

IOM X ASEAN YOUTH FORUM TAKES CREATIVE APPROACH TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

20 FEBRUARY 2015, BANGKOK, THAILAND

Twenty young leaders from across the ASEAN region are ready to join the fight against human trafficking and exploitation after attending the creative IOM X ASEAN Youth Forum in Bangkok from 12-14 February.

“Our approach to engaging young people in counter trafficking does not involve scare tactics,” said Tara Dermott, IOM X Program Leader. “Rather, it’s about educating them on emerging human trafficking trends, sharing practical tips that every aspiring migrant should know, and helping each person develop a unique awareness-raising activity to hold in his or her community.”

IOM X is the [International Organization for Migration](#)’s new campaign to encourage safe migration and public action to stop human trafficking and exploitation, funded by the the [United States Agency for International Development](#) (USAID).

Creative workshops during the IOM X ASEAN Youth Forum included a ‘role play’ and a ‘city challenge’. In the role play, the young leaders had to decide whether or not to migrate for work based on conversations with family, a recruiter, a friend who migrated before and a Migrant Resource Center worker. Audience participation provided additional support to help the young job seekers make informed decisions, and therefore prevent risk of exploitation.

During the ‘city challenge’, the young leaders were equipped with GoPro cameras as they scoured Bangkok for important symbols of a migrant’s journey. The symbols – which fell into categories such as ‘transportation’ (i.e. buses, trains), ‘communication’ (i.e. phone booths, Internet cafés) and ‘authority’ (i.e. police stations, embassies) – were photographed and uploaded to social media, using the hashtag #IAMIOMX.

“So many people migrate without thinking it through carefully or making an informed choice. This makes them more vulnerable to manipulation, deceit, fraud and exploitation,” said Joey Dela Cruz, IOM X Youth Leader, Philippines. “Youth leaders like myself can work together to inform, train and create informed choices for young people to consider, rather than jump into opportunities because of pressures they face.”

Throughout the IOM X ASEAN Youth Forum, participants worked with communication

professionals to design events they will hold in their home countries from March to September of this year. These youth-led events will help build awareness about human trafficking and exploitation, and how to minimize risks by following safe migration tips. Such tips include memorizing a helpline number in your country of destination and setting up a regular contact schedule with someone you trust. The youth-led events are being funded by the [Young South East Asian Leaders Initiative](#), a U.S. President Obama signature program to strengthen leadership development and networking in Southeast Asia.

IOM X was pleased to welcome representatives from USAID, World Vision, Save the Children, Terre des Hommes, UN Women, International Labour Organization (ILO) and The Global Fund to End Slavery to observe and participate in activities during the Forum.

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Note to Editor:

- ASEAN stands for the [Association for South East Asian Nations](#), which is comprised of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.
- Select high-resolution photos from the event are below. To view the full high-resolution event album, please [click here](#).



QUOTES

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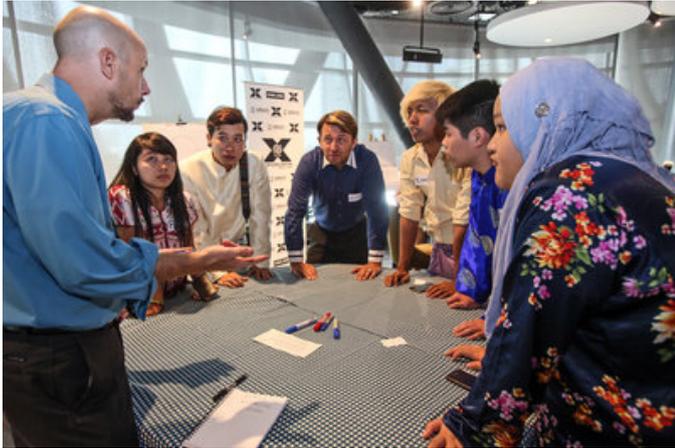
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ABOUT IOM X

IOM X is the International Organization for Migration's innovative campaign to encourage safe migration and public action to stop exploitation and human trafficking.

The campaign leverages the power and popularity of media and technology to inspire young people and their communities to act against human trafficking – the buying and selling of people for the purpose of exploitation – which is happening in every country in the world today.

IOM X is produced in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and works closely with celebrities, private sector partners, government agencies, NGOs and youth groups across Asia Pacific.



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