



Tool 2.12 Developing a multi-agency approach to intervention

Overview

This tool offers a checklist of the main steps involved in setting up a multi-agency framework and provides guidelines and resources for establishing formal inter-agency collaboration.

Given the nature of the trafficking problem and the crimes it involves, the expertise required to address it effectively and the multiple needs of its victims, it is essential that a multi-agency approach is taken in any initiative to combat it, to ensure that the needs of victims are met and law enforcement measures are supported.

Multi-agency collaboration is not easy; time and effort are required for it to work effectively. A management and operational framework therefore needs to be agreed on for steering and managing any subsequent specific initiative or intervention. This framework may be built on existing arrangements, where there are any.

Establishing such a framework involves:

- Identifying key contacts and agency representatives
- Establishing personal links between the various agency contacts
- Developing multi-agency training
- Jointly assessing the local priorities and developing strategies and action plans
- Starting to share intelligence and data
- Starting to work on protocols for working jointly
- Agreeing on management structures and processes for developing the multi-agency approach further.

Strong and effective leadership of multi-agency partnerships is of critical importance to their success.

Responsibilities of multi-agency groups

Multi-agency groups must essentially ensure that victims are supported while the law is enforced. Their responsibilities should include:

- Education and awareness-raising activities
- Ensuring that all relevant agencies and parties are informed and involved in decision-making and planning

- Joint training initiatives
- Developing appropriate working practice protocols
- Ensuring information exchange between statutory and non-governmental organizations
- Monitoring incidence rates and the impact of any local initiatives
- Developing local strategies and action plans

Where children are involved, child protection services must play a role in coordinating multi-agency initiatives on trafficking in a way that fits with strategic planning arrangements for children. It also may be appropriate for multi-agency groups addressing gender-based violence to have active responsibilities in trafficking-related issues.



Source: United Kingdom Home Office, Crime Reduction Toolkit on trafficking in people, available at:
www.crimereduction.gov.uk/toolkits/tp0507.htm

Formal cooperation mechanisms between law enforcement and non-governmental organizations

Cooperative agreements between State and non-State actors raise the rate of successful prosecution of traffickers. Formal protocols and memorandums of understanding between agencies provide a solid basis upon which to build this multi-agency collaboration.

As a matter of best practice, formal protocols should be drawn up setting out the role and responsibilities of law enforcement on the one hand and relevant non-governmental organizations on the other, and governing the exchange of intelligence between them.

The safety of victims remains the ultimate responsibility of law enforcement officers and agreements should only be entered into with credible and secure support organizations that have the capacity to deliver victim services.

How such protocols should be worded is a matter for local agreement, depending upon local circumstances. However, the protocol should include a general joint statement of purpose in relation to combating human trafficking and set out the responsibilities of partners. At a minimum, a protocol should include:

- A declaration that the intelligence being retained and exchanged is in compliance with the relevant data protection and confidentiality legislation
- The process and means through which intelligence will be exchanged. This may include a specific position within each organization or may relate to a named individual
- A timetable of scheduled meetings, where appropriate
- The terms of the intelligence exchange, to include both personal data and thematic intelligence

- A description of the process that will be used to resolve difficulties and differences of interpretation
- A description of how the confidentiality of the personal data exchanged will be protected



For additional information, see the United Kingdom Home Office Crime Reduction Toolkit on trafficking in people available at: www.crimereduction.gov.uk/toolkits/tp00.htm

Components of a memorandum of understanding

Partners

Partners to the memorandum of understanding should be identified. Cooperation is enhanced where partners (e.g. special anti-trafficking units within the police force, specialized non-governmental organizations) are identified.

Defining purpose

The basic principles and the purpose of cooperation should be clarified.

Principles of cooperation

A key principle is agreement on a cooperative approach to combating human trafficking.

Target group

Specifying the precise target group to benefit from the memorandum of understanding will contribute to successful referral of trafficking victims. Criteria and means of identification can be based on the Trafficking in Persons Protocol.

Mutual communication of information

Parties to the memorandum of understanding should agree to treat the presumed trafficked person's personal data as confidential.

Entry into force and amendment

The memorandum of understanding comes into effect when all relevant parties have signed, and should be amended only on the basis of mutual consultation.

Detailed definition of different responsibilities

The definition of the different responsibilities of all partners goes hand in hand with transparent cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Points to be incorporated

With respect to actions to be taken by law enforcement partners:

- A presumption that a person is a victim of trafficking if circumstances suggest that he or she may have been trafficked
- Informing the presumed trafficked person of the opportunity of access to support services
- Contracting the non-governmental organization cooperative partner immediately after the first questioning of the presumed trafficked person, whether or not the presumed trafficked person faces danger from traffickers

With respect to actions to be taken by non-governmental organizations and service institutions:

- The presumed trafficked person should be fully informed about the institution and its mandate, and receive any available information on the likely future course of legal proceedings.
- Accommodation and physical and psychological rehabilitation services should be made available.
- The institution should establish contact with the police where the presumed trafficked person takes an informal decision to cooperate with the criminal-prosecution authorities.
- Where the presumed trafficked person takes an informal decision to return to his/her country of origin, relevant social agencies should be contacted and details of the return organized.
- Where the presumed trafficked person is involved in legal proceedings, she/he should be supported by the arrangement of legal representation and by being accompanied during and after court proceedings.



Source: National Referral Mechanisms: Joining Efforts to Protect the Rights of Trafficked Persons; A Practical Handbook (Warsaw, OSCE, 2004), available at:

www.osce.org/publications/odihr/2004/05/12351_131_en.pdf

Recommended resource

UNDP and Civil Society Organizations: a Toolkit for Strengthening Partnerships

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has published a toolkit aimed at strengthening the relationship between UNDP and civil society organizations. Chapters of the toolkit are devoted to defining civil society organizations, and a methodology for working collaboratively with them is presented. The toolkit also provides operational information for working with civil society organizations, including information on policy implementation, contracts, making grants and entering into partnership agreements. Though

primarily designed for use by UNDP staff, the toolkit is a valuable resource for any individual or entity working with civil society organizations and for civil society organizations themselves.



The toolkit is available at:
www.undp.org/cso

Promising practice

Childscope

The European Union Council of Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs adopted resolution on 27 September 2001 on the contribution of civil society in finding missing or sexually exploited children (2001/C 283/01). In so doing, it emphasized the need for enhanced cooperation between civil society organizations and law enforcement services in preventing and combating such crimes and called for further study to be conducted. Child Focus, the European Centre for Missing and Sexually Exploited Children, and the Institute for International Research on Criminal Policy joined together to conduct a three-part research project, entitled “Childscope”, aimed at promoting the integration of European policies and responses to missing and sexually exploited children.

One outcome of Childscope has been research conducted on cooperation between civil society organizations and the law enforcement sector. A model protocol to facilitate their cooperation was drafted, with the intention that it could serve as a basis for establishing official relationships between civil society organizations and law enforcement authorities throughout European countries. The protocol reflects common European legal standards and general principles of codes of practice for both law enforcement and civil society organizations.



More information about Childscope is available at:
www.childscope.net

The European Model Protocol of cooperation between law enforcement and civil society organizations in cases of sexual exploitation is available at:

www.childscope.net/2006/httpdocs/documents/Model%20Protocol.pdf