

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **New Initiative to Strengthen Border Management and Protect Vulnerable Migrants**



*IOM conducts a training session on travel document examination procedures for the General Department of Immigration (GDI) of Cambodia. Photo: IOM (2024)*



*A GDI official examines security features of a passport using magnifier glass during a training session.  
Photo: IOM (2024)*

**Phnom Penh** - The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Cambodia, with support from the Government of Japan, begins the implementation of a new project to support the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) in strengthening border management and reinforcing migrants.

Cambodia is a country of origin, transit, and destination for migrant workers. In recent years, the incidence of transnational organized crime (TOC) has been increasing throughout Southeast Asia, including Cambodia. A growing number of migrant workers are being lured into countries under false pretenses and forced to work in illegal industries including online scam centers. In addition to human trafficking, money laundering, drug smuggling and other activities are deeply intertwined in transnational crime requiring coordinated efforts across the government.

The project's primary focus is on improving the capacity of frontline officials at border points to identify, assess and manage risks including those that may be related to transnational crime. Additionally, the project will enable the provision of immediate assistance, such as shelter, food, and medical care to vulnerable migrants in Cambodia.

Japan's Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia UENO Atsushi said, "Transnational organized crime, including human trafficking and online scam, is a serious and imminent challenge to this region today. It affects the country's reputation as well as its social and economic activities. We need to address this challenge by enhancing cooperation among concerned parties and by strengthening the capacity of Cambodian authorities."

"The Government of Japan believes that IOM's expertise and know-how will contribute significantly to the prevention of transnational organized crime, the protection of human rights, and the safety in the region. We hope that Cambodian side make the best use of this programme," added Ambassador UENO.

Welcoming the project, Nellie Ghusayni, Chief of Mission of the International Organization of Migration (IOM) in Cambodia said "This project will not only enable us to provide urgent assistance to vulnerable migrants in Cambodia but will directly support the Royal Government of Cambodia in strengthening border governance. This is essential for enhancing border security, protecting the rights of all travelers, and addressing the increasing threats of transnational crime. IOM Cambodia is grateful for the Government of Japan for their generous support and commitment to protecting the most vulnerable.

The project will run for 12 months and provide support to the General Department of Immigration and the General Commissariat of National Police of the Ministry of Interior, the General Department of Customs and Excises of Ministry of Economics and Finance, Ministry of Social and Veteran Affairs, and National Committee for Counter Trafficking among other key stakeholders.

SDGs: 8, 10, 16

ENDS

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### **Notes to the editor:**

**IOM**, as the specialized UN agency for migration, acts with its partners to assist in meeting the growing operational challenges of migration management, advance understanding of migration issues and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants and dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all and works with government and partners to

ensure that the SDG goals and targets linked to migrants' rights remain part of the Government agendas. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants and works to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, be they refugees, displaced persons or other uprooted people. At present, IOM has been responding to the mass migrants returns in POE's and areas of return and support the Ministry of Interior in managing the return of migrants and with operational presence in Banteay Meanchey, Battambang, Siem Reap and an office in Poi Pet, Banteay Meanchey.