the Middle East and Asia. A total of 28 participants from eight districts took part in the training.

Outcome



A pre- and post-test assessment revealed a significant increase in knowledge, with average scores improving from 8 to 10 out of 10. Participants praised the workshop for its depth and relevance, especially its focus on legal rights, safe migration strategies, and practical HIV prevention measures such as PrEP and PEP. However, feedback also suggested the need for inclusive terminology in training materials, broader outreach to union members, and expanded sessions on LGBTQI rights in host countries. Overall, the activity successfully strengthened the participants' capacity

to support their peers in navigating safe migration and HIV risks.

Activity 12: Training Youth Peer Leaders on HIV, Safe Migration, and Psychosocial Counselling

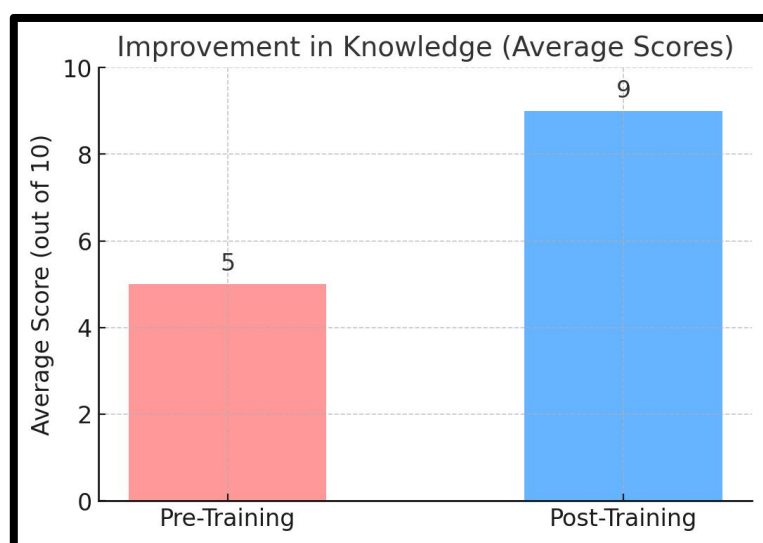


Description:

Community Development Services (CDS) conducted two targeted training workshops for 31 youth peer leaders at the Horana Divisional Secretariat in 2024, aimed at building youth-led advocacy around health and safe migration. The first session focused on HIV awareness, reproductive health, and the dangers of unsafe migration. Through interactive methods—including simulations, group discussions, and a testimony from a person living with HIV (PLHIV), participants explored topics such as HIV transmission, GAMCA testing procedures, and legal and health challenges faced by young migrants.

The final session centered on safe migration practices. Youth leaders were trained to identify the key steps involved in safe migration, understand the role of the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), and recognize the risks of human trafficking and smuggling. Creative tools such as docu-dramas and hands-on activities were used to demystify complex issues, ensuring the content was accessible and impactful. These trainings equipped youth leaders with the knowledge and tools to educate their peers in schools, estates, and community youth groups.

Outcome:



Post-training evaluations showed a marked increase in knowledge, with average scores rising from 5 to 9 out of 10. A follow-up counselling skills workshop was held on 8 August 2024, equipping 29

youth with practical techniques in active listening, problem identification, and referral pathways. Participants appreciated the creative approaches, including drama, music, and art. However, despite the knowledge gained, CDS observed low engagement in peer education post-training, with no activity logs submitted or shared in the designated WhatsApp group. This highlights the need for innovative follow-up strategies to ensure youth apply their learning in their communities.

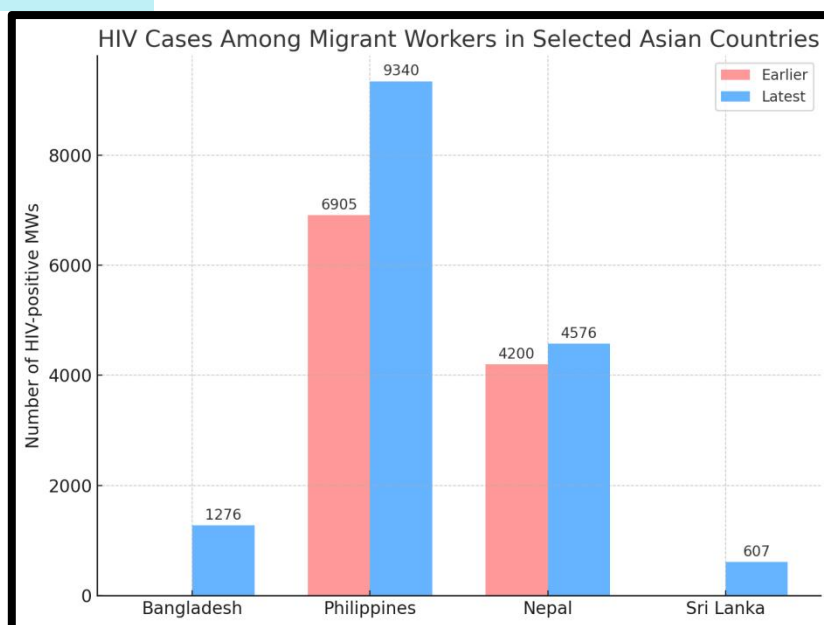
Participants reported gaining valuable insights into the migration process, support services, and red flags to avoid exploitation abroad. Despite strong individual learning, post-activity monitoring revealed that the youth did not widely disseminate this knowledge among their peers. None of the participants submitted activity reports or shared peer education efforts online. CDS concluded that while knowledge transmission to individuals was successful, more creative and youth-centered engagement models are necessary to translate that knowledge into community-level impact.



