



REGIONAL SUPPORT OFFICE  
THE BALI PROCESS

# ANNUAL WORK PLAN '23



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# Glossary

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## **ASEAN**

Association of South East Asian Nations

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## **BALI PROCESS MEMBERS**

Includes Bali Process Member States and International Organisations

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## **CIFAL**

UN Global Network of International Training Centres for Authorities and Leaders

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## **GABF**

Bali Process Government and Business Forum

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## **ICRC**

International Committee of the Red Cross

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## **IOM**

International Organization for Migration

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## **JCLEC**

Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation

## **PPA**

Peoples Police Academy of Viet Nam

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## **RSO**

Regional Support Office of the Bali Process

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## **RILON**

Regional Information, Liaison and Outreach Network

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## **UNHCR**

The UN Refugee Agency

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## **UNITAR**

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

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## **UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



# Executive foreword

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In early 2023, Ministers from across the Bali Process Member States reconvened for the Eighth Ministerial Conference in Adelaide, Australia—marking the first time a Ministerial Conference has been held since the start of the global Covid-19 pandemic and the first Ministerial Conference held outside of Bali, Indonesia. The discussions and regional priorities agreed here—including around technology facilitated trafficking, the rise in prevalence of online scams, shifting irregular migration patterns in the region and increasing people smuggling activities especially by sea, will guide the work of the Regional Support Office of the Bali Process (RSO) over the coming year—working closely with the Bali Process Working Groups, the Bali Process Government and Business Forum, and across our Member and Observer States and Organisations.

Challenges facing Member States are growing in scope and complexity—with an increasingly uncertain global status quo leading to new push and pull factors, and with a changing landscape of source, transit and destination countries that is challenging traditional approaches. Against this backdrop, technology advances have facilitated the operations and reach of transnational criminal networks, with those being targeted often younger, educated, computer-literate, and in search of better economic opportunities. As the world continues to reset following the reopening of international borders from the Covid-19 pandemic, and to adapt to the changed environment in which we find ourselves operating, the role of the Bali Process and the Regional Support Office of the Bali Process in supporting international collaboration, as part of global efforts to combat transnational crime, people smuggling and trafficking in persons is critically important.

An announcement at the Eighth Bali Process Ministerial Conference for a one-off funding injection to the RSO from Australia for 2.7M Australian Dollars will bolster RSO capacity to address these issues, through new research and enquiry activities, and with an increased focus on our work around vulnerable migrants and victims of trafficking and exploitation protection and support. The RSO will also support regional efforts around public information campaigns.

The RSO was also pleased to update Bali Process Member States at the Ministerial Conference about changes to our funding structure, supported by the Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which will allow the opportunity for direct and voluntary funding of the RSO by Bali Process Member States. These changes aim to support the RSO to continue to evolve and grow its capacity to become an influential regional contributor on behalf of Bali Process Member States. The RSO extends its sincere gratitude to the Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs, which has provided primary funding for the RSO since its establishment in 2012, and to IOM, which hosts the RSO in Bangkok, Thailand and supports its administration. The RSO also thanks the Royal Thai Government for its ongoing support for the RSO to operate in Thailand.



## LOOKING AHEAD

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2022 marked the tenth year since Bali Process Members came together to establish the RSO in recognition of the critical need to translate Bali Process dialogue into practical action through the provision of technical support and cooperation activities with Bali Process Member States.

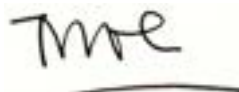
As we look ahead to 2023, the RSO will be reshaping its structure to more effectively serve priority areas and the needs of Bali Process Members. This includes a new programmatic focus on issues around trafficking in persons, people smuggling, transnational crime and technology and irregular migration regional priorities. The RSO will maintain focus on supporting dialogue and development across our Member States, through capacity building and training, and communications and engagement.

In 2023, we further plan to establish an alumni network of peers and practitioners who have participated in training with the RSO, and to reinvigorate our Regional Information, Liaison and Outreach Network (RILON) to support enhanced information sharing and collaboration at a practitioner and official level. We will also relaunch the RSO Secondment Programme, to support strengthening of technical capacity across Member States, and for Member States to share good practices and high-level capacities through and with the RSO. The Secondment Programme will crucially facilitate in depth two-way dialogue between the RSO and Member States, through secondees.

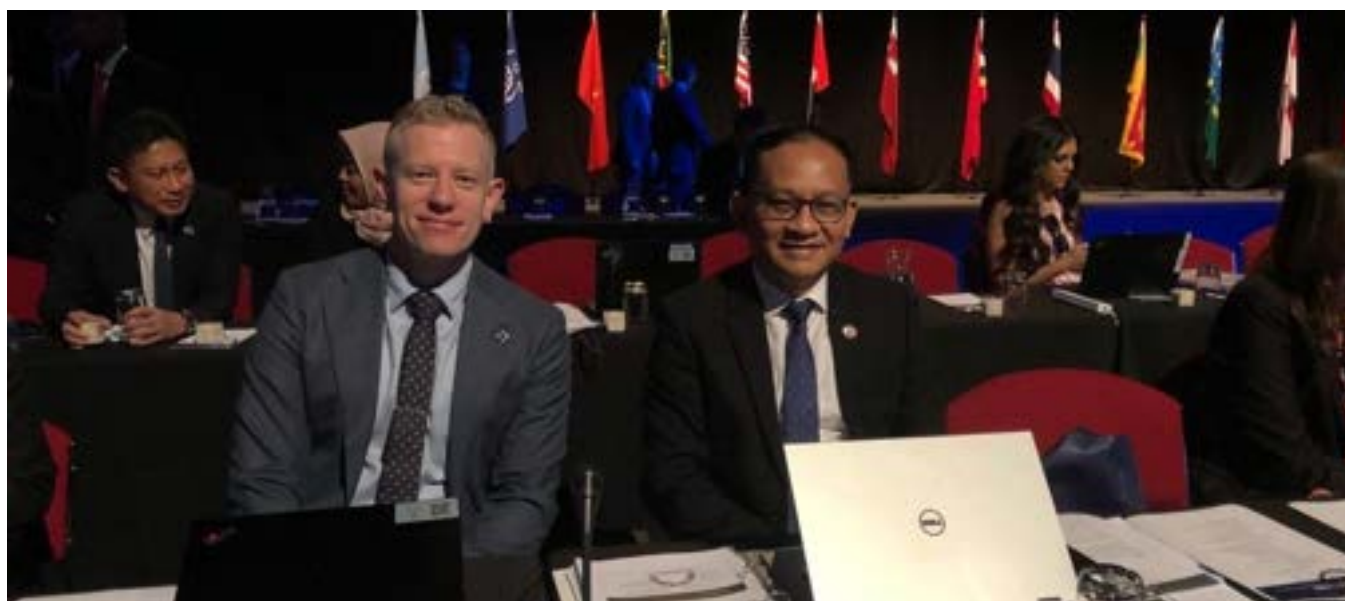
The work of the RSO would not be possible without the support and commitment of Bali Process Members, each of whom contribute time, resources, and personnel to work with the RSO across our lines of effort. In this next decade, we look forward to seeing continued engagement and impact across our work with Bali Process Member States, expanding our impact through increased resourcing, capacity and capability, to sustain progress in shared efforts to combat human trafficking, people smuggling and related transnational crimes.



