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Photo by Visarut Sankham

## Assistance to Migrant Children

Thailand is home to an estimated 4 to 5 million migrants. Many stay for extended periods of time and often bring their spouses and children with them. Between 300,000 to 400,000 migrant children currently reside in country. Compared to the local populace, migrant children tend to be disadvantaged and are at higher risk of exploitation, abuse and denied opportunities. Through various projects, IOM carries out several child-centred activities to reduce these vulnerabilities.

### Legal Clinic

For migrant children born in Thailand, statelessness prevents them from effectively accessing basic services such as education, healthcare and social protection. IOM operates a legal clinic at Mae Sot Hospital to provide birth registration, needs assessment and case planning for non-Thai children. The clinic also links children to appropriate public services. Almost 500 births have been registered since its opening in April 2016.



### Emergency Assistance Fund

IOM's Emergency Assistance Fund assists families that lack the means to support their children due to unexpected situations; such as workplace injuries, accidents and sudden termination of employment. Families in such scenarios can dial a 24-hour hotline operated by IOM staff to request for assistance. Aid is provided to children through hygiene kits, health and nutritional support and the purchase of health insurance to ensure health coverage. To date, 127 children have benefitted from the Fund since October 2015.



Photos provided courtesy of Visarut Sankham.  
[www.sankhamphotography.com](http://www.sankhamphotography.com)

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## Child Protection Mainstreaming

IOM incorporates child protection principles in all of its counter-trafficking trainings for law enforcement officers. As a core component of the curriculum, emphasis is placed on the special needs of children throughout the victim identification process. Trainings also cover laws governing the trafficking of children, such as the Thai Anti-Trafficking Act and the appropriate referral channels to utilize when handling suspected cases of trafficking.



## Increasing Access to Education

Despite Thailand's *Education for All* Policy, migrant families continue to face obstacles that prevent their children from receiving a good education. In Mae Sot, Ranong and Phang Nga, IOM conducted a mapping exercise to identify gaps between policy and practice and identify best practices on increasing enrolment that can be replicated in targeted communities. To help build the capacity of local education authorities, community leaders, parents and school principals, IOM is creating a clear set of standard operating procedures in order to help migrant children access educational services. Small scale funding is also provided to NGOs to help cover tuition fees for selected disadvantaged children.



Provinces with IOM Projects that benefit migrant families in Thailand

## Humanitarian Assistance for Children in Detention

Migrant children in temporary detention face difficult conditions that may impair their development. IOM helps ensure that over 90 children and youth in 14 Immigration Detention Centres (IDCs), Shelters for Children and Families and Welfare Protection Centres for Victims of Trafficking remain healthy through the provision of nutritional support, medical check-ups, vaccinations and non-food items. IOM also has psychologists on hand to provide psychosocial support and organize recreational activities to manage stress. These include sports events and trips to the seaside. To ensure holistic development, classes are organized for migrant children to promote skills development in areas such as English and Thai languages and cooking.

## Youth Engagement on Migrant Issues

Through IOM's innovative campaign arm IOM X, youths are encouraged to learn, act and share to promote safe migration and public action to stop human trafficking and exploitation. In 2016, IOM X partnered with Thai and Malaysian youth leaders through the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) for a workshop about human trafficking and effective prevention activities. IOM X also collaborated with Microsoft Thailand on YouthSpark to empower community youth leaders from across Thailand with ICT skills and information about human trafficking.

