#### INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION GROUP AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

# **Issue Paper**

# **Pivoting toward the Evidence:**

Building effective counter-trafficking responses using accumulated knowledge and a shared approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning



# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME Vienna

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Inter-agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT)



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This publication has not been formally edited.
Publishing production: English, Publishing and Library Section, United Nations Office at Vienna.

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# Acronyms and abbreviations

AK Accumulated knowledge

CTIP Counter Trafficking in Persons

DAC Development Assistance Committee

EBP Evidence-based practice

GAATW Global Alliance against Trafficking in Women

ICAT Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons

ICMPD International Centre for Migration Policy Development

ILO International Labour Organization

IOM International Organization for Migration

LSHTM London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

MEL Measuring, evaluating and learning

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO Non-government organization

OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OHCHR Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

TIP Trafficking in Persons

UN United Nations

UNICEF United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNODC United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

USGAO United States Government Audit Office

# Acknowledgements

This paper is a publication of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT).

ICAT was established in 2007 in response to a United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution in 2006 (2006/27) requesting intergovernmental agencies to work together to strengthen technical assistance provided to countries in the area of trafficking in persons (TIP). In March 2007, the UN General Assembly requested the UN Secretary-General to develop interagency coordination further in order "to enhance cooperation and coordination and facilitate a holistic and comprehensive approach by the international community to the problem of trafficking in persons" (A/RES/61/180).

As a policy forum, ICAT aims to facilitate a holistic and comprehensive approach by the international community to preventing and combating trafficking in persons including protection and support of victims of trafficking. To this end, ICAT is publishing a series of five issue papers, each examining a critical challenge to address for the international community to succeed in the fight against trafficking in persons. The ICAT papers provide an opportunity for international organizations to speak with one voice and are intended as a catalyst for the promotion of common strategic priorities and greater policy and programmatic coherence.

An overview paper titled, *The next decade: Promoting common priorities and greater coherence in the fight against human trafficking*, providing a summary of five initial themes was launched in May 2012. Since that time, ICAT has published the following issue papers:

- 1. International Legal Frameworks concerning Trafficking in Persons, 2013
- 2. Preventing Trafficking in Persons by Addressing Demand, 2014
- 3. Providing Effective Remedies for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, 2016.

The fourth issue paper, titled, Pivoting toward the Evidence: Building effective counter-trafficking responses using accumulated knowledge and a shared approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning, focuses on the state of evaluation in the counter-trafficking sector. It reflects the expertise and experience of six international organizations and entities forming the ICAT Working Group, namely the International Labor Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The initial material was drafted by Jacqueline Berman (independent consultant) and Phil Marshall (Research Communications Group), drawing on (1) data from more than 100 documents relating to counter-trafficking evaluations, (2) results from an online survey of counter-trafficking practitioners, (3) invaluable feedback received from participants in an expert consultation in December 2015, and (4) extensive additional input from ICAT Working Group members. The following colleagues from ICAT member organizations are acknowledged for their contribution: Martin Fowke (UNODC), Youla Haddadin (OHCHR), Houtan Homayounpour (ILO), Mathieu Luciano (IOM), Kerry Neal (UNICEF), Annalisa Pauciullo (UNODC/ICAT secretariat), Szilvia Petkov (UNODC/ ICAT secretariat), Ariel Riva (UNHCR), and Sumbul Rizvi (UNHCR). Thomas Golding (independent consultant) assisted with fielding and analysis of the online survey.

The paper has not been formally edited. The paper was realized through a generous financial contribution provided by the Government of Sweden.

# **Executive Summary**

The adoption in 2000 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Trafficking in Persons Protocol), has prompted a wide range of responses to combat and prevent human trafficking by multiple governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental actors. These responses have produced substantial legal and normative improvements, with governments progressively enacting stronger anti-trafficking legislation aimed at investigating, prosecuting and convicting traffickers, implementing means of identifying and supporting victims of trafficking, and contributing to the public becoming increasingly more aware of the issue also.

Yet these advancements have occurred in the absence of rigorous empirical evidence evaluating the extent to which counter trafficking in persons (CTIP) responses have contributed or led to the achievement of planned goals, or mixed methods research exploring how and under what conditions outcomes, were or were not, achieved<sup>1</sup>. And while policy makers, researchers, practitioners and donors working to respond to trafficking ("the anti-trafficking sector") have long recognized the importance of measuring, evaluating and learning (MEL) from the multiple and evolving counter-trafficking efforts, there has not been systematic investment in MEL or a consolidated or shared approach to MEL practices and tools that can be used to inform the anti-trafficking sector more broadly.