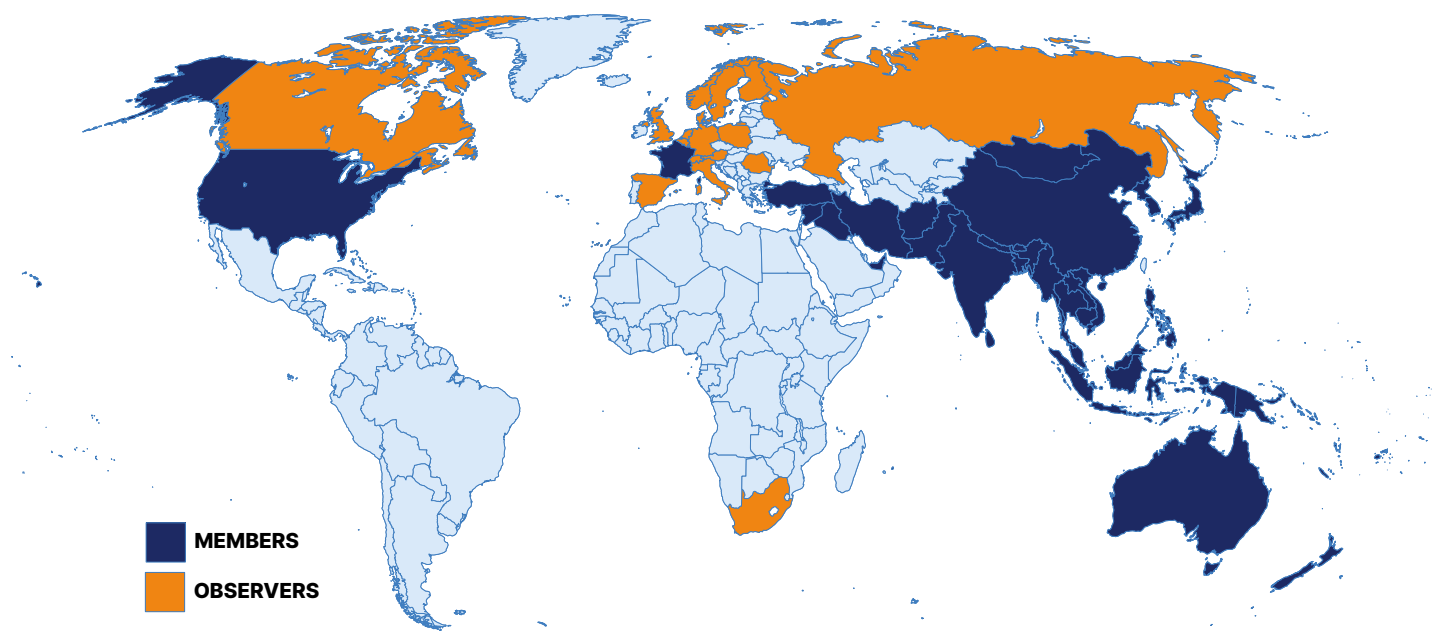
**David Scott**  
**RSO Co-Manager**  
**(Australia)**



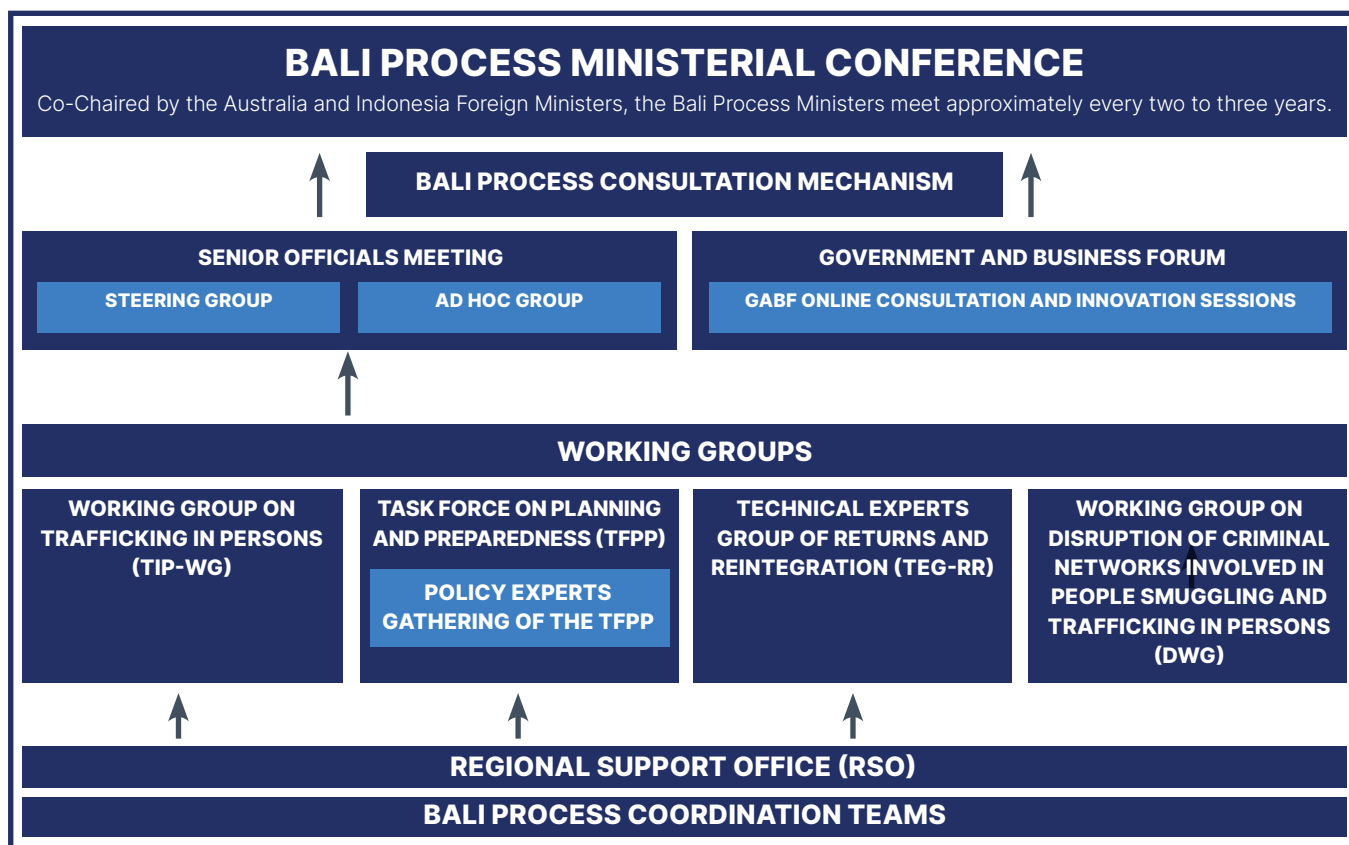
**Sukmo Yuwono**  
**RSO Co-Manager**  
**(Indonesia)**



