

Child Trafficking Prevention

PROJECT PROFILE

It is a nightmare that continues to spread like an epidemic. More than one million children are trafficked each year and sold into forced labor or the sex trade. In the Mekong sub-region of Southeast Asia, extreme poverty leads to the high incidence of trafficking. Poor children are particularly vulnerable as they are often unsupervised by adults who are either working or abusing alcohol and drugs. They are lured by traffickers who promise good-paying jobs in the city and the hope of a better life. But instead they become modern day slaves, exposed to violence and abuse. Parents have even been known to sell their children out of desperation to feed the rest of their family.

Where We Work

Southeast Asia is the worldwide hub of human trafficking. World Concern has child trafficking prevention programs in Nepal, Thailand, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. We work in cities like Poipet, Cambodia, on the Thailand border. This area has a high incidence of child trafficking and sex tourism.

How We Help

World Concern believes that prevention is the key to curbing the increase in child trafficking and exploitation. We work to keep children **safe in their community** by providing educational opportunities to the most vulnerable, offering them real hope for a better future. We also train older children in job skills so they can earn an income and avoid deceptive offers. We train community leaders about the rights of children and how physical abuse violates these rights. Children are taught to identify traffickers' lies and avoid dangerous situations. They also learn about physical and sexual abuse and what to do if they're exposed to this. We assist parents in improving their situation with microloans and skills training programs so they can earn higher incomes, thereby protecting their children from the risk of trafficking.

WORLD CONCERN HELPS PREVENT TRAFFICKING WITH...

- SAFE MIGRATION
- SAFETY IN COMMUNITY
- SAFE HAVEN
- STRENGTH IN NETWORK

We provide families with information and tools for **safe migration** if they are considering moving. And World Concern offers **safe haven**—a home away from home—for children whose safety is at risk if they continue to live in their homes or communities. Children thrive in a healthy place where they can continue their education.

World Concern provides a **network** for Christian anti-trafficking organizations to develop joint strategies, share knowledge and support one another.



Learning job skills helps children find safe work.



"School on a Mat" gives kids a basic education and anti-trafficking lessons.



Who We Help

Those most at risk of exploitation are children from poor families, those with alcoholic or drug addicted parents, and kids who are not attending school. Additionally, many children from hill tribes in Thailand do not have citizenship papers, which puts them at greater risk for trafficking.

Meechu's Story: Rescued From the Danger of Child Trafficking

Around the northern Thailand community of Chiang Rai, the poor share an elusive dream. For Meechu's aunt who cares for her 14-year-old orphaned niece, the dream is simple: enough money for food and school fees, and a good future for all the children—jobs that will allow them to remain near home as young adults.

But larger cities' jobs are alluring, and economic opportunities are scarce here. Often, child traffickers prowl her village, looking for new recruits.

World Concern provides girls like Meechu with educational scholarships and vocational training. Meechu has learned about trafficking, and how to stay safe.

Today, Meechu sits on a blanket with other Thai girls stringing bright jeweled beads onto pieces of string. They're the kind of beads you could find at the dollar store. Yet they mean hope and a future to her and the other girls. Once they learn the trade, the dollar-store beads will be replaced with semiprecious stones, and they'll sell the jewelry to make income for their families.

Of jewelry making, she says, "I like it. I like the artistic parts, and I like earning money by selling." With each bead she strings, she gets closer to a livelihood to support herself and her family near Chiang Rai, out of the reach of traffickers.



Meechu will be safe from the danger of child trafficking, now that she has learned to protect herself.

About World Concern

World Concern, part of CRISTA Ministries, is a Christian humanitarian organization that helps lift people out of poverty. World Concern works with the poor in 22 countries, with the goal of transforming the lives of those we touch, leading them on a path to self-sustainability. Worldwide, World Concern offers life, opportunity and hope to nearly six million people. For more information on our work around the world, please visit www.worldconcern.org.

