IOM RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION

Christine Aghazarm
Research and Publications Unit
IOM, Geneva
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IOM’s approach towards trafficking in persons

- Wide range of activities implemented in partnership with:
  - Governmental institutions;
  - NGOs;
  - International organizations.

- Policy – Research – Practice Interface

- Through implementation and management of the IOM victim-centred Global Human Trafficking Database, the Organization has gained extensive experience collecting information on human trafficking.
Complex interplay between research, policy and programming

Anti-trafficking actors cannot know what is working and what is failing if they do not have access to accurate data and research to help understand the phenomenon and substantiate claims.

- To understand the complexities of the issue and combat human trafficking effectively reliable research and data is needed

- To feed into anti-trafficking policy and programme development
  - Learn about other experiences and practices
  - Assess the effectiveness and impact of their current policies
  - Promote an informed debate

- With the ultimate goal to protect trafficked persons, to prosecute traffickers and to prevent and combat trafficking in persons
Limitations with current approaches and knowledge gaps:

- Conceptual clarity; definitions
- Too few data collection methods stand to employ standardized methods and measures
- Data gathered is not comparable and the potential for use is limited
- Figures are often based on estimates
- Focus on women and children for sexual exploitation
- Internal trafficking, links with development under-researched
- Little evaluation and impact assessment
The impact…

- No adequate baseline to measure trafficking and anti-trafficking initiatives against
- Difficult to assess severity of the phenomenon, changing trends etc…, and target responses
- Holds back efforts to combat trafficking at the local, national, regional, and international level
Recent IOM initiatives to address knowledge gaps

- UN.GIFT Expert Group Meeting on Trafficking Research, Cairo 2008
- New publications on male trafficking and male smuggling

« Trafficking of men - a trend less considered: The case of Belarus and Ukraine »

« In pursuit of the Southern dream: Victims of Necessity »
Recent IOM initiatives to address knowledge gaps: IOM Global Human Trafficking Database

- Thematic Research Series:
  - Trafficking of males
  - Re-trafficking;
  - Trafficking and traffickers;
  - Trafficking and development

- Methods and approaches in trafficking research: taking stock and exploring ways forward
  - Cooperation IOM (Geneva) and NEXUS Institute (Vienna)
Counter-Trafficking (CTM)

- Return and Reintegration Assistance -

-00- Version 7.6.4
The IOM Global Human Trafficking Database as a tool to assist efforts to collect better data.

- Developed to facilitate the internal management of information gathered from IOM counter-trafficking and Return and Reintegration programmes - **VICTIM-CENTRED**.

- A pilot database was launched in South Eastern Europe in 2000.

- For each case, the system links up IOM field missions in source and destination countries
  - Data can be shared across borders in a safe and secure manner
  - Prevents duplication of case records

- The system has since been expanded regarding thematic and geographical applicability.

- Standardized approach, today used by 46 IOM missions in all regions of the world, with data covering 80 source and 100 destination countries.

- **Funded by the US Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (G/TIP).**
“The extent of the information on victims and traffickers in the database improves the overall understanding of the broader dimensions of trafficking”. (GAO, 2006)

- Primary qualitative and quantitative data on:
  - Trafficked persons
  - Trafficking process
  - Patterns of exploitation and re-trafficking.
  - Assistance
Overview of total caseload

- As of end December 2008, the system contains data on 13,359 registered cases of victims of trafficking

- Gender breakdown:
  - Female: 10,999 (82%)
  - Male: 2,358 (18%)
Strengths of the Database

• A rich source of primary information.

• That links up source and destination countries

• That through analysis of the dataset, is feeding into programming and policy development
Limitations of Database...

- Important to recognise that the database contains data on IOM identified and assisted cases only.

- An unknown number of victims remain unidentified and unassisted.

- Not representative of the scope of trafficking in a country.

- Some data categories are subjective and are context specific (Eg: socio-economic and background information):
  - Potential barrier to comparability of data

- Collecting information on human trafficking is problematic and this system also suffers from a degree of missing data for some variables
  - Due to limited time spent with a person;
  - Issues of trust and mis-trust;
  - Barriers to sharing of information between all involved partners
The way forward

- To continue to promote and ensure best practices for the collection, storage and processing of standardized data on human trafficking.

- Through the adaptation and development of the IOM global database to an external data collection tool to be used by civil society organizations and governments.

- Continue to conduct research and publish in new areas.

- Raise awareness and promote more work on evaluation and impact assessment.
“Tools” and further reading...

- World Migration Report
- IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking
- Migration Research Series MRS
- International Migration
- Thematic publications
- Conference reports
- Migration Magazine
IOM Publications are available to download

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Thank You!

caghazarm@iom.int