

**SOMTC CONSULTATION WORKSHOP ON THE
ASEAN-AUSTRALIA COUNTER TRAFFICKING
(ASEAN-ACT) WORK PLAN 2020-2023**

ADVANCING VICTIM RIGHTS

20 April 2021



SINGAPORE
INTER-AGENCY TASKFORCE
**ON TRAFFICKING
IN PERSONS**

SCOPE

- 1) Background
- 2) National Approach Against Trafficking-In-Persons (TIP)
- 3) Advancing Victims' Rights – A Victim-Centric/Sensitive Framework



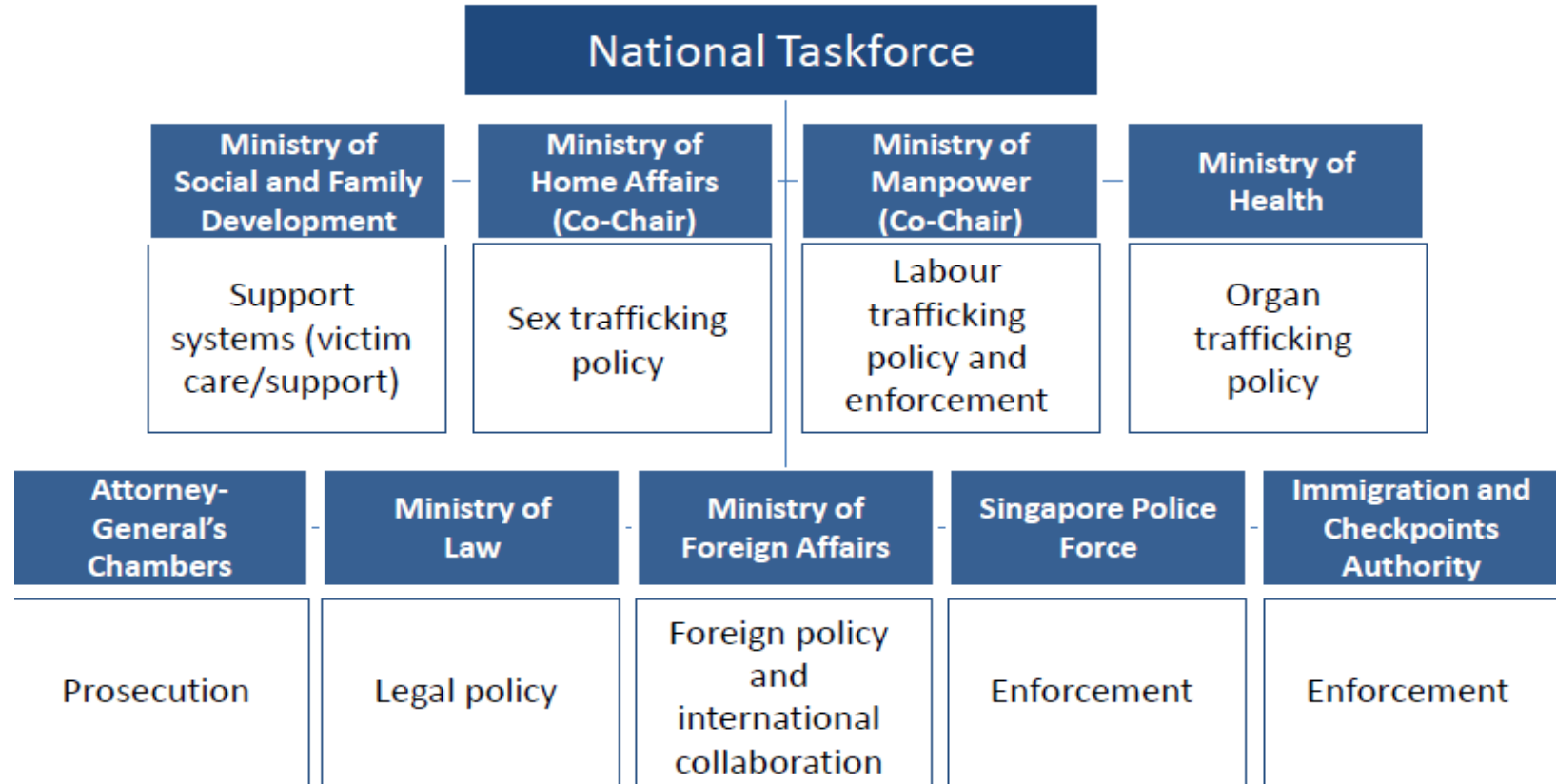
1. BACKGROUND

- a) TIP is a transnational crime
- b) Singapore is an attractive economic hub due to favourable economic conditions, large migrant workforce and our hub status
- c) Vigilance against transnational criminal elements