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. 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



A Survey Based Research: HIV-Positive Migrants Statistics and Policy Changes and Challenges on Migration in Asia and the Pacific: CARAM Asia produced two research reports by engaging a consultant to draft and review the writings. The first, on HIV-Positive Migrants

Statistics, highlighted the vulnerabilities faced by migrants, focusing on health challenges for those deported due to their HIV status, and analyzed receiving countries' policies on healthcare and deportation practices. **This research highlights a growing HIV epidemic among migrant workers (MWs) in Asia, with increasing cases across multiple countries.** In Bangladesh, MWs accounted for 17.6% (1,276) of new HIV cases in 2023, up from previous years. The Philippines reported a rise in HIV-positive cases among migrants, from 6905 pre-COVID to 9340 by March 2023. Nepal also saw an increase, with 4576 HIV-positive MWs in 2021 (11.3% of total cases), up from 4200 in 2020. Similarly, Sri Lanka reported 607 cases in 2022, with 30.8% involving migrants. **These findings highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions to address barriers and healthcare challenges faced by MWs living with HIV.**

The second, on **Policy Changes and Challenges on Migration in Asia and the Pacific**, examined migration policies, identified implementation gaps, significant challenges faced by migrant workers, and uncovered unaddressed issues in existing frameworks. The research revealed that MWs play a vital role in economic growth, cultural exchange, and addressing labor shortages in sectors like construction and agriculture. In 2022, Asian migrants contributed \$309 billion in remittances, strengthening economies in countries like Nepal, the Philippines, and Bangladesh. Despite these contributions, **MWs in Asia face significant challenges, including exploitation, limited healthcare access, discrimination, and weak legal protections. While some progress has been made in migration policies, gaps remain, particularly for low-skilled workers and migrant women.** The recommendations included strengthening legal frameworks, better healthcare access, and enhancing protection against human trafficking.

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

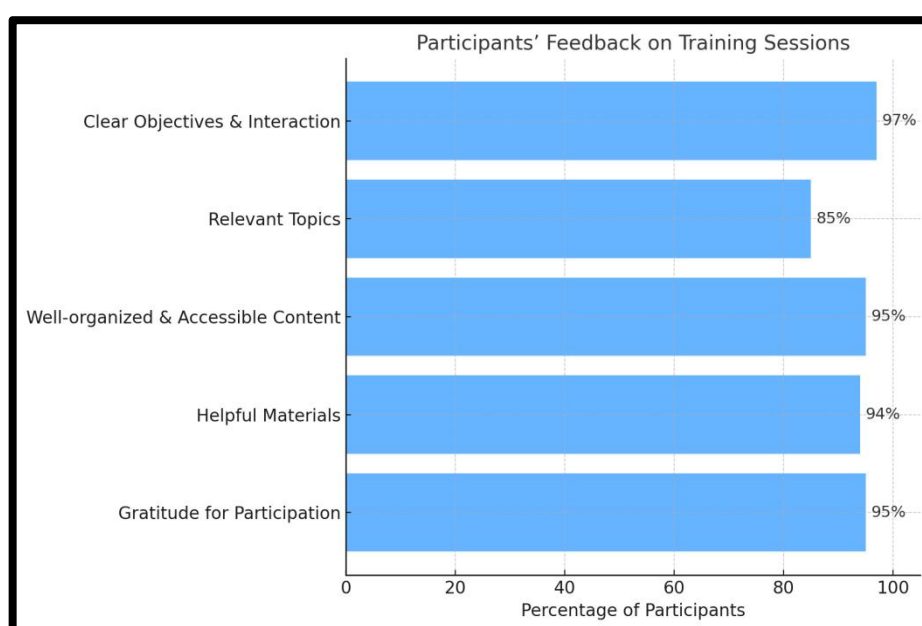
Activity 1: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

A comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework was established to track the implementation and impact of all project activities. This system included scheduled data collection methods such as attendance records, meeting minutes, feedback surveys, and referral tracking tools to ensure accurate assessment of outputs and outcomes. Regular field visits, beneficiary consultations, and analytics reviews were used to evaluate the effectiveness of training, advocacy, and support interventions. The MEL plan was designed not only to ensure accountability and transparency but also to provide real-time insights that would inform adaptive planning and continuous improvement across the project cycle.

In Nepal, POURAKHI implemented MEL through a dedicated staff member whose role encompassed designing, executing, and monitoring the full range of project activities in coordination with CARAM Asia. This human resource was essential in supporting data-driven decision-making and ensuring that learning from the field was integrated into implementation strategies. The staff's remuneration was included in the activity budget, underlining the centrality of MEL to project success. As a result, **MEL contributed significantly to enhancing efficiency, identifying gaps early, and guiding the project toward achieving its intended outcomes.**

Activity 2: Satisfaction with Awareness Sessions

Monitoring and evaluation of awareness sessions were carried out by CARAM Asia through its implementing partner, MSD using satisfaction surveys and pre- and post-tests to assess the effectiveness and impact of these interventions. The sessions were conducted both in prisons for detainees of all nationalities and in-migrant communities outside detention centers. The surveys aimed to gauge participant satisfaction, clarity of content, and relevance of the topics covered, thereby generating data for refining and improving future sessions.