## BALI PROCESS MEMBERSHIP



## BALI PROCESS STRUCTURE



## THE REGIONAL SUPPORT OFFICE

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The Regional Support Office of the Bali Process was established in 2012 to provide a unique function and resource—delivering practical, on-the-ground support and impact for the Bali Process and Bali Process Working Groups who support Bali Process Member States to address people smuggling, trafficking in persons, and related transnational crime.

The RSO works to strengthen cooperation across Member States to translate directions set at the Bali Process Ministerial Conference into action and real-world outcomes—through knowledge transfer, capacity-building and the sharing of information and best practice.

The RSO Annual Work Plan 2023 sets out our roadmap of key forecasted activities to deliver in 2023 in our efforts to strengthen practical cooperation on countering people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime, from, to and through the Asia-Pacific region. The activities in this Annual Work Plan 2023 are informed by the guiding principles and core purposes outlined in the RSO Strategic Plan.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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Four guiding principles shape how the RSO develops the activities in the Annual Work Plan and how we achieve our objectives.

- Participatory and consultative engagement with Bali Process Member States and International Organisation Members, the private sector, and other partners.
- Inclusive, non-discriminatory, gender-sensitive and supportive of gender equality.
- In line with international law, norms and standards, including human rights and refugee law.
- Responsive and adaptive to needs and emerging priorities of Bali Process Member States and International Organisations.



# Achieving our strategic purpose

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The RSO Strategic Plan outlines four key purposes that guide the activities of the RSO and demonstrate how we contribute to the overall work of the Bali Process. The RSO Annual Work Plan 2023 forecasts activities for 2023 and how they align with our purposes.

## **PURPOSE 1: Responsive to Bali Process Members and Working Groups**

We engage with Bali Process Members to deliver activities that contribute towards commitments and undertakings arising from Bali Process meetings. We source and provide specialist technical assistance to Bali Process Members, Task Forces and Working Groups.

## **PURPOSE 2: Operational Capacity Building**

We work with Bali Process Members and partners to develop and deliver fit-for-purpose operational capacity building activities relevant to the mandate of the Bali Process.

## **PURPOSE 3: Policy Development and Promotion of Best Practice**

We provide support in policy development and promoting best practice to improve aspects of migration management, and responses to people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime.

## **PURPOSE 4: Outreach, Engagement and Advocacy**

We engage and promote the work of the RSO to partners and dialogues outside of the Bali Process architecture, and publicly advocate on our issues and activities.



# Contributing to the Bali Process 2023 Strategy for Cooperation

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The 2023 Adelaide Strategy for Cooperation, endorsed at the Eighth Bali Process Ministerial Conference in February 2023, sets out eight areas of cooperation. The RSO Work Plan sets out how we will deliver activities in line with the RSO's strategic purpose and the 2023 Strategy for Cooperation.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT (LE)**

1. Promote and strengthen capacity to deliver coordinated, comprehensive approaches to detecting, preventing, investigating and prosecuting people smuggling, trafficking in persons, and related transnational crime, including the emerging online scam operations.
2. Strengthen law enforcement responses to technology-facilitated people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime, including building digital forensics capacity, and understanding of how to adapt existing policy and legislative frameworks.
3. Conduct capacity building to improve the capabilities of the officers of members' relevant national mechanism on the identification of, and assistance to, victims of trafficking.
4. Pursue information-sharing, coordinated action and joint operations, and foster closer cooperation among members to disrupt and dismantle smuggling and trafficking networks.

## **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (SE)**

5. Strengthen collaboration with regional organisations, including ASEAN, and relevant consultation initiatives, to foster cooperation and policy dialogue, and enhance regional coordination on training and capacity building with relevant institutions including the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation.
6. Through the Government and Business Forum (GABF), strengthen government engagement and collective efforts with the private sector to combat trafficking in persons for the purposes of forced labour, modern slavery, and the worst forms of child labour, including promotion of supply chain transparency and ethical business practices.
7. Strengthen engagement with civil society and other relevant organisations to improve national and regional responses to people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime, including to foster collaboration in supporting and protecting victims, and to help identify perpetrators.
8. Strengthen engagement with technology platforms and related organisations to reduce trafficking risks in online spaces and strengthen communication between platforms, policymakers and law enforcement.

## **INFORMATION SHARING AND PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS (IS&C)**

9. Support members to develop and implement effective public information campaigns, raise public awareness and promote digital literacy, to reduce irregular migration and promote safe and legal migration.

10. Facilitate information-sharing and collaboration among policy and operational officials, including through thematic dialogues and workshops.

## **IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND RELATED TRANSNATIONAL CRIME (IM)**

11. Conduct research, policy dialogue and practical cooperation within the Bali Process mandate on emerging issues, including trafficking into online scam operations, and enhance Members' understanding of the impact of natural and humanitarian disasters on irregular migration.

12. Continue activities to build preparedness to respond to irregular migration, including changing patterns and trends, such as multi-disciplinary table-top and planning exercises.

13. As part of efforts to combat people smuggling, trafficking in persons, and related transnational crimes, continue work with relevant mechanisms on anti-corruption initiatives.

## **BORDER MANAGEMENT (BM)**

14. Continue to update and develop guides, tools and training for operational and policy officers to promote effective frontline response to irregular migration, including resources and training on technology as a facilitator of, and tool to combat, people smuggling and trafficking in persons.

15. Continue to support the responsible use of biometrics for identity integrity in immigration, in cooperation and collaboration with national authorities/mechanisms, as appropriate.

## **VICTIM PROTECTION AND MIGRATION MANAGEMENT (VP&MM)**

16. Promote victim-centred approaches to the relevant management of people smuggling and trafficking.

17. Increase awareness of available assistance and support for persons in need of protection, in particular women and children.

18. Support the further implementation of Bali Process initiatives on civil registration and collection of vital statistics.

## **RETURNS AND REINTEGRATION (R&R)**

19. Support Members to explore, develop, and strengthen policies and procedures on return and reintegration, including in relation to access to services and livelihoods, and the preparedness of labour markets for returnees, in order to improve sustainability and durability of returns.