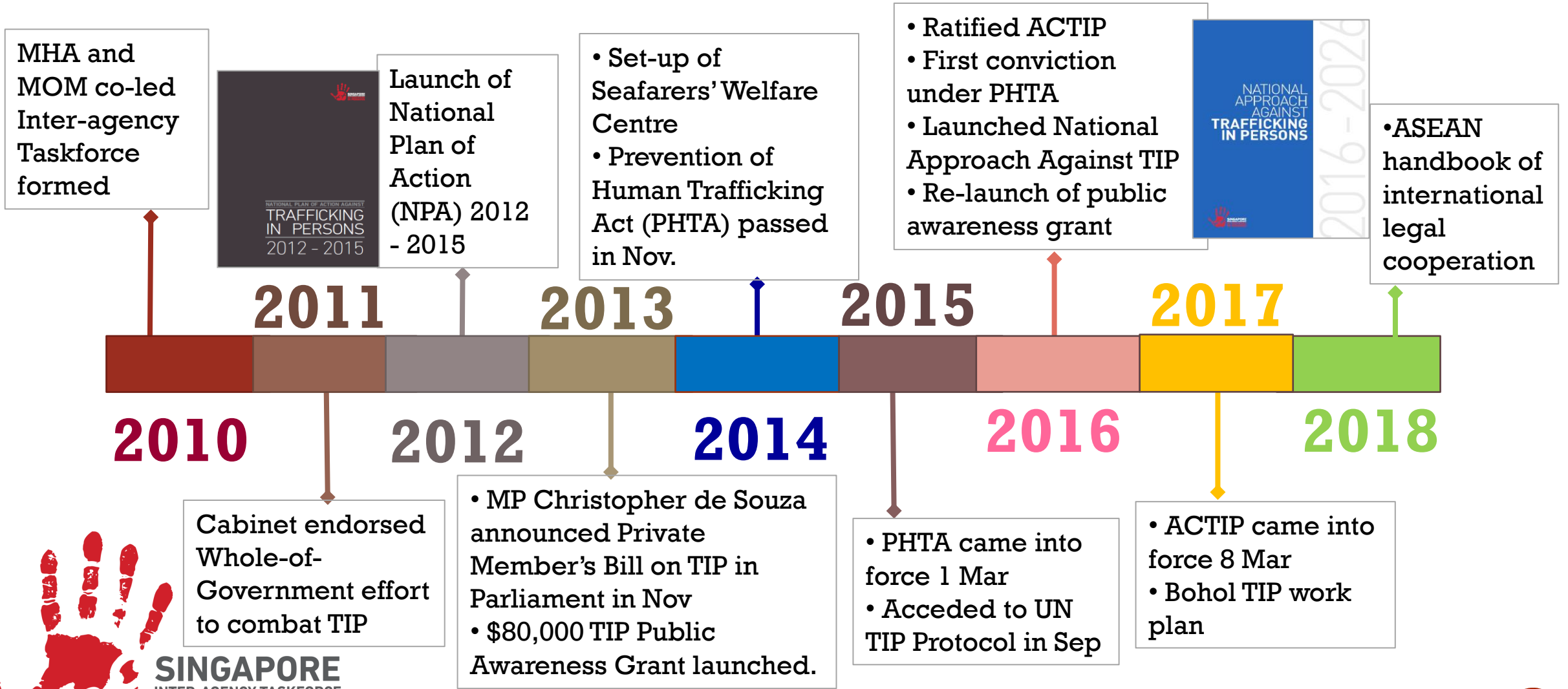


INTER-AGENCY TASKFORCE ON TIP

WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH



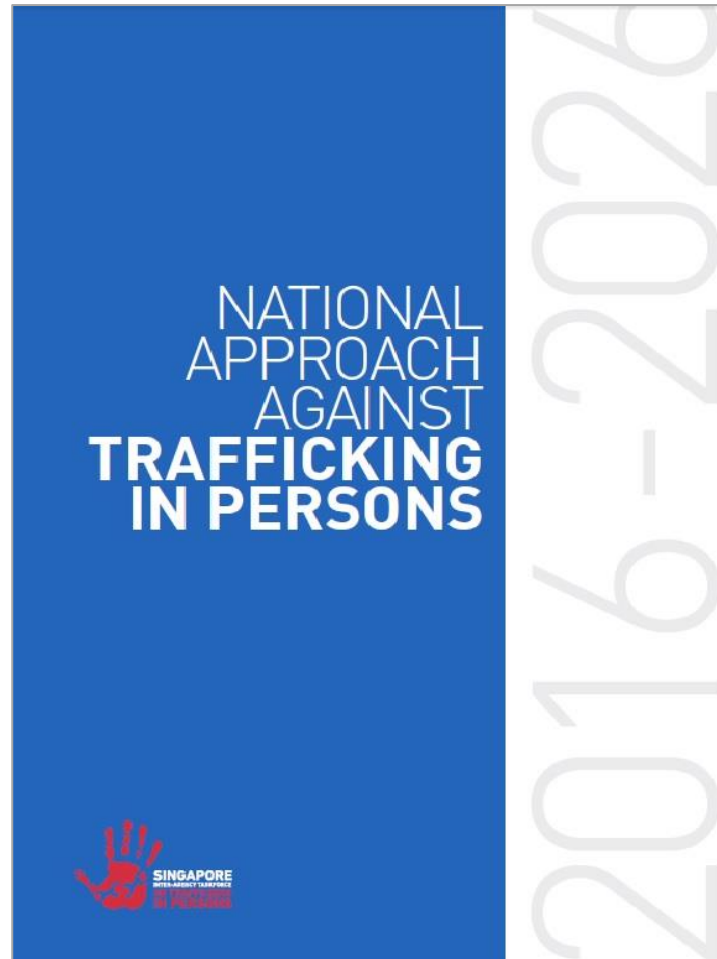
SINGAPORE'S JOURNEY IN COMBATTING TIP



SINGAPORE
INTER-AGENCY TASKFORCE
**ON TRAFFICKING
IN PERSONS**

RESTRICTED

2. NATIONAL APPROACH AGAINST TIP

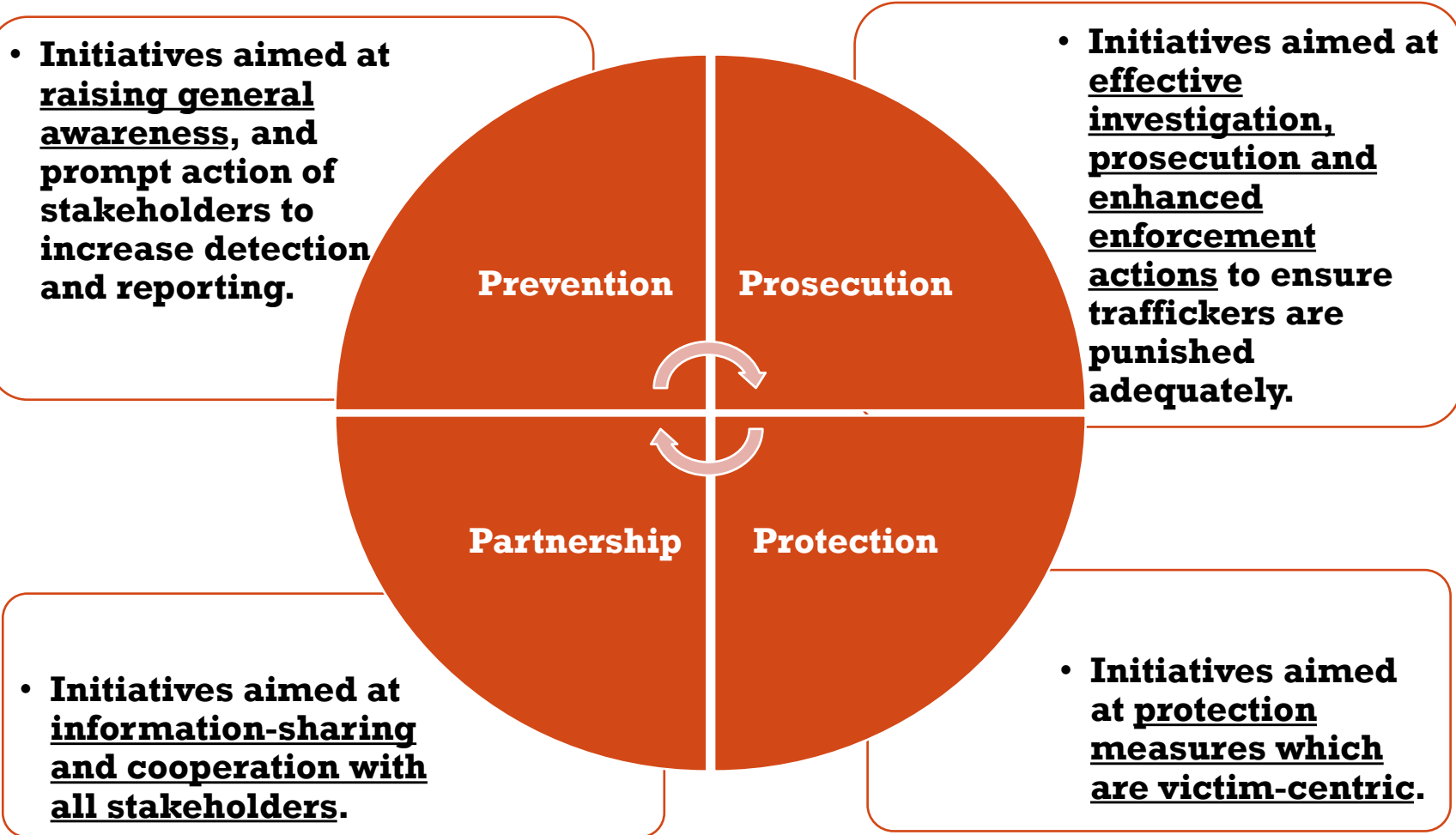


- a) 10-year plan launched in March 2016
- b) 4 Strategic Outcomes
- c) Whole-of-Singapore response to ensure Singapore's efforts remain effective and sustainable



RESTRICTED

SINGAPORE'S 4PS TO COMBAT TIP



SINGAPORE
INTER-AGENCY TASKFORCE
**ON TRAFFICKING
IN PERSONS**

RESTRICTED

NATIONAL APPROACH AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Prevention

- Build Awareness
- Encourage reporting of TIP Cases
- Enforce against TIP

Prosecution

- Review legislative frameworks
- Improve investigation and prosecution processes
- Enhance competency development
- Support TIP victims in getting compensation

Protection

- Maintain system to support TIP victims
- Protection for TIP victims and informers
- Build capacity of frontline officers and social workers

Partnership

- Strengthen international & regional partnerships
- Partner local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and businesses to develop prevention measures
- Conduct regular dialogues with stakeholders



