

## COMPLETION REPORT

### Human Trafficking in Japan – Gender and Policy Issues

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#### Research overview and findings

This research “Human trafficking in Japan: Gender and policy gaps” is a qualitative research using both primary and secondary data.

The research aims to identify gender and policy gaps in anti-trafficking responses of the Government of Japan and provide solutions to narrow down the gaps and to better tackling human trafficking in this globalized context. The research tried to find answers for the following questions: What is the situation of human trafficking in Japan? What is the state gender ideology in Japan that shapes anti-trafficking responses and what are prominent gender issues associated with human trafficking in Japan? What are policy issues that need to be considered in Japan's anti-trafficking responses? How to deal with gender and policy issues to help Japan alleviate human trafficking to have an equal society and to achieve sustainable development? What are feasible experiences for Vietnam?

Different findings have been emphasized. Human trafficking has been perceived and constructed in multiple ways. However, human trafficking needs to be gender and policy issues and anti-trafficking responses must be gender-sensitive to positively impact on the lives of trafficking victims and help eliminate the crime. Although Japan has not ratified the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime or its protocols. Japan has not had a law on human trafficking. However, Japan's considerable effort towards human trafficking and the GOJ fully meets the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's minimum standards and in 2018 Japan was upgraded into Tier 1. Japan, however, needs to do more to maintain this progress and tier position.

There are different types of human trafficking in Japan. The two most popular human trafficking types in Japan are labour trafficking and sex trafficking. Several trafficking-related terminologies that need to be considered, such as *enjokosai* (compensated dating) and *karoshi* (dying from overwork). One links to trafficking for sexual exploitation, another relates to trafficking for labour exploitation.

Up to April 2019, the GOJ has issued Action Plans to combat human trafficking in 2004, 2009, and most recently, in 2014. From 2015, Japan started to issue annual reports to present measures to combat human trafficking and achievement towards anti-trafficking activities. Japan follows the 3-P anti-trafficking framework set forth by the United Nations in the UN Trafficking Protocol 2000. However, the prosecution effort is blurred. It can be said that the 3-P anti-trafficking framework of Japan consists of Prevention, Prevention and Partnership because Japan has been doing well towards partnership, both in term of domestic, regional and international partnership to combat human trafficking.

Different gaps and challenges in Japan's responses and actions should be emphasized. People's awareness on

human trafficking is limited, although awareness raising is one of the foci in different action plans of the GOJ. Research on human trafficking in Japan, both by Japanese and overseas scholars are limited, this in turn, affect policy implications, recommendations, and the formulation of evidence-based anti-trafficking activities.

Japan is a patriarchal society that favors men than women. The state's gender ideologies are also patriarchal that shape the way how the GOJ perceived and constructed human trafficking and anti-trafficking policy. The welfare state of Japan is active in promoting gender equality. However, the Action Plans set out by the GOJ is not gender-sensitive with lack of specific measures designed for male, female victims of human trafficking. There is a feminization of trafficking victims and a masculinization of traffickers and the suspects. In addition to that, limited effort has been paid for eliminating *enjokosai* which potentially lead to trafficking of the female youth.

### **Publication of the Results of Research Project:**

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Expected to be presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> AAWS Congress at Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea in December 6-8, 2019 (if accepted).

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Planning to write articles for regional and international journals.

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

Proposing for the publication of the book: "Human trafficking in Japan: Gender and Policy Issues". Looking for the fund to revise the research into a book manuscripts and publish by an international prestige publishing house.