20. Collaborate across Working Groups to better understand the relationship between returns, victim protection, and the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators of people smuggling, trafficking in persons, and related transnational crime.

## **COORDINATION AND SUPPORT (C&S)**

21. Continue to harness the RSO as a focal point to provide support to build member capacity across the Bali Process mandate and areas of focus.

22. Enhance internal and external communication, including launch of refreshed websites, RSO social media strategy, and online resources.

23. Strengthen consultation and collaboration across Working Groups on the inter-related issues of irregular migration, in order to streamline and enhance the effectiveness of the Bali Process.

24. Members to consider supporting the RSO through voluntary funding, or seconding officers to the RSO to undertake projects

# 2023 ACTIVITY CALENDAR

## QUARTER ONE:

### January - March 2023

Activity	Strategic Purpose	Strategy for Cooperation
In cooperation with IOM, thematic dialogue on Protecting Migrant Workers in Indo-Pacific Supply Chains—Promising Business and Government Practices Guide publication	3	IM, VP&MM, R&R
In partnership with UNHCR, develop version 2 of the Screening and Referral Toolkit project	3	IM, VP&MM, R&R
Launch of the refreshed Bali Process website	1,4	SE, C&S
Thematic dialogue on preventing and responding to online scam enterprises	3	IS&C, IM, BM
Research brief on the nexus between online platforms and trafficking in persons and people smuggling	3	IS&C, IM, BM
Thematic training session on addressing people smuggling and trafficking in persons at JCLEC (virtual)	2	LE
Launch of refreshed RSO Highlights newsletter and Monthly Report	1,4	SE, C&S

#### RSO STRATEGIC PURPOSES AND BALI PROCESS 2023 STRATEGY FOR COOPERATION

Purpose 1: Responsive to Bali Process Members and Working Groups	Purpose 2: Operational Capacity Building	Purpose 3: Policy Development and Promotion of Best Practice	Purpose 4: Outreach, Engagement and Advocacy
Law Enforcement (LE)	Stakeholder Engagement (SE)	Information Sharing and Public Information Campaigns (IS&C)	Irregular Migration and Related Transnational Crime (IM)
Border Management (BM)	Victim Protection and Migration Management (VP&MM)	Returns and Reintegration (R&R)	Coordination and Support (C&S)



# QUARTER TWO:

## April - June 2023

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Activity	Strategic Purpose	Strategy for Cooperation
Counter people smuggling workshop, with a focus on disruption, information sharing and practical initiatives, in partnership with the Disruption Working Group	2	LE, BM
In partnership with IOM, voluntary return and reintegration assistance to eligible migrants from Bali Process Member States	1,3	IM, R&R
In partnership with UNODC, national roundtables on corruption as a facilitator of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants with interested Bali Process Members	3,4	IS&C, IM
Rapid assessment of perceptions and information needs of persons at risk of irregular migration in selected Bali Process Member States	1,3	IM, VP&MM, C&S
In partnership with the Australian Institute of Criminology, commence a research project themed around gender and transnational organised crime	3	IS&C, IM, VO&MM
Commence a review of the Bali Process Handbook on Addressing Irregular Migration through Effective Campaigns	3	IS&C, IM, VO&MM
In partnership with the Bali Process Technical Experts Group on Returns and Reintegration, support a review and refresh of the Bali Process Policy Guide on Return and Reintegration	3	R&R, C&S

### RSO STRATEGIC PURPOSES AND BALI PROCESS 2023 STRATEGY FOR COOPERATION

Purpose 1: Responsive to Bali Process Members and Working Groups	Purpose 2: Operational Capacity Building	Purpose 3: Policy Development and Promotion of Best Practice	Purpose 4: Outreach, Engagement and Advocacy
Law Enforcement (LE)	Stakeholder Engagement (SE)	Information Sharing and Public Information Campaigns (IS&C)	Irregular Migration and Related Transnational Crime (IM)
Border Management (BM)	Victim Protection and Migration Management (VP&MM)	Returns and Reintegration (R&R)	Coordination and Support (C&S)



# QUARTER THREE:

## July - September 2023

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Activity	Strategic Purpose	Strategy for Cooperation
Practical Training for Frontline Officers on Investigating of Trafficking in Persons at JCLEC, Semarang Indonesia	2	LE
Developing an online learning education platform to raise awareness on people smuggling, trafficking in persons, and related transnational crime	2,4	LE, BM, VP&MM
Training Workshop for Frontline Officials on Screening and Referring Vulnerable Migrants with Indonesia in Banda Aceh	1,2,4	LE, IM, VP&MM, R&R
In partnership with the Nexus Institute, development of Bali Process Facilitator Guide #5 on victim witnesses and #6 on access to remedies	2,4	VP&MM, R&R
In partnership with IOM, provide integrated reintegration assistance to returnees in Bali Process Member States	1,3	IM, R&R
In partnership with UNODC, regional roundtable on corruption as a facilitator of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants with identified Bali Process Member States	2,3,4	IM, BM
Launch of RSO Secondments Programme	1,2,3	LE
RSO 2023 Members Engagement Function: Collaborating across borders in identification and support for victims of trafficking	4	SE
Thematic roundtable on transnational crime and technology trends in Southeast Asia	3	SE, IS&C, IM, BM
In partnership with UNHCR, develop guidelines for Civil Registrations for Civil Registrars	3	IS&C, BM, VP&MM
Thematic Dialogue to launch Bali Process Practitioner Guide series on victim protection and support	3,4	VP&MM
Commence research into illicit financial flows from trafficking in persons in partnership with GI-TOC and ASEAN-ACT, and update the Following the Money Policy Guide	1,3	IS&C, IM, BM



## RSO STRATEGIC PURPOSES AND BALI PROCESS 2023 STRATEGY FOR COOPERATION

Purpose 1: Responsive to Bali Process Members and Working Groups	Purpose 2: Operational Capacity Building	Purpose 3: Policy Development and Promotion of Best Practice	Purpose 4: Outreach, Engagement and Advocacy
Law Enforcement (LE)	Stakeholder Engagement (SE)	Information Sharing and Public Information Campaigns (IS&C)	Irregular Migration and Related Transnational Crime (IM)
Border Management (BM)	Victim Protection and Migration Management (VP&MM)	Returns and Reintegration (R&R)	Coordination and Support (C&S)

