

Dear Madam / Sir

We from ACRATH - Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans - wish to make a submission to the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness. Our organisation is working for the elimination of human trafficking in Australia, the Asia Pacific region and internationally. We do this by working in Catholic and other networks to support people who are trafficked and to advocate for societal change. Our organisation is endorsed by CRA - Catholic Religious Australia; CRA has a membership of over 8,000 Catholic religious.

In this brief submission, ACRATH wants to make the link between effective ODA and the elimination of human trafficking. We know from our work in Australia and from our partner organisations in the Asia Pacific region, that the vulnerability to trafficking for poor women can be in part addressed by achieving the MDGs. We therefore encourage the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness to recommend Australia's energetic co-operation to achieve the MDG targets fully and on time. We further encourage the Independent Review to recommend Australia continue its leadership role at the UN to follow through on their commitments.

ACRATH further wants to make the link between the elimination of human trafficking and the facilitation of women's empowerment in poor communities. We know from our work in Australia and from our partner organisations in the Asia Pacific region, that small amounts of microfinance targetted to empowering women and facilitating their agency to help themselves can make major change in their lives. We therefore encourage the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness to recommend the funding of microfinance projects and institutions, eg the Grameen Bank.

ACRATH wants to raise the issue of small community organisations in the Asia Pacific region who have worked in partnership with us and who struggle to maintain their anti trafficking support for victims and advocacy because of a lack of funding. These organisations often carry out remarkable programs with victims of trafficking, including rescues as well as ongoing emotional and financial support for victims as they recover from their trafficking ordeal; these organisations often also bravely raise their advocacy voice to try to shut down the systems that facilitate human trafficking. This latter activity can be physically dangerous, and can also mean that funding sources dry up. We therefore encourage the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness to recommend the expansion of the Human Rights grants scheme in each Embassy so that they can facilitate the strengthening of existing Australia - Asia Pacific NGO partnerships in anti human trafficking work.

ACRATH further wishes to endorse the submission made by AID/WATCH.

Thank you for this opportunity to make this submission.

Peace
Christine

Christine Carolan
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