Results from the monitoring reports indicated high levels of satisfaction: 97% of participants agreed that the sessions had clearly defined objectives and encouraged interaction. Moreover, 85% found the topics relevant, 95% appreciated the well-organized and accessible content, and 94% found the materials helpful. An impressive 95% expressed gratitude for being part of the sessions. **While feedback overall was overwhelmingly positive, participants also offered constructive suggestions for enhancing topic relevance, content clarity, and material support.** These insights will inform the design of future awareness activities to ensure sustained engagement and greater impact.

Activity 3: CARAM Asia Board of Directors Meeting:

CARAM Asia held two virtual Board of Directors meetings to discuss key organizational matters. Updates were provided on project progress, including the "Prevention & Advocacy on Migrant's HIV Issues, Enhancing Access to Health Services and Promoting HIV Positive Migrant's Rights in Asia" project funded by the RCF. Reports for 2023, including narrative, financial, and audit documents, were presented. Discussions included CARAM Asia's regional and global engagements, such as its participation in the 7th APPC and membership in the Global Health Council. In light of the organization's growth since 2007, the need to enhance community representation on the Board of Directors was emphasized. Additionally, updates on status of funding proposals and organizational ECOSOC status, were presented.

Activity 4: CARAM Asia Collective Impact Reflections Meeting with RCF funded project partners:



Description:

Initially scheduled for quarter 3 of 2024, the meeting was postponed to quarter 4 following RCF's instruction due to funding challenges, as it required big financial resources. This one-day in-person meeting reviewed the progress of the 2023 project activities, funded by RCF. The main agenda focused on the following areas: sharing achievements from 2023 project activities, including outcomes, impact, lessons learned, and capacity-building needs; addressing region-specific challenges; and exploring lessons learned to develop strategies for future advocacy and action.

Outcomes:

Key achievements were shared by seven partners across implementing countries. This included empowering over 2,522 migrant groups, including potential migrants in the Philippines, Lebanon, and Sri Lanka, through a total of 45 HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns. Social and mainstream media campaigns in Pakistan reached over 50,000 views for awareness and virtual advocacy, while online IEC materials on health services availability in the Philippines garnered more than 8,000 engagements. In addition, various services such as medical assistance, HIV testing, psycho-social support, counseling and referral services, and nutrition diet support provided in Pakistan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Nepal, and Lebanon reached 1,571 beneficiaries. CARAM Asia, in collaboration with its implementing partners also enhanced the capacity of stakeholders and migrant communities on HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal and Malaysia by leveraging the diverse skills and backgrounds within its network, reaching 891 participants through 37 workshops. Advocacy works also led to key progress, including establishing an HIV screening and referral system at Pakistan's airports with a draft strategy and referral framework; integrating migrants' health into the national budget, with HIV challenges in the draft National AIDS strategy awaiting approval; incorporating migrant health rights into policy discussions in the Philippines, leading to amendments in the HIV and AIDS Policy Act; securing diplomatic endorsement of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for migrant workers in Lebanon by Bangladesh's embassy, Burkina Faso's consulate, and Madagascar's consulate; and driving policy and law reform in Nepal through media advocacy on migrant employment rights.

Challenges such as funding constraints, stigma, healthcare barriers for undocumented migrants, and inadequate government data were addressed with recommendations for expanding digital outreach, integrating HIV education into school curricula, advocating for inclusive policies, and strengthening collaborations with governments and CSOs.

Activity 5: Planning Meeting on HIV Financing & Advocacy.



Description:

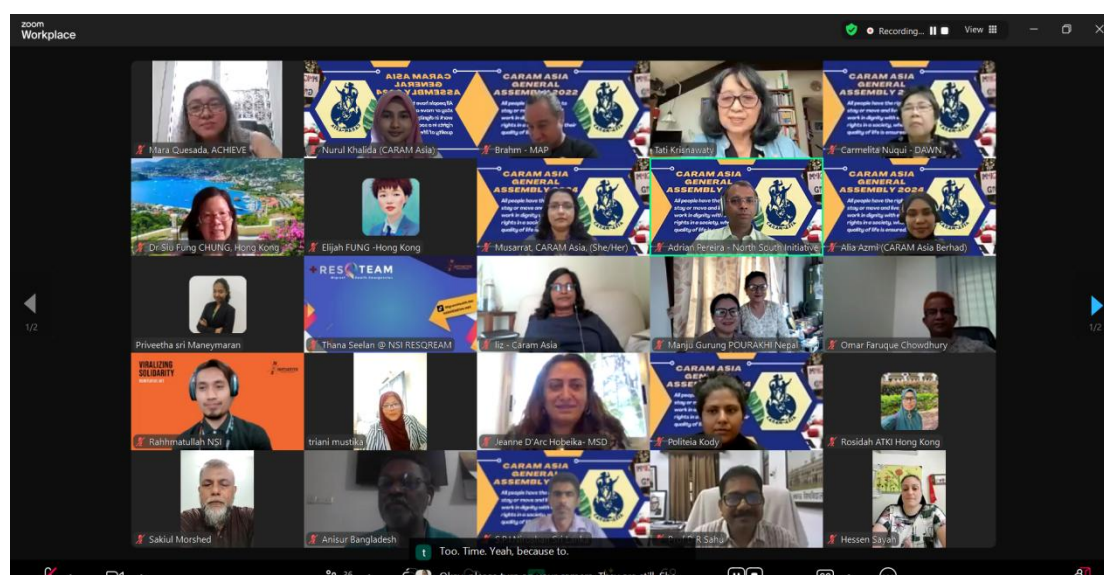
A one-day Planning Meeting on HIV Financing & Advocacy was conducted with a focus on addressing the urgent need for sustainable HIV financing for migrant workers and empowering civil society organizations (CSOs) to advocate for increased funding. Previously,