# QUARTER FOUR:

## October – December 2023

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Activity	Strategic Purpose	Strategy for Cooperation
RSO 2023 Constructive Dialogue on Irregular Migration, Trafficking in Persons, People Smuggling and related Transnational Crime and 2024 annual work program consultation	4	SE, C&S
Commence development of RSO Operational Capacity Building and Training Framework	1,2	LE, BM
Regional Thematic Dialogue to launch Bali Process Facilitator Guide series on victim protection and support	3,4	VP&MM
In partnership with UNHCR, the launch of the Bali Process Toolkit for inclusive Civil Registration	3	BM, VP&MM
In partnership with the Australian Federal Police, New Zealand Police and Royal Canadian Mounted Police, International People Smuggling Course at JCLEC, Indonesia	2	LE, BM
In partnership with the Bali Process Technical Experts Group on Returns and Reintegration, support a review and refresh of the Bali Process Policy Guide on Return and Reintegration	3	R&R, C&S
In partnership with UNHCR, develop and launch version 3 of the RSO-UNHCR Screening and Referral Toolkit project	2,3	IS&C
In partnership with UNHCR, scoping of Phase #2 of the Bali Process Civil Registrations and Vital Statistics project	3	BM, VP&MM
Regional Training Workshop on Enhancing Victim Identification and Protection in the Asia-Pacific Region at UNITAR CICAL- Jeju, Republic of Korea	1,2,4	LE, VP&MM, R&R
2023 Border Forum: Multilateral Information Sharing	3	IS&C, IM, BM
Regional people smuggling workshop with Bali Process Member States of Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Bangladesh and Thailand	1,2	LE, BM
Workshop on Border Management by Air with Bali Process Member States of Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines at JCLEC, Indonesia	1,2	LE, BM
In partnership with the Trafficking in Persons Working Group and the Taskforce on Planning and Preparedness, thematic dialogue on strengthening criminalisation of perpetrators of trafficking in persons	1,4	SE, IS&C, C&S
Online investigations training on Prevention and Response to Trafficking in Persons and People Smuggling.	1,2	LE, BM, VP
Consultation on the Regional Information, Liaison and Outreach Network Initiative (RILON Initiative)	1,2,3	LE, SE, C&S

Activity	Strategic Purpose	Strategy for Cooperation
Policy brief investigating human trafficking related communications between organised crime groups on public social media channels and communication platforms	2,3	IS&C
Launch of RSO Alumni Network	2,3,4	LE, SE, C&S
Launch of the refreshed RSO website	1,4	SE, C&S
Commence assessment and gap analysis of identified Bali Process Member State national legal and policy frameworks for TIP, victim identification, assistance and protection	3,4	IS&C, IM, BM

## RSO STRATEGIC PURPOSES AND BALI PROCESS 2023 STRATEGY FOR COOPERATION

Purpose 1: Responsive to Bali Process Members and Working Groups	Purpose 2: Operational Capacity Building	Purpose 3: Policy Development and Promotion of Best Practice	Purpose 4: Outreach, Engagement and Advocacy
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Border Management (BM)	Victim Protection and Migration Management (VP&MM)	Returns and Reintegration (R&R)	Coordination and Support (C&S)

# RSO programmatic focus areas

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## COUNTERING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS:

### Objectives and Priorities

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The Asia-Pacific region has witnessed an expansion in the incidence and scope of human trafficking and modern slavery following the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>1</sup> Alongside the largest share of women and children trafficked globally for sexual exploitation, considerable numbers of men and women are trafficked for forced labour and related exploitation, with forced marriage also a real concern for this region.<sup>2</sup> An expansion of social media use and time spent online resulting from the pandemic has triggered a dramatic increase in tech-facilitated trafficking, where digital technologies are being used both to recruit and exploit victims.<sup>3</sup> Both global and domestic dimensions of trafficking are key issues for this region, with victims found across the Asia-Pacific, the Middle East, Europe, and North America.

#### Objectives

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- To provide capacity-building and technical support to Member States to strengthen capacity to identify and protect victims of trafficking and exploitation, using a trauma and victim-centred approach.
- To promote cooperation among an extended network of policy makers, law enforcement, legal and protection practitioners for addressing trafficking in persons and modern slavery, in compliance with international, regional and national legal standards and with the commitments undertaken by the Bali Process.
- To work with Bali Process Member States to promote a victim-centered and trauma-informed approach through capacity building and training activities and policy dialogue.
- To design activities with the awareness that women, men, girls and boys are at risk of different methods of recruitment and exploitation. The RSO will support Bali Process Member States to embed a gender-sensitive approach when working to address activities relating to trafficking in persons.

<sup>1</sup> Buckley P, Pietropaoli L, Rosada A, Harguth B, Broom J., J Public Health Emerg Vol 6, How has COVID-19 affected migrant workers vulnerability to human trafficking for forced labour in Southeast Asia?—a narrative review (2022), available at: <https://jphe.amegroups.com/article/view/8264/html>.

<sup>2</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, The Impact of Covid-19 on trafficking in persons trends and inter-institutional response in Asia and the Pacific: A Literature Review (2021), available at: <https://roasiapacific.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1671/files/documents/impact-of-covid-19-on-trafficking-in-persons.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Council of Europe, Online and technology-facilitated trafficking in human beings: Full report (2022), available at: <https://rm.coe.int/online-and-technology-facilitated-trafficking-in-human-beings-full-rep/1680a73e49>.



## Delivery Methods

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- 1. Coordination:** The RSO Annual Work Plan 2023 includes activities specifically aimed at fostering collaboration and information-sharing among Bali Process Member States that is critically needed to effectively address the global scale and transnational element of trafficking in persons. In particular, the RSO will seek to improve dialogue and cooperation around criminalisation and prosecution of trafficking in persons, through two events: a thematic dialogue, and a regional roundtable to discuss operational approaches and practical cooperation around investigation and prosecution of the new forms of trafficking in persons.
- 2. Research and Policy:** The RSO will support the development of updated policy guidance to support improved identification of victims of trafficking and the investigation of illicit financial flows from trafficking in persons. The RSO will work with Bali Process Member States to address the emerging forms of trafficking in persons, such as those driven by digital technologies and transnational criminal networks, as well as to support safe returns and reintegration for victims.
- 3. Capacity Building:** The RSO will promote capacity building activities tailored to Bali Process Member States' needs, and to mainstream victim-centred approaches in victim identification and assistance. Targeted trainings, both at the regional and national level, will be offered to ensure that victims can safely access legal remedies as well as durable reintegration to their country of origin.

## Priority Bali Process Member States

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The Countering Trafficking in Persons programme recognises that no Bali Process Member State is free from trafficking in persons, either as a country of origin, or a country of transit and destination.

Desk-reviews and policy guidance will strive to be inclusive of Bali Process Member States and will continue to inform the RSO's strategy and provide Bali Process Member States and stakeholders with the information and resources needed to evaluate their policy and capacity building needs.

The Countering Trafficking in Persons programme will prioritise engagement with Bali Process Member States that are facing new or particularly complex challenges with regards to trafficking in persons, including Cambodia, Viet Nam, and Indonesia. Capacity building opportunities will be proactively sought with countries in South Asia and in the Pacific, to strengthen the RSO's outreach and support broader capacity uplift across the Bali Process region. Finally, specific partnerships will be sought with the Philippines to promote the development of good practices in terms of reintegration of victims of trafficking, building on the Philippines existing national referral mechanisms and Civil Society Organisation (CSO) networks.