As a consequence, counter-trafficking programmes do not routinely draw on the significant amount of knowledge accumulated from multiple responses to date. This knowledge includes experience and lessons learned from within the counter-trafficking field, as well as evidenced-based knowledge from other sectors such as public health, social protection, sexual and gender-based violence, and criminal justice more broadly. In addition, CTIP responses, mirroring those in social protection, development, and other fields, often lack a theory of change and programme logic. That is to say, there is a disconnect in the relationship between activities and intended outcomes and a reliance on unarticulated assumptions or hypotheses that are not supported by available data. These gaps can limit the potential effectiveness of programmes, as well as the ability of evaluation to identify and report on programme outcomes. Adding these components to programme design is thus an important co-requisite for strengthening evaluation of many programmes, including those focused on responding to trafficking.

In an effort to reflect more systematically on the state of evaluation in the sector and to develop a way forward, this Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) paper looks to help aims to construct a common framework for aligning goals, defining and assessing progress, and building a robust and shared evidence-base of effective programmes and practices. The paper suggests a road map for capturing and using knowledge accumulated in the sector and beyond, guiding and growing effective interventions, monitoring their progress, evaluating their results and compiling evidence of "what works" in countering human trafficking (Figure II).

The goal of the draft road map is thus to develop and share a clear, practical and feasible approach to: (1) harnessing knowledge accumulated; and (2) growing MEL approaches, tools

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the evaluation field, the term 'rigor' or 'rigorous evidence' generally refers to experimental and quasi-experimental evaluation designs that establish causality between the intervention and a statistically significant change detected (attribution). That an evaluation is not labeled 'rigorous' does not diminish the value of mixed methods evaluation designs or of interventions where qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods research establishes a contribution made by the intervention to an outcome or change. Further, there are actors in the evaluation field who are exploring and using participatory, developmental and other approaches to evaluation to determine impact. Discussions of methodology remain on-going and can be found throughout the evaluation field. See for example White, 2010; Stern, et al, 2012; Heider, 2013; UNEG, 2013.

and resources needed to help practitioners in the field to use this knowledge and to pursue their work based on logical linkages and planned results. In turn, this approach can help align and strengthen efforts in the field as well as help guide the development of evidence about which programmes and policies are most responsive to the needs of people who have experienced trafficking. This learning can then be used to develop more targeted measures aimed at increasing identification and referral, assisting people to sustainably exit from trafficking and reintegrate into society, increasing prosecution and conviction of traffickers and reducing the number and reach of trafficking networks.

## I. Introduction

Monitoring and evaluation should never be an afterthought in trafficking programmes; they are an integral part of the successful implementation of anti-trafficking programmes and activities (UNODC, 2008)

The dearth of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) information on anti-trafficking assistance in general . . . constitutes a significant gap in efforts to combat trafficking in persons. Unless . . . programmes are monitored and evaluated on a regular and on-going basis, service providers, policy makers and donors are without the information needed to design, adjust and implement effective programmes and policies. (Surtees, 2009)

In 2000, the international community produced the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Trafficking in Persons Protocol) as a supplement to the United Nations (UN) Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000). This international instrument proffered a definition of trafficking that expanded the focus of previous instruments such as the UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and Exploitation of Prostitution of Others (1949).<sup>2</sup>

While the definition in the Trafficking in Persons Protocol remains much discussed, contested, and differently operationalized, its emergence marked a point of departure for the field of counter-trafficking.<sup>3</sup> Once articulated, multiple governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental actors have been using the definition to develop their counter-trafficking responses, including to make substantive changes to national legal frameworks and to launch numerous programmes and projects aimed at responding effectively to and reducing trafficking in persons.

Fifteen years on from the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, the question of effectiveness remains itself much debated. For example, have the efforts made and resources spent responding to trafficking been effective? Have they made a difference for the people who have experienced trafficking? Have approaches to trafficking improved over time? Have we improved processes for identifying possible cases, providing victims with assistance, and investigating and prosecuting traffickers? Are there reasons to believe that these efforts have made a contribution to slowing the growth of or deterring trafficking? Have they helped to prevent new cases of trafficking?