CARAM Asia conducted research on HIV financing issues for migrant workers in several countries, leading to the development of advocacy action plans. These plans now need to be revisited and revised in collaboration with project partners and those involved in previous work. In the meeting, participants from seven CARAM Asia member organizations shared experiences, identified gaps in HIV financing, and discussed advocacy strategies. Key topics included budget processes, expanding fiscal space and addressing social determinants of health.

Outcome:

The meeting concluded with the **development of regional HIV financing strategies**, emphasizing the integration of migrant health into HIV programs and advocating for equitable healthcare access and the rights of migrants.

Activity 6: General Assembly and CARAM Asia's Overall Strategic planning meeting



A two-day virtual meeting was held, featuring a comprehensive agenda focused on organizational governance and strategic planning. The first day included an opening speech by CARAM's previous chairman, Mr. Brahm Press, followed by program and constitution reviews, discussions on increasing community representation on the Board of Directors, and board member elections, which were facilitated by an election commissioner with technical support.

The second day focused on reviewing and amending the strategic plan for 2025–2027, involving breakout group discussions led by Task Force conveners and facilitators. Participants contributed to refining the strategies for CARAM Task Forces: Migrant Worker's Rights (MWR), Migrant's Health Rights (MHH), Migration, Development & Globalization (MDG), and Migration, Climate Change & Humanitarian Crisis (MCCHC). Each Task Force presented its revised strategic plan during the plenary session, culminating in the finalization of CARAM Asia's overarching strategy for the next three years.

The finalized strategic planning documents for 2025–2027 including the overall plan and Task Force-specific strategies, are now accessible on CARAM Asia's website. These documents outline the organization's roadmap for advancing migrant rights and addressing critical regional challenges.

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 represented regional civil society at the 17th ASEN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML) in Lao PDR, helping shape key recommendations on ethical recruitment, legal protections and non-discrimination for care workers. CARAM Asia also led regional advocacy around the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) by hosting capacity-building sessions and co-organizing a workshop to develop indicators for monitoring migrant and refugee rights. These efforts reinforce CARAM Asia's role in advancing labor and health rights for migrant communities across Asia.

CARAM Asia, Regional Unity in Action: CARAM Asia's Representation at the 17th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML) in Vientiane, Lao PDR



CARAM Asia and Fellow Regional CSOs Stand Together as Civil Society Representatives at the 17th AFML in Vientiane, Lao PDR

In line with its commitment to advocating for the labor and health rights of migrant workers in Asia, CARAM Asia has participated in the 17th AFML, held on 13–14 November 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Organized under the leadership of the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW), this year's forum centered on the theme "Care Work and Labour Migration in ASEAN" and explored two key sub-themes: "Meeting Care Needs Through Labour Migration" and "Enhancing Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Care Workers."

The forum provided a critical platform for ASEAN Member States, employer and worker organizations, civil society, and international organizations to share perspectives, experiences, and best practices concerning care work in the region. During the nomination process in a virtual meeting with regional networks, CARAM Asia and the Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM) were selected to represent regional civil society organizations (CSOs) at the 17th AFML. As the recognized stakeholders in this process, the representation of CARAM Asia and the Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM) as regional CSOs were facilitated by the Task Force on ASEAN Migrant Workers (TFAMW).

Ahead of the main forum, CARAM Asia with APMM joined the TFAMW CSOs Preparatory Meeting on 12 November 2024 to coordinate civil society input and align collective strategies. The following recommendations addressing the 17th AFML theme were developed through joint and extensive discussions involving CARAM Asia, APMM, the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW), Mekong Migration Network (MMN), and other regional CSOs. These discussions ensured that the final consensus-driven version addressed the concerns of migrant care workers effectively.

Sub-theme 1. Meeting care needs through labour migration

Addressing migrant vulnerability in regulating and managing labor migration is a priority because economic inability and the lack of jobs with decent wages are still the main factors in labor migration.

1. We encourage ASEAN Member States to emphasize monitoring and enforcement mechanisms focusing on the welfare and protection of migrant workers in Bilateral and Regional Policy Agreements, including in enhancing International Skills Partnerships to improve skills and facilitate migrant labor mobility.
2. We encourage ASEAN Member States to regulate and monitor recruitment agencies and immigration officials, as well as penalize erring officials and entities and ensure the accountability of recruitment agencies, brokers and employers.
3. We encourage ASEAN Member States to adopt ILO's Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration, ratify ILO Convention 143 on Migrants in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers, ratify ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers and Recommendation 201 on Domestic Workers, include migrant workers under labor law in all receiving ASEAN countries, and establish binding agreements between countries to ensure protections for migrant care workers, covering ethical recruitment standards, rights protection, access to social and legal services, including right to unionize.

4. We encourage ASEAN Member State to implement the ASEAN Comprehensive Framework on Care Economy especially the strategic priority number 1 on Promoting Healthy Ageing and Leveraging Opportunities in Ageing Societies in Southeast Asia

Sub-theme 2. Enhancing protection and promotion of the rights of migrant care workers

There are already many recommendations, guidelines and regulations related to the protection and promotion of migrants' rights, both internationally, regionally and nationally. Political will is needed to ensure the implementation of these recommendations, guidelines and regulations.