# COUNTERING PEOPLE SMUGGLING:

## Objectives and Priorities

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Bali Process Member States continue to face significant challenges in effectively countering the activity of people smugglers and complex criminal syndicates, who operate online and within communities to facilitate the irregular movement of individuals across borders. People smuggling is a highly profitable business and smugglers and criminal networks take advantage of those seeking to escape poverty, conflict, persecution and other natural and humanitarian disasters in search of opportunities and a better life—charging high prices for dangerous and illegal journeys, with migrants extremely vulnerable to other forms of crime including trafficking.

A coordinated response from governments within the Bali Process is necessary to effectively detect people smuggling operations and undertake disruption activities. The Covid-19 pandemic created a unique environment for the people smuggling trade with closed international borders creating difficult conditions for successful smuggling ventures. The reopening of international borders in 2022 has resulted in a quick rebound of people smuggling activity with an increasing reliance on technology as a key facilitator of smuggling.<sup>4</sup>

The RSO will work closely with Bali Process Member States government agencies, law enforcement, border and immigration agencies and international organisations to enhance knowledge and information sharing, assist to strengthen detections and disruptions of smuggling activities and support Bali Process Member States with deterrence activities and campaigns. The RSO will continue to reinforce the importance of coordinated efforts to reduce people smuggling activities, protecting the rights of smuggled persons and working together to prevent the abuse associated with people smuggling.

### Objectives

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- To improve the understanding of the shifts in the business model for smugglers operating across the Bali Process region.
- To enhance multi-country and multi-agency information sharing and sustained dialogue amongst the most affected Bali Process Member States.
- To re-commence capability development activities and invest in research and enquiry activities that will contribute to improved knowledge gains and awareness raising on the smuggling challenges, trends and disruption opportunities for Bali Process Member States.
- To support enhanced understanding of the trends associated with people smuggling across the Bali Process region with a focus on irregular maritime venture activities and people smuggling by air, analysis of people smugglers disinformation activities and identify potential future threats that could face the Bali Process region with respect to people smuggling.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Covid-19 and the smuggling of migrants – a call for safeguarding the rights of smuggled migrants facing increased risks and vulnerabilities (2021), pg.11-13, available at: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/SOM\\_and\\_COVID-19\\_Publication\\_final\\_EN\\_final.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/SOM_and_COVID-19_Publication_final_EN_final.pdf).

## Delivery Methods

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- 1. Coordination:** The RSO will work closely with Bali Process Members and other stakeholders to facilitate opportunities for enhanced coordination of activities and strengthened frameworks that support effective information sharing. The RSO will focus on supporting Bali Process Member States to develop coordinated counter people smuggling public information campaigns aimed at exposing people smugglers business models and continuing to raise awareness of the dangers to individuals within the Bali Process region of engaging people smuggling services. The RSO, with our delivery partners, will be focused on supporting Bali Process Member States government agencies, law enforcement and border, immigration and defence agencies.
- 2. Research and Policy:** The RSO will support the establishment of research and enquiry opportunities to identify the regional trends associated with people smuggling in the Bali Process region including undertaking analysis work of people smugglers disinformation campaigns in the region and commencing scoping for a Bali Process region people smuggling futures project looking at potential future threats that the region may encounter with respect to this crime type. The RSO will support Bali Process Member States to strengthen understanding of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol including with respect to development and refinement of national legislation and regulations that support implementation of the Protocol in identified Bali Process Member States.
- 3. Capacity Building:** The RSO will promote capacity building activities tailored to Bali Process Member States' needs focusing on information and intelligence sharing, comprehensive approaches to countering people smuggling by sea and air, law enforcement focused people smuggling detection and disruption training and through delivery of introductory countering people smuggling training courses for operational officers.

## Priority Bali Process Member States

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Given the global scale of people smuggling activities, the RSO is cognisant of the need to provide capability development opportunities to the full membership of the Bali Process where support is sought. To achieve this, the RSO will launch an online learning and development module focused on countering people smuggling and countering trafficking in persons that will be accessible to all Bali Process Member States.

Additionally, the RSO will prioritise engagement with Bali Process Member States facing complex and heightened people smuggling challenges including Bangladesh, Lao PDR, Thailand, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.



# TRANSNATIONAL CRIME AND TECHNOLOGY:

## Objectives and Priorities

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The links between transnational organised crime, irregular migration and technology continue to deepen as the use of smartphones, social media and other new technologies become increasingly prevalent.<sup>5</sup> Technology, which may once have been a specialised interest or niche within the counter trafficking in persons and people smuggling field, has become central to how governments and law enforcement, as well as organised criminal syndicates, operate.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, and in response to Bali Process Member States requests for a greater focus on the role of technology as a facilitator of trafficking in persons and people smuggling, the RSO will concentrate its work at this intersection through 2023-24.

The RSO will do this by mainstreaming conversations around technology across activities being implemented in an effort to increase coordination between Bali Process Member States to address smuggling and trafficking facilitated by technology. The RSO will work with policymakers, law enforcement, border and immigration agencies and prosecutors within Bali Process Member States to effectively prevent and respond to technology facilitated trafficking in persons and people smuggling.

### Objectives

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- To develop an engaged network of law enforcement, border and immigration officials, policymakers, and technology platforms to facilitate exchanges and actions that contribute to addressing trafficking in persons and people smuggling facilitated by technology.
- To identify regional priorities in terms of technology & trafficking and taking steps to define these priorities alongside a strategy for response.
- To markedly increase the frequency and speed of coordination across borders and between the technology industry and criminal justice actors when responding to technology facilitated trafficking in persons and people smuggling.
- To increase capacity, and provide resources and technical support, where most urgently needed to respond to emerging challenges.
- To raise awareness across the region of corruption as a facilitator of trafficking in persons and people smuggling.

<sup>5</sup> ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking (ACT), The use and abuse of technology in human trafficking in Southeast Asia (2022), available at: <https://www.aseanact.org/story/use-and-abuse-of-technology-in-human-trafficking-southeast-asia/>.

<sup>6</sup> The Regional Support Office of the Bali Process, Trapped in Deceit: Responding to the Trafficking in Persons Fuelling the Expansion of Southeast Asia's Online Scam Centres (2023), available at: <https://bit.ly/41Ljs7e>.

