



Tool 9.15 Use of standardized data collection instruments

Overview

This tool presents some examples of standardized research instruments and methodologies.

In the same way that universally accepted and consistently applied definitions of trafficking and smuggling will help researchers generate accurate estimates of the frequency of the two phenomena, standardized research instruments and methodologies make it possible to measure, compare and interpret data, across jurisdictions and over time, on the prevalence, nature and effects of the traffic in persons.

Trafficking in persons is a transnational phenomenon that can only be overcome if all anti-trafficking players, inside and outside Governments, can work together on the basis of sound information about the phenomenon, how it evolves and how it is affected or not by various interventions.

Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking

(E/2002/68/Add.1)

(United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights)

Guideline 3.

Research, analysis, evaluation and dissemination

Effective and realistic anti-trafficking strategies must be based on accurate and current information, experience and analysis. It is essential that all parties involved in developing and implementing these strategies have and maintain a clear understanding of the issues.

The media has an important role to play in increasing public understanding of the trafficking phenomenon by providing accurate information in accordance with professional ethical standards.

States and, where appropriate, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, should consider:

1. Adopting and consistently using the internationally agreed definition of trafficking contained in the Palermo Protocol.
2. Standardizing the collection of statistical information on trafficking and related movements (such as migrant smuggling) that may include a trafficking element.
3. Ensuring that data concerning individuals who are trafficked is disaggregated on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity and other relevant characteristics.

4. Undertaking, supporting and bringing together research into trafficking. Such research should be firmly grounded in ethical principles, including an understanding of the need not to re-traumatize trafficked persons. Research methodologies and interpretative techniques should be of the highest quality.
5. Monitoring and evaluating the relationship between the intention of anti-trafficking laws, policies and interventions, and their real impact. In particular, ensuring that distinctions are made between measures which actually reduce trafficking and measures which may have the effect of transferring the problem from one place or group to another.
6. Recognizing the important contribution that survivors of trafficking can, on a strictly voluntary basis, make to developing and implementing anti-trafficking interventions and evaluating their impact.
7. Recognizing the central role that non-governmental organizations can play in improving the law enforcement response to trafficking by providing relevant authorities with information on trafficking incidents and patterns taking into account the need to preserve the privacy of trafficked persons.



The Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking are available at:

www.unhcr.bg/other/r_p_g_hr_ht_en.pdf

Research instruments

As part of a project entitled “Coalitions against trafficking in human beings in the Philippines”, UNICRI, in cooperation with UNODC, has designed standard research instruments and a standard research methodology. These could be used, with minor modifications based on situational and cultural variables of the State under study, in all anti-trafficking technical cooperation projects. The research instruments are as follows.

Victim survey

The survey instrument used with victims of trafficking comprised 49 questions and addressed the following topics:

- Personal and demographic profile (gender and age)
- Recruitment practices
- Costs of being smuggled and debts incurred in the process of recruitment and departure
- Routes and experiences during travel
- Exploitation in the destination State
- Involvement of organized criminal groups and networks
- Connivance and corruption of Government officials
- Victim reporting practices
- Victim assessment of Government measures to fight trafficking

Non-governmental organization survey

The non-governmental organization survey included questions concerning the following issues:

- Organizational and operational profile
- Clients and/or beneficiaries
- Extent of the non-governmental organization's work with as well as assistance to trafficked victims and smuggled persons
- Services most needed by trafficked victims
- Coordination with Government agencies as well as with other non-governmental organizations

Criminal justice experts survey

Two variations of this survey were developed: one for the State of origin and one for destination States. It was felt that law enforcement and criminal justice experts in the State of origin might have more insight into recruitment practices, whereas their counterparts in destination States might be able to provide more information on the exploitative practices. Thus, there are minor differences in these two research instruments. However, an attempt was made to have as much overlap as possible between the two questionnaires.

The criminal justice experts survey covered the following topics:

- General data on trafficking cases
- Travel routes and experiences
- Coercion, deception and exploitation
- Other criminal practices
- Criminal earnings
- Involvement of transnational organized criminal groups
- Law enforcement and criminal justice responses
- Connivance and corruption of Government officials

Checklist for the analysis of case files

The checklist mirrors the categories and variables contained in the other research instruments. It covers the following specific topics:

- Victims (their experiences with recruitment and exploitation)
- Offenders (demographic variables and their role within the criminal organization)
- Criminal organizations (nature, practice and modus operandi)
- Contacts within the licit and illicit environments
- Routes taken
- Costs and proceeds of criminal activities
- Data on criminal cases



An executive summary of the report on phase I of the project on coalitions against trafficking in human beings in the Philippines, entitled *Trafficking in Human Beings from the Philippines: Examining the Experiences and Perspectives of Victims and Non-governmental Organizations*, is available at:

www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/human_trafficking/Exec_summary_ISDS.pdf



A report entitled *Rapid Assessment: Human Smuggling and Trafficking from the Philippines* is available at:

www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/trafficking/RA_UNICRI.pdf

Recommended resource

ASEAN and Trafficking in Persons: Using Data as a Tool to Combat Trafficking in Persons

(IOM and ASEAN)

In this IOM/ASEAN report, published in 2007, the collection of trafficking data in the ASEAN member States of Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand is examined with a view to deriving best practices from those efforts and making recommendations for improving their effectiveness and efficiency. Sample questionnaires used to collect data are also provided in the report.