5. We encourage ASEAN Member States to align their country policies with the ILO's 5R Framework for Decent Care Work to ensure fair working conditions, including standardized wages, occupational safety, and social protections.
6. We encourage ASEAN Member State to reaffirm the call in CEDAW General Recommendation No. 26 'to formulate a gender-sensitive, rights-based policy on the basis of equality and non-discrimination to regulate and administer all aspects and stages of migration, to facilitate access of women migrant workers to work opportunities abroad, promoting safe migration and ensuring the protection of the rights of women migrant workers.
7. We urge ASEAN Member States to ensure access to justice for migrant care workers, especially domestic workers, including the right to freedom of association and the right to legal assistance, addressing the issue of criminalization, arrest, detention, and deportation, exclusion/discrimination and violence/death row of women-migrant workers and ensuring a human rights-based standard employment contract and/or proper documentation of their work status without duplication or substitution.
8. We urge ASEAN Member States to ensure that women migrant workers are protected and are not submitted to the immigration/deportation system where violence, abuse or improper termination of contract is alleged.
9. We encourage ASEAN Member States to develop a Comprehensive Migration Policy Against Trafficking and Slavery, regulate the private sector to support care work, ensuring all social protection initiatives have provisions that account for un/der/paid care responsibilities including marriage migration, represent care and domestic workers in decision making processes along with implementation and monitoring, including auditing and labor inspection mechanisms that make un/der/paid care visible and valued.
10. We encourage ASEAN Member States to ensure care and domestic workers have access to health services without any discrimination compared to locals, and abolish criminalization (arrest, detention and deportation) based on health status, and provide equality in access to health services in case of pregnancy, HIV & AIDS and other health conditions, and eradicate sex discriminatory practices such as mandatory HIV/AIDS testing, pregnancy testing or testing for other infections and health conditions without consent.
11. We urge ASEAN Member States to ratify ILO Convention 190 to End Violence and Harassment in the World of Work, including ensuring women migrant care and domestic workers have accommodations that are livable and have adequate sanitation, health, hygiene, and privacy provisions.
12. We urge ASEAN Member States to ensure a living wage or at the very least receive a wage in accordance with the laws and regulations of the receiving states for women migrant care and domestic workers, and ensure safe and secure channels of receiving salary or other

payments in their own accounts, and have secure ways of transmitting their income through regular channels without interference by any third parties and/or being overcharged.

13. We urge ASEAN Member States to ensure social integration in the destination countries and reintegration policies in the origin countries for migrant care and domestic workers, including language support, awareness raising about the conditions of work and cultural conditions, as well as capacity building on rights and financial management.
14. We urge ASEAN Member States to prioritize human rights and social spending more effectively and re-evaluate the neoliberal economic model, eradicate harmful practices and policies, such as privatization, market deregulation and austerity measures in care services that contributed to higher unemployment rates, lower labor standards, negative health outcomes and reduced access to high-quality care services.

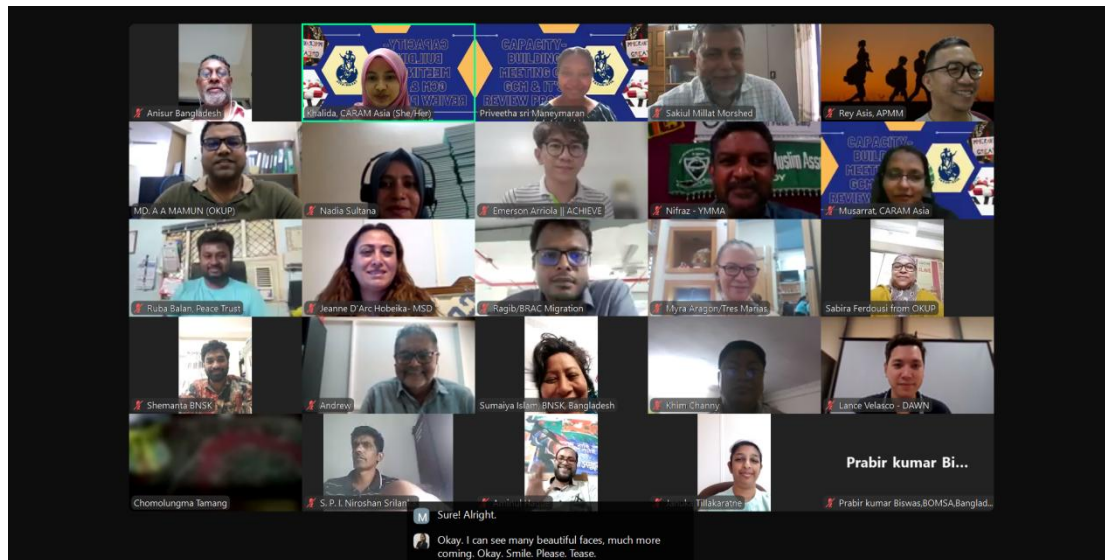
CARAM Asia's meaningful participation in the forum led to the successful incorporation of its several advocacy areas into the official recommendations of the 17th AFML:

1. Non-Discrimination for Migrant Care Workers. The recommendation was "Make regular pathways more equitable and inclusive to migrant care workers by addressing discrimination, violence, and restrictions based on the grounds of gender, age, disabilities, and health status".
2. Employment Standards and Paid Leave. The recommendation was "Ensure issuance of a standard employment contract (or proper documentation) in language understood by the migrant care worker and clear terms and conditions of employment, including wages, gender-responsive employment benefits, working conditions, working and rest hours, paid leave days (including due to sickness and maternity), health and safety, employment dispute mechanisms, and repatriation".