## Delivery Methods

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- 1. Coordination:** The RSO will lead the coordination of actors responding to issues related to technology and trafficking in persons and people smuggling. This will range from supporting efforts to align technology and trafficking related policies across regions by bringing together private sector actors, law enforcement, border and immigration agencies and policymakers, to facilitate operational level coordination between response actors who are working to counter urgent challenges, such as online scam centres. The RSO will coordinate with and support the Disruption Working Group.
- 2. Research & Policy:** The RSO will support the development of both 1) original research to provide additional nuance to Bali Process Member States' understandings of the challenges related to transnational crime and technology, as well as 2) policy guidance, to support the dissemination of best practices amongst Bali Process Member States, as well as to support rapid responses to emerging challenges.
- 3. Capacity Building:** The RSO will support law enforcement and criminal justice actors to boost the technical skills needed to respond to transnational crime, to use emerging technologies more effectively, and to prepare for novel technology related threats and opportunities.

## Priority Bali Process Member States

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Implementation related to transnational crime and technology will be inclusive of all Bali Process Member States, as modern technologies, such as social media or communication applications, are not constrained to any single country's or region's borders.

Accordingly, research, major forums and coordination efforts will seek to include broad perspectives and provide value to all Bali Process Member States in overcoming transnational crime and technology related challenges. Within this, specific focus will be on Southeast Asia, particularly the Mekong Sub-region, South Asia and, to a lesser extent, Persian Gulf States, where challenges such as online scam centres and transnational organised crime led people smuggling operations are operating at scale and where cross-border solutions are most urgently needed.

Regional level roundtables and task groups will work to bring together key response partners, with the RSO facilitating inter-regional dialogue where challenges extend beyond traditional regional boundaries. Capacity building efforts will focus on regions where digital literacy and capability is the lowest, thereby helping to raise the floor on regional law enforcement and prosecution capacity, limiting opportunities for organised crime to exploit gaps in preparedness.





# IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND REGIONAL PRIORITIES

## Objectives and Priorities

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Natural and humanitarian disasters that contribute to regional crises continue to drive current and future migration trends, along with the legal status of persons migrating as a result of these impacts.<sup>7</sup> Conflict, political instability, economic pressures and the increased activity of human trafficking syndicates are all playing a role in increased irregular migration in the region. These are complex issues that require a detailed understanding of the factors underlying migration, the vulnerabilities of different populations with regards to these impacts, including fast-and slow-onset disasters. As demonstrated by the multiple requests made to the RSO for technical support by Bali Process Member States, consistent irregular migration factors have emerged as a long-term phenomenon that Member States are reckoning with. In 2023 the RSO will endeavour to build a strong foundation for this thematic area, to ensure that through a consistent approach, the RSO will be able to provide Bali Process Member States with information and assistance on the irregular migration challenges facing the Bali Process region and will seek to work closely with Bali Process Member States to identify priority action areas for the region.

### Objectives

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- To identify regional priorities relating to irregular migration trends that are clearly identified, alongside a strategy to enhance regional awareness and improve the knowledge base.
- To enhance dialogue, information-sharing and practical cooperation on emerging irregular migration-related trafficking in persons and people smuggling issues—including the impact of natural and humanitarian disasters, forced labour and other forms of exploitation—and improve Bali Process Member States' understanding of the drivers of irregular migration—such as conflict, political instability, and economic pressures.
- To promote dissemination of best practices and trans-border coordination among Member States, to reduce vulnerable populations' exposure to risks connected with irregular migration, forced labour and related exploitation.
- To promote best practice around inclusive civil registration across Member States, with an emphasis on hard to reach populations.
- Support Member States to develop and strengthen policies and procedures around return and reintegration, including access to specialised services and livelihoods for improved sustainability of returns and for reducing the risk of circular migration.

As irregular migration and exploitation rates are dramatically on the rise in the region, so too is the need to ensure that migrants are less vulnerable to those risks and can have safe access to legal remedies and to protection.<sup>8</sup> Stranded migrants and vulnerable returnees should have access to safe return and reintegration options. Barriers to return and lack of services and support for durable reintegration of vulnerable migrants represent a serious challenge in most Bali Process Member States, which requires concerted efforts and a consistent approach across the region.

<sup>7</sup> International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), Migration Outlook 2023 (2023), pg.22, available at: [https://south.euneighbours.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ICMPD\\_Migration\\_Outlook\\_2023.pdf](https://south.euneighbours.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ICMPD_Migration_Outlook_2023.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Migration Data Portal, Irregular Migration- Recent Trends (2022), available at: <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/regional-data-overview/south-east-ern-asia>

## Delivery Methods

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- 1. Coordination:** The RSO will continue to support the delivery by IOM of voluntary return and reintegration assistance to stranded migrants. The RSO will promote coordination and dialogue among actors responding to issues related to irregular migration, return and forced labour and related exploitation. The RSO will support the Bali Process Technical Experts Group on Returns and Reintegration.
- 2. Research and Policy:** The RSO irregular migration programme in 2023 will focus on developing a systematic understanding of the impact of natural and humanitarian disasters such as conflict, political instability, economic pressures and the increased activity of human trafficking syndicates, on migration and outline an initial roadmap for policy actions for countries of origin, of transit and of destination. The dissemination of the research and of the policy recommendations will be the opportunity for the RSO to initiate and foster a regional dialogue on irregular migration trends and challenges among Bali Process Member States and will further support the development of a multi-year RSO workplan for these regional priorities, including with respect to research and enquiry, based on the evidence collected and the needs identified by and among Bali Process Member States and partners.
- 3. Capacity Building:** The RSO will support policy and law enforcement officers through promotion of tools and information related to the civil registrations of vulnerable populations and with respect to information identification and exchange regarding the risks of irregular migration and options for safe and dignified return and reintegration of stranded migrants.

## Priority Bali Process Member States

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The Irregular Migration Programme will work broadly across the Asia and Pacific region, considering that irregular migration and natural and humanitarian disasters are affecting most if not all Member States. Armed conflicts, political instability, economic pressures, and large-scale disasters breed opportunities for traffickers, smugglers and transnational criminal networks while simultaneously weakening preventive measures. The RSO will assist in enhancing the capacity of Member States including Departments and Ministries of Government, Immigration authorities, border control and customs, law enforcement and service providers by offering countering trafficking, smuggling and transnational crime capacity building and training activities and through dialogue and engagement.

In terms of forced labour and related exploitation and lack of access to civil documentation, the Irregular Migration Programme will seek to target countries in South-East Asia that are particularly affected by these issues and where focused efforts have already been made by the RSO and partners to promote good practices in, respectively, ethical recruitment, civil registration and cross-border cooperation.

# OPERATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

## Objectives and Priorities

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Development and strengthening of operational capacity is a crucial component in addressing the complex and challenging issue of human trafficking and people smuggling and ensuring the protection of victims and the prosecution of perpetrators. One of the RSO's prime functions has been strengthening the ability of law enforcement agencies and criminal justice actors of Bali Process Member States to effectively detect, investigate, prosecute, and coordinate relevant cases. This includes providing learning opportunities to police, regulatory, and border officers who interact directly with trafficked victims and smuggled migrants and equip them with the necessary knowledge and competencies to effectively perform their responsibilities. It also involves having clear mechanisms for effective international cooperation and coordination with other countries and organisations to address cross-border crimes.