What is data?

The report states: “Data is the basis of information. Information is the basis of knowledge”. In assessing the type of data that needs to be collected, the following must be considered:

- What knowledge do you need?
- What information will help you obtain that knowledge?
- What data will help give you that information?

Information objectives of data collection on trafficking

In the context of trafficking in ASEAN member States, the report clarifies that member States need data which will help them work out how to prevent trafficking, prosecute offenders and protect victims, and measure their efforts in doing so.

Data collection principles

The report sets out and discusses the following data collection principles:

Principle 1 *To be useful, data has to be relevant to your objectives*

It is important to define objectives before undertaking data collection. Data is relevant if it provides Governments with information on how to meet the objectives of prevention, protection and prosecution, and if it helps to measure whether anti-trafficking efforts are having the intended effect (evaluation).

Principle 2 *Data needs to be regular and reliable*

Data needs to be collected and reported on a regular basis, to allow for tracking of changes over time. Data needs to be reliable; it must be accurate and precise, and the methodology for collection must be clearly explained and defensible.

Principle 3 *Data must be protected*

Data must be properly protected, with clear policies and procedures that balance the interests of law enforcement with the need to ensure privacy, confidentiality and the personal safety of individuals. Anonymous, non-personal data is generally sufficient for policymaking purposes. Specific, personal data may be required for operational reasons. Access to this data should be subject to strict controls.

Principle 4 *Data must be turned into information and knowledge*

This involves implementing an appropriately designed and maintained information system at the agency level and/or at the national level. Information systems are not just computerized databases or spreadsheets; they require hardware, software, people and clearly defined data “fields”. Information systems involve many steps, from identifying information needs and relevant data, to turning that data into information that is useful information for managers. Information systems have to be properly designed, implemented and maintained. Information systems must be sustainable.



ASEAN and Trafficking in Persons: Using Data as a Tool to Combat Trafficking in Persons is available at:

www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/cache/offonce/pid/1674?entryId=14477

Promising practice

For related promising practice concerning profiling of traffickers, see Tool 9.14.

Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns**(United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime)**

In April 2006, UNODC published a report on global trafficking patterns. The methodology used to collect the data compiled in this report was content analysis, which involves the systematic study, analysis and selective classification of the content of open source publications. Content analysis schemes are highly reliable: a different research group, using the scoring system and instructions assigned for the data collected, should be able to come up with the same categorizations, since the results achieved by the methodology are based on objective elements and not on perceptions, opinions or evaluations. The basic procedure in content analysis consists of:

- Selection of categories and subject to be analysed
- Rigorous establishment of criteria for inclusion, a feature which ensures that the study can be replicated by others
- Carefully following the pre-established classification scheme
- Statistically analysing the results

Prior to publication of the report, the methodology applied was reviewed and evaluated positively by a panel of independent experts.

In 2002, the Global Programme against Trafficking established a trafficking database on flows of trafficking in persons. The data entry phase consisted of a continuous screening of the principal sources, globally, that provide information on trafficking cases. Each account of trafficking selected by the team of researchers was entered into the trafficking database using the support of data-entry user-friendly software. The fields selected by the researchers and used for the IOM/ASEAN report were:

- Date of the entry
- Date of the publication
- Publication identification number (assigned to each publication during the data collection phase to avoid duplication and facilitate reference to the original source)
- Type of publication
- Publishing institution
- Route of the human trafficking (in terms of countries or areas or regions involved)
- Number of stages of each route
- Country, area or region of origin, of transit and of destination of the victims
- Type of exploitation (whether sexual exploitation or forced labour)
- Profile of the victims (whether men, women, children)
- Profile of offenders (nationality and gender)



More information about the data collection methodology can be found in *Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns*, available for downloading at:

www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/publications.html

Frontex

Frontex is a European Union agency based in Warsaw, created as a specialized, independent body tasked with coordinating operational cooperation between European Union member States in the field of border security. A core activity of Frontex is carrying out risk analysis: assessing threats, looking at vulnerabilities and weighing consequences. Among its tailored risk analyses are assessments of migration flows from Africa into Europe, including trafficking in persons. The benefit of conducting such tailored risk analyses is that it will facilitate in designing joint operations at European Union borders to disrupt the flow of trafficking into the Union.



More information about the work of Frontex is available at:
www.frontex.europa.eu

Strategic Information Response Network

The Strategic Information Response Network is an initiative supported by UNIAP that is intended to deliver high quality, responsive and up-to-date data and analysis on cutting edge issues relating to trafficking in persons in the Greater Mekong subregion. The Network is intended to inform and encourage action by key governmental and non-governmental anti-trafficking stakeholders and to convey information to them in various forms, from brief reports, maps and data sheets, to discussion forums and debates. Research, validation and analysis is conducted in the field by community-based organizations, national and international agencies and/or UNIAP itself.

As secretariat to COMMIT, UNIAP is mandated by paragraph 29 of the memorandum of understanding on COMMIT, signed by the Governments of the subregion to develop “procedures for the collection and analysis of data and information on trafficking cases” and to ensure that “anti-trafficking strategies are based on accurate and current research, experience and analysis”. The Strategic Information Response Network is intended to fulfil that mandate.



More information about the work of the Strategic Information Response Network is available at:
www.no-trafficking.org