The key outcome of the 17th AFML was a set of non-binding and voluntary recommendations addressing the challenges and opportunities in the care work sector. These recommendations will serve as a foundation for stakeholder collaboration and future policy inputs to the ACMW. CARAM Asia's engagement highlighted its pivotal role in ensuring migrant workers' voices and concerns, especially in care work sectors, remain central to ASEAN's regional labor migration agenda. Please find the official 17th AFML recommendations through [this link](#), and full regional CSOs recommendations through [this link](#).

CARAM Asia's Advocacy Works for Migrants' Rights in Asia: Towards the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM)

Capacity-Building Meeting to Enhance Knowledge of CARAM Asia Members Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Migrant Workers on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) and Its Review Process



CARAM Asia Members CSOs, CBOs, and Migrant Workers, attended the Capacity Building Meeting on the GCM and Its Review Process Held Online

On September 25, 2024, CARAM Asia, in collaboration with Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM), hosted a virtual capacity-building meeting aimed at enhancing the knowledge of CARAM Asia member organizations, including CSOs, CBOs, and migrant workers, regarding the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) and its review process. The meeting sought to empower these groups by educating them on the GCM's processes, promoting collaboration, and strengthening national-level advocacy strategies to ensure the safe and regular management of migration.

During the opening ceremony, Musarrat Perveen, Regional Coordinator of CARAM Asia, delivered the welcome remarks. The meeting then featured a presentation on the GCM by Rey Asis Perez, Program Coordinator on Advocacy and Campaigns of APMM, outlining its guiding principles, objectives, and the monitoring process. Key discussions also included the importance of migrant involvement in GCM processes, ensuring their needs and voices are effectively addressed.

The participants engaged in breakout sessions, which were guided by three key questions. First, they identified three urgent issues faced by migrants. Second, they discussed the relevant objectives of the GCM that address these issues. Lastly, they explored what is needed to ensure the meaningful engagement of migrants in the GCM process, including in planning,

implementation, and review at local, national, regional, and international levels. The essence of discussion were presented during the subsequent plenary session by the rapporteurs of each group. The discussion was summarized and the main issues and recommendations were raised, focusing on the challenges migrants face in both sending and receiving countries and proposing solutions aligned with the GCM objectives.

Three Urgent Migrants Issues	Relevant GCM Objectives	Overall Needs for Meaningful Engagement of Migrants
Lack of Social and Legal Protections	- Objective 14: Consular access - Objective 19: Migrants and Diaspora Contribution - Objective 20: Remittances - Objective 22: Social protections	- Inclusive Dialogues: Engage grassroots stakeholders, migrants, and policymakers in migration discussions. - Ethical Recruitment: Standardize recruitment practices through bilateral agreements. - Awareness and Education: Raise awareness through multilingual campaigns and accessible resources.
Risk of Human Trafficking	- Objective 10: Eradicate trafficking - Objective 16: Inclusion and social cohesion - Objective 18: Skills development and recognition - Objective 23: International cooperation	- Migrant Empowerment: Establish self-help groups and provide skills training. - Combat Human Trafficking: Strengthen preventive measures and international collaboration. - Access to Services: Advocate for universal health coverage and grievance mechanisms. - Reintegration Programs: Develop structured support for returning migrants.
Inadequate Access to Services and Rights	- Objective 15: Access to basic services - Objective 17: Eliminate Discrimination - Objective 19: Migrants and Diaspora Contribution - Objective 20: Remittances	- Human Rights Integration: Ensure rights-based migration policies and training for stakeholders. - Collaboration and Advocacy: Partner with CSOs and use evidence to inform policies. - Funding and Support: Increase financial resources for migrant services. - Representation: Include migrants in decision-making and international forums. - Address Specific Issues: Reform restrictive systems, eg: Kafala, and advocate for expatriates' voting rights.

CARAM Asia's meaningful participation in the forum led to the successful incorporation of its several advocacy areas into the official recommendations of the 17th AFML:

1. **Non-Discrimination for Migrant Care Workers.** The recommendation was “Make regular pathways more equitable and inclusive to migrant care workers by addressing discrimination, violence, and restrictions based on the grounds of gender, age, disabilities, and health status”.
2. **Employment Standards and Paid Leave.** The recommendation was “Ensure issuance of a standard employment contract (or proper documentation) in language understood by the migrant care worker and clear terms and conditions of employment, including wages, gender-responsive employment benefits, working conditions, working and rest hours, paid leave days (including due to sickness and maternity), health and safety, employment dispute mechanisms, and repatriation”.
3. The key outcome of 17th AFML was a set of non-binding and voluntary recommendations addressing the challenges and opportunities in the care work sector. These recommendations will serve as a foundation for stakeholder collaboration and future policy inputs to the ACMW. CARAM Asia's engagement highlighted its pivotal role in ensuring migrant workers' voices and concerns, especially in care work sectors, remain central to ASEAN's regional labor migration agenda. Please find the official 17th AFML recommendations through this [link](#), and regional CSOs recommendations through this [link](#).