### Objectives

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- To develop knowledge and skills of operational personnel through regional and national workshops on relevant laws and policies, investigation techniques, victim identification and support methods, and evidence collection.
- To standardise the approaches and methods used by operational personnel, promoting consistency, and improving the overall response to and support for victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants.
- To raise awareness of the issue of human trafficking and people smuggling among law enforcement, border and immigration officers and policy officers, improving their ability to identify cases and respond appropriately.
- To promote and facilitate interagency cooperation and coordination between and within Bali Process Member States to improve information and resource sharing capacity.



## Delivery Methods

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- 1. In-person and online workshops:** Law enforcement and operational agencies gain comprehensive and technical knowledge required to respond to trafficking in persons and people smuggling cases.
- 2. Self-paced learning:** Participants access introductory and awareness raising courses on trafficking in persons and people smuggling through an online platform.
- 3. Communities of practice:** Alumni engage in peer-to-peer learning and support through virtual or in-person networks.

## Priority Bali Process Member States

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The RSO's operational capacity building activities prioritise Bali Process Member States who face constraints in responsive programming with an aim to assist in closing the gap between international norms and local practice. Beneficiary Bali Process Member States and training topics for the RSO 2023 capacity building program are identified by principles of needs-based, partnership and strategic alignment as follows:

- Counter Trafficking in Persons Course.
- Regional Counter People Smuggling Workshop.
- Virtual Training on Victim Identification, Protection, Recovery and Reintegration.
- Addressing Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants Workshop.
- Regional Workshop on Capacity, Resources, and Needs Assessment.
- Workshop on Border Management by Air.
- Regional Workshop on Victim Identification, Protection, Recovery, and Reintegration.
- E-learning Course on Understanding Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants.

The RSO will partner with other training institutions to provide joint training and capacity-building programmes, such as the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation, the People's Police Academy Viet Nam and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (CIFAL-Jeju).

# COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

## Objectives and Priorities

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Communications and engagement plays a key role in supporting the RSO to lead regional conversations and facilitate collaborative action to address trafficking in persons, people smuggling and irregular migration across the Asia and Pacific region. The RSO will conduct proactive engagement with Bali Process Member and Observer States and partner organisations, to ensure the RSO both understands and is responsive to Bali Process Member State needs and priorities, and by acting as a trusted voice and resource to build regional knowledge and support collaboration and mutual understanding. The RSO aims to build a community of practice across practitioners working on the ground across law enforcement, border and immigration officials, policy makers, judicial authorities and counter-trafficking and migration practitioners—facilitating cross-border dialogue and sharing of practices and insights that encourages coordinated action.

### Objectives

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- To be responsive to Bali Process Members and Working Groups, sustaining and strengthening engagement to ensure a good understanding of, and responsiveness to, Member needs. We aim to use our unique platform in the region to connect Members and build opportunities for regional dialogue and collaboration.
- To grow reputation and influence through outreach, engagement and advocacy, growing our voice in the region as an active and responsive source of information and knowledge-sharing.
- To support operational capacity building, policy development and promotion of best practice—to facilitate information sharing, and acting as a central resource for knowledge dissemination, bringing together and consolidating efforts across actors in the region.





## Delivery Methods

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### The RSO will:

- Refresh the Bali Process website, launch the RSO website, enhance activity on social media channels and newsletters as part of an interconnected digital network—helping to achieve our aims to grow in visibility and impact.
- Refresh the Regional Information, Liaison and Outreach Network (RILON) group, extending membership across law enforcement, border management, immigration and judicial authorities, policy and counter-trafficking and smuggling practitioners to provide an active space for discussion and collaboration.
- Establish an Alumni Network and draw on this group as a valuable network of engaged voices on the ground to increase our reach and penetration at a local level and to improve post-activity engagement with RSO Alumni to improve future programming and identify success stories.
- Establish a programme of secondments from Bali Process Member States to the RSO offices, working with programme teams to identify engaged and active candidates whose work ties into Bali Process regional priorities.
- Build the RSO's reputation by promoting thought leadership through a network of engaged alumni and key stakeholders, working in partnership with academia, strategic partner organisations, non-government organisations and shared interest groups
- Develop relations with target media outlets and technology platforms, to build our ability to generate wider coverage, name recognition and influence.

Our communications efforts are focused on the needs of Bali Process Member States—and the crucial role the RSO plays to support the Bali Process in raising the profile and awareness of its work, including through increasing support for the Bali Process Co-Chairs and the activity of the Bali Process Working Groups.



# Ensuring the RSO is responsive to Bali Process members, Working Groups and emerging issues

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In accordance with our Strategic Priorities, the RSO remains agile, adaptable and approachable to respond and deliver additional activities beyond the activities defined in the Annual Work Plan 2023, in response to commitments and undertakings arising from Bali Process meetings. The RSO can source and provide specialist advice and technical assistance to Bali Process Members, Taskforces and Working Groups upon request. The RSO will proactively introduce new initiatives and activities that respond to emerging issues relating to people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime.

The RSO also runs a secondment programme for Member States to work in the RSO offices in Bangkok, Thailand for a three to six month period on a project and programme of work that contributes to Bali Process and RSO objectives.

The RSO welcomes suggestions for collaboration and ideas for new activities and projects from Member States—particularly from law enforcement officers, border and immigration officials, policy makers, judicial personnel and counter-trafficking and migration practitioners.

If you would like to partner with the RSO in any way, or to suggest new programmes of activity or support, please get in touch at [info@rso.baliprocess.net](mailto:info@rso.baliprocess.net).



# Monitoring, reporting and performance

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The RSO operates with strategic guidance from the Bali Process Senior Official Co-Chairs, and Senior Officials in the Governments of Australia and Indonesia. Day to day operations are overseen by two RSO Co-Managers from the Australian and Indonesian Governments.

The RSO produces a Biannual Strategy, an Annual Work Plan and Annual Report, Monthly Reports, a quarterly newsletter RSO Highlights, and a six-monthly narrative finance report.

The RSO is an open structure welcoming assignments of government officials and other contributions from Bali Process Member States. New projects proposed by members will be considered by the RSO Co-Managers, and with strategic guidance provided by the Bali Process Co-Chairs.

The RSO Co-Managers report on a biannual basis to the Bali-Process Co-Chairs. The Co-Managers also report to the Steering Group and the Ad-Hoc Group and full Bali Process membership at Senior Officials' Meetings and Ministerial Conferences.

The RSO Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and supporting architecture will be developed throughout 2023.





**REGIONAL SUPPORT OFFICE**  
THE BALI PROCESS

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