3. ADVANCING VICTIMS' RIGHTS

– A VICTIM CENTRIC/SENSITIVE FRAMEWORK

- a. Investigation process
- b. Victim assistance support
- c. Home leave
- d. Special care after case conclusion
- e. Funding for NGOs
- f. Confidentiality of victims' identities
- g. Legal protection



A) INVESTIGATION PROCESS

- a) Investigators play a key role in victims' recovery.
- b) Our victim-centric investigation approach incorporates enforcement with caring for and empathising with victims' situation, which provides effective support to victims and ultimately fosters victims' trust in Singapore authorities.
- c) During interviews, arrangements are made for interpreters and/or female officers to be present to assist in the interviews, where necessary, to treat victims with empathy and dignity.



B) VICTIM ASSISTANCE SUPPORT

– PROVISION OF SHELTER FOR TIP VICTIMS

- a) The Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) work closely with NGOs – the Good Shepherd Centre (GSC) and Migrant Workers Centre (MWC) respectively – to provide shelters for sex and labour TIP victims.
- b) Due to COVID-19, safe management measures were introduced at all shelters, resulting in a reduction of capacity. The NGOs are in close contact with MSF and MOM to alert them if there is shortage of space for TIP victims in the shelters.
- c) At no time is any TIP victim requiring shelter services turned away.



B) VICTIM ASSISTANCE SUPPORT

– CUSTOMISED CARE PLAN FOR TIP VICTIMS

- a) Customised care plan for TIP victims include:
 - i. Shelter, medical care, counselling and interpretation services
 - ii. Shelter may also facilitate victim's return to his/her country of origin (with victim's consent) and link the victim to services with the NGO's overseas sister organisations.

- b) Due to differing needs, different NGOs manage sex TIP and labour TIP victims accordingly:
 - i. The GSC manages the care plan for sex TIP victims.
 - ii. Hagar manages the care plan for labour TIP victims in close collaboration with MOM.



C) HOME LEAVE

- a) Arrangements can be made for victims who are material witnesses in a court case to leave the country pending trial proceedings, as Singapore is fully cognisant of the importance of TIP victims reconnecting with their family for emotional support.
- b) Under the TIP Victim Care Framework, investigators assess such requests made by victims on a case-by-case basis.
- c) Upon being informed of a victim's need to go on home leave, officers would make the necessary travel arrangements including the purchase of air tickets and obtaining of necessary visas.



D) SPECIAL CARE AFTER CASE CONCLUSION

- a) Even after cases have concluded, victims still receive special care. The investigator arranges for the victim's air-ticket and informs his/her Embassy, parents/guardians and destination law enforcement agency of his/her arrival details.
- b) Alternatively, the investigator liaises with a local NGO that would arrange with their overseas partners to check in on the victim's well-being at his/her home country.
- c) Arrangements are also made for the victim or the NGO to update the investigator after they have returned to their home country.



E) FUNDING FOR NGOS

- a) The Singapore government contributes funds to NGOs that provide support services and for the NGOs' ad-hoc refurbishment projects and staff training.



F) CONFIDENTIALITY OF VICTIMS' IDENTITIES

- a) Proceedings involving child victims of sexual exploitation must be heard in-camera: Section 18(1)(a) PHTA
- b) Proceedings involving adult victims may be heard in-camera upon application to Court: Section 18(1)(b) PHTA
- c) PHTA prohibits the publication of a sex trafficking victim's identity and any other act likely to lead to the identification of the victim: Section 18(2) PHTA. This is regardless whether proceedings are heard in-camera or not.
- d) For TIP cases involving other forms of exploitation (other than sexual exploitation), gag orders are generally also imposed to protect victims' identity.



G) LEGAL PROTECTION

- a) While assisting with investigations, the victims will be issued a Special Pass to allow their legal stay in Singapore, and have access to a range of support services and assistance.

- b) As a matter of practice, Singapore authorities usually do not prosecute TIP victims for offences which they are compelled to commit as a direct consequence of being a TIP victim.

THANK YOU!

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