Continuing the Advocacy to Make the Global Compact for, with and by Migrants and Refugees: Regional Workshop on Developing Migrants and Refugees Indicators (MRIs) in the GCM



CARAM Asia and its Member Organization, OKUP represented the network during the regional workshop on developing MRIs in the GCM in Bangkok, Thailand

The Regional Workshop on Developing Migrant and Refugee Indicators in the GCM, held on November 26-27, 2024, at the Zenith Sukhumvit Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand, marked a significant milestone for CARAM Asia in advancing the rights and well-being of migrants in Asia. The event was collaboratively organized by a network of dedicated organizations, including CARAM Asia, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM), Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN), Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN), and International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP-AP). This hybrid event gathered stakeholders, including migrant and refugee leaders, advocates, and civil society representatives from across the Asia-Pacific region. The primary objectives were to discuss the GCM's implementation, develop indicators to monitor its objectives, and establish actionable next steps for advocacy and capacity building ahead of the 2nd Regional Review of the GCM happening in February 2024.

The workshop featured a series of plenary sessions and interactive workshops designed to address key issues faced by migrants and refugees while advancing the objectives of the GCM. The plenary sessions provided foundational insights into the GCM, including its guiding principles, objectives, and the relevance to migration governance, while highlighting updates and lessons learned. Discussions emphasized the urgent issues faced by migrants and refugees in the Asia-Pacific region. The interactive workshops encouraged collaborative thinking, such as the "Luggage of Issues" activity, where participants identified and clustered critical issues. Next sessions focused on linking GCM objectives to these concerns, developing actionable MRIs indicators, and exploring other advocacy instruments and spaces to amplify migrant and refugee voices. These dynamic sessions combined knowledge-sharing with practical, solution-oriented discourse, creating a platform for collective action.

The workshop culminated in significant outcomes, including the development of a draft set of MRIs that integrates key priorities to address the multifaceted challenges faced by migrants and refugees. This includes identifying driving forces of migration, by eradicating poverty through sustainable home economies, addressing climate change impacts through mitigation and disaster recovery, and promoting international agreements to support and integrate refugees and displaced people. Ensuring decent work through equitable wage standards, transparent recruitment processes, and eliminating exploitation were emphasized, alongside measures to enhance access to justice, such as free legal assistance and effective complaint mechanisms. Social protection schemes, including universal health coverage and bilateral agreements, were proposed to protect migrants and their families. The participants also stressed combating human trafficking through international cooperation, while advocating for gender-sensitive approaches to address the unique struggles of women migrants and refugees, ensuring their inclusion in governance and access to essential services.

These outcomes were presented to the Regional UN Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific, which includes the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The network responded positively to the development of the MRIs and recommended presenting the indicators at the 2nd Regional Review of the GCM in February 2024. Both the organizers and participants agreed to finalize the MRIs by 10th January, 2025 and collaborating closely in preparation for the regional review.

CARAM Asia is honored to contribute to the workshop as both an organizer and participant, reaffirming our commitment to the GCM's goals by addressing migrants' health and labor rights, with a particular focus on HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).



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



Migration, heavily influenced by neo-liberal policies, continues to have profound implications on the health and well-being of migrant workers. This program seeks to address critical gaps in the migration and development discourse, with a focus on the health impacts of globalization. By examining the influence of globalization, World Trade Organization (WTO) policies, and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) on migration and public health systems, and by analyzing the consequences of healthcare privatization and systemic economic inequalities, the program aims to develop global strategies for debt relief and poverty reduction to mitigate migration-related vulnerabilities.

In 2024, CARAM Asia enhanced its impact by actively participating in key events and dialogues at various levels. These included consultations and technical meetings with the World Health Organization (WHO), Global Health Council (GHC), International AIDS Society (IAS), ESCAP, and the Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia. Through these engagements, CARAM Asia contributed to shaping health system strategies, influencing labor policy for migrant domestic workers, and strengthening advocacy on health equity, care work, and feminist economic approaches. Such participation has been instrumental in integrating migrant health concerns into global and regional policy discussions, and in building collective advocacy for rights-based migration governance.

CARAM Asia Participation, Engagement and Contributions in the Global Meetings

In 2024, CARAM Asia actively participated in a series of significant meetings and events at the national, regional, and international levels, reflecting its commitment on migration, development and globalization. In January, the Secretariat joined a session hosted by the Global Health Council (GHC) in collaboration with USAID, focused on Health System Strengthening. This event provided valuable insights into the strategic direction of the USAID Office of Health Systems and the broader evolution of the Global Health Bureau's work. Following this, in February, CARAM Asia attended a WHO event dedicated to the global research agenda on health, migration, and displacement. The meeting emphasized participatory approaches in research, introduced five thematic research areas for the next five years, and presented practical tools such as the Implementation Guide and Toolkit.

In the same month, CARAM Asia also participated in a GHC Working Group meeting on Health and Equity, where discussions centered on developing a robust advocacy strategy to address global health equity challenges. On 5 February, the Secretariat joined a webinar organized by Wellcome on the Climate Impacts Awards, which explored funding priorities and engagement strategies. Engagement at the national policy level was also evident in March when CARAM Asia took part in the Town Hall Session for Malaysia's National Human Resources Policy Framework 2024–2030. This session, hosted by the Ministry of Human Resource (KESUMA), offered a platform to raise key issues related to migrant domestic workers and suggest improvements in national labor policies.