The answer, in general, is that we are not entirely sure. In practice, governments have progressively enacted stronger anti-trafficking legislation, the public has become increasingly aware of the issue, and the means of identifying and supporting people who have experienced trafficking and of investigating, prosecuting and convicting traffickers have advanced. At the same time, the anti-trafficking field lacks a fundamental base of rigorous evidence that estimates

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime provides the following definition:

<sup>&</sup>quot;Trafficking in persons' shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> In this paper, we use the terms, trafficking in persons, trafficking in human beings, and human trafficking as well as anti-trafficking, counter-trafficking and combatting trafficking interchangeably and to refer to the multiple practices that constitute trafficking. The fungibility of terms does not indicate any specific view or preference.

the impact of CTIP efforts on planned outcomes, or mixed methods research that explores contribution to outcomes and conditions under which outcomes were (or were not) achieved. That is to say that while there has been significant progress, the impact of these advances on the size and scope of the trafficking problem remains unclear. At present, it appears that only a small proportion of the overall number of trafficking cases are identified each year (Section III). Further, the number of traffickers prosecuted and convicted, and the number of networks disrupted remains low in comparison to the number of trafficking cases identified.

What is clear is that policy makers, researchers, practitioners and donors working to respond to trafficking ("the sector") have recognized and called for, but not always systematically invested in, measuring, evaluating and learning (MEL) from the multiple and evolving countertrafficking efforts made to date. This is not for lack of understanding or appreciation of the critical information that comes from MEL-related activities. Indeed, the sector has long understood and appreciated how monitoring and evaluation are critical.

As early as 2002, for example, the UN's Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking affirmed the importance of "[e]stablishing mechanisms to monitor the human rights impact of anti-trafficking laws, policies, programmes and interventions," and recommended that NGOs working with people who have experienced trafficking monitor and evaluate the human rights impact of the same (UN OHCHR, 2002). As the two epigraphs further attest, the UN and other inter-governmental, governmental, and non-governmental actors and individual researchers and practitioners have continued to call for MEL of efforts aimed at countering human trafficking.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> While the actual number of trafficking cases each year remains unknown, the ILO estimated that there were about 21 million cases of forced labour globally, a figure which incorporates cases of trafficking (2012).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See also UNODC Global Report on TIP, 2014. https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP\_2014\_full\_report.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> In this paper, the terms 'efforts,' 'programmes,' 'interventions,' and 'activities' are generally used interchangeably. They include a wide set of practices, including, but not limited to, advocacy and influencing activities, awareness and educational campaigns, policy and legislative drafting and reform, identification and referral networks, direct assistance, criminal investigation and prosecution, restitution, safe migration, anti-money laundering, and efforts to ensure clean supply chain and other private sector-focused activities, among numerous other responses.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Among multiple other publications, see also United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) (2007), Hames et al. (2010), Berman and Marshall (2011), Van der Laan et al. (2011), London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2014).

Table 1. Key terms and definitions in monitoring, evaluation and learning

Term	Definition	Examples
Input	Budgetary, technical, educational, human, material, physical, local, community and other resources necessary for <i>and</i> available to an organization or entity to implement a project	For example, staff, target groups, offices, funding, equipment, strategies, community partners
Activity	Actions, sessions, processes, events, tools, courses, trainings, meetings, partnerships and other endeavors built from the available inputs	For example, organizing a training, preparing a policy paper, running an advocacy campaign, developing a new reintegration programme, or building a new shelter
Output	Immediate, tangible products, services or other accomplishments produced by or upon the completion of project activities; within the direct control of the project staff	For example, trainings and workshops completed; policy papers and legislation drafted; curricula and programmes developed; shelters built; meetings with decision makers conducted
Outcome	<ul> <li>The intended or achieved <i>shorter</i>, <i>interim</i>, <i>and longer term</i> effects of project outputs that emerge at some point in the future</li> <li>Institutional, performance, or behavioral changes influenced, but not directly controlled, by project outputs</li> <li>Where project outputs make a <i>contribution</i> to longer-term changes</li> </ul>	For example, increases in knowledge, awareness, or skills in the shorter term; new CTIP related behaviors, practices, legislation or actions that decrease the likelihood of or opportunities for TIP in the interim term; increases in the number of people receiving assistance and integrated or reintegrated into new or previous communities and investigation and prosecution of traffickers in the longer term
Impact	<ul> <li>The <i>longer term</i> and desired goals, objective or lasting changes attributable to the intervention</li> <li>The result(s) that follow the impact pