



*“More than a year we have worked in Thailand, yet we have nothing” a daughter called and told her mother, while she and her husband were working as migrant workers in Thailand. They had migrated to Thailand in hope of earning a good income, so that they could pay off their debt and support their son in Cambodia, who lived with his grandmother.*

This is a personal story shared by a widow in Prey Veng province, whose daughter and son in-law left Cambodia to work in Thailand. When her daughter and son in-law first arrived in Thailand, they thought they could earn a better income compared to Cambodia. Sadly, working as an orchard guard and a chemical pesticide sprayer allowed her daughter to earn only 6 USD a day while her son in-law earned only 7.5 USD a day. They did not receive any kind of work benefits such as daily food, health insurance, or other employment benefits from their Thai employer. Each month they barely had enough money to send back to pay off their debt. Before this happened, the daughter’s family had fallen into serious debt, which forced her and her husband to migrate for work in Thailand without realising about the risks of labour exploitation and illegal migration. Instead, they did as many other people from their district did, migrated without critical consideration of how to get safely to Thailand, and what work to do.

This widow later became a member of a Self-Help Group (SHG) in her village, and joined training on various topics, such as labour trafficking, illegal migration, critical thinking, and safe migration, conducted by the ICC-Trafficking Response team. She realised the importance of this training, especially for her daughter and son in-law in

Thailand. One day her daughter called her, and talked about the bad working condition in Thailand. With the knowledge the widow had gained from ICC-Trafficking Response training, she then asked her daughter and son-in-law to come back to Cambodia, because now there are more job opportunities in Cambodia offering a similar salary as in Thailand. The widow's advice to her daughter was as a result of her new ability to make critical analysis and comparisons about the positive and negative effects of internal and external migration, due to her learning from ICC-Trafficking Response project.

Her daughter and son in-law decided to come back home in June 2018. Her daughter started working at a garment factory, and her son in-law started working as a driver in Phnom Penh. They took their son along to Phnom Penh for him to attend school. Currently, their livelihood has improved and they can pay for their child’s education, as well as pay off their debt. The daughter and husband regret their migration experience in Thailand - seeking for better jobs - without realising that Cambodia now has more job opportunities compared to the past.

The widow continues to participate in ICC-Trafficking Response’s activities, and is committed to share her knowledge about labour exploitation and illegal migration to other people in her community. ICC-Trafficking Response team believes that SHG members like her are very important spokespeople in their community, in terms of raising awareness and combating labour exploitation, human trafficking, and illegal migration.