Continuing its engagement in regional advocacy, CARAM Asia was involved in multiple events related to the International AIDS Society (IAS). At the IAS Regional Members' Meeting in May and again in October, the organization contributed to discussions on governance, community involvement, and preparations for AIDS 2024. In September, CARAM Asia joined two major events: the final Beijing+30 Asia Pacific consultation hosted by APA, which focused on feminist strategies in the face of climate change and digitalization; and a stakeholder briefing led by ESCAP and the Regional UN Network on Migration. The latter event was organized to facilitate engagement in the second Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), highlighting opportunities for civil society participation. Capacity building and skills development remained a priority, as demonstrated by CARAM Asia's participation in the U.S. Department of State's MyGrants Training Webinar in September. The session offered comprehensive guidance on using the MyGrants platform, including account setup, funding applications, and post-award activities. Beyond participation in events, CARAM Asia also contributed to advocacy and strategic planning through targeted initiatives. It responded to a survey conducted by the International AIDS Society in June to help shape the organization's strategy for 2026–2030.

In November, CARAM Asia supported a petition led by the Promotion of Church People's Response, advocating for clemency and the repatriation of Mary Jane Veloso, a Filipina migrant worker imprisoned abroad. This is part of CARAM Asia's continuous effort in 2022. In 2022, CARAM Asia supported the formation of the Network for the Protection of Women Migrant Workers' Rights (NPWMR) in response to growing concerns about the rights and vulnerabilities of women migrants. The network was established to defend, promote, and protect the rights of women migrant workers by working in close collaboration with partner organizations. Its core activities include campaigns led by women migrant organizations, capacity-building initiatives for network members, and the creation of platforms for joint advocacy and project implementation.

CARAM Asia, in partnership 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 mobilized around the case of Mary Jane Veloso (MJV), a Filipina migrant worker and human trafficking survivor who has been imprisoned in Indonesia. These organizations jointly launched advocacy efforts in 2022, including an international campaign seeking clemency from the Indonesian government, based on strong evidence that Mary Jane was a victim of trafficking and had no knowledge of the drugs found in

her possession.



The NPWMR network, with CARAM Asia as a key member, continues to serve as a platform for coordinated action and solidarity in addressing rights violations faced by women migrant workers, using high-profile cases like Mary Jane Veloso's to highlight systemic failures in migration governance, call for justice, and push for legal and policy reforms that prioritize protection, dignity, and accountability.

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 causes 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 displacements 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.

Research Proposal on the impact of climate changes on physical and mental health of population affected by climate induced events including displaced and non-displaced communities in South Asia region

Target Communities

- Displaced People (Potential Migrants)

Methodology (Engaged Research Approaches)

- Qualitative Study (Engaging communities, stakeholders, policy makers, NGOs & CBOs and high level government official from relevant department)
- Quantitative Study (Survey to find out the diseases burden from health diseases and type of diseases among displaced people)

Scope of Study

- How Many Interviews and Focus Group Discussion will be conducted to represent the national situations in the countries? How to collaborate with NGOs in the countries?
- At what level the research will be conducted?
- Outreach communication? How to reach affected communities we have seen in our experience that those communities the people reach results (through social media campaign, outreach programme, etc.)?

Meeting Chat

Musarrat, CARAM Asia's Zoom Meeting

Logan 6:25 PM

Is there any scope to incorporate health expenditure due to climate change displaced population? so that we can address how to overcome health expenditure due to Climate change induced migration, such as insurance, etc.

Who can see your messages?

Meeting Group Chat

Message Musarrat, CARAM Asia's Zoom Meeting

As part of CARAM Asia's ongoing efforts to advance the rights and well-being of migrant workers, the MCCHC TF under CARAM Asia has conducted a series of consultations with relevant experts

in different countries including Malaysia, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, member organizations, and academic and community-based partners. These collaborative efforts led to the development of a comprehensive research proposal titled ***“The Impact of Climate Change on Physical and Mental Health of Populations Affected by Climate-Induced Events, Including Displaced and Non-Displaced Communities in the South Asia Region.”*** The Task Force was seeking potential donors to support the implementation of this critical research initiative.

The proposed research aims to fill important evidence gaps by documenting the physical and mental health challenges caused by climate change, particularly among migrant workers in countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, and Pakistan. These workers are often based in high-risk areas like coastal floodplains and highlands, making them highly vulnerable to climate-related health impacts. Special focus is placed on the unique vulnerabilities of female migrant workers and other marginalized groups, to ensure their voices and experiences are meaningfully represented in climate-health discussions.

Using a transdisciplinary approach, the proposal outlines a robust methodology that includes quantitative and qualitative data collection such as surveys, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and stakeholder consultations to ensure that the research reflects the lived realities of affected communities. The project is guided by a strong theory of change and a focus on policy relevance, with the ultimate goal of informing local and regional policy frameworks and contributing to the development of climate-resilient health systems.

Expected outcomes of the project include enhanced awareness of the climate-health-migration nexus, the empowerment of local stakeholders such as women’s groups and youth networks, the creation of a digital platform for climate and health information, and the formulation of evidence-based policy recommendations for inclusive and sustainable climate adaptation strategies. Through this initiative, CARAM Asia continues to integrate climate justice into its advocacy for migrant health and well-being, reaffirming its role as a leading regional platform advancing rights-based, community-centered, and evidence-driven responses to emerging global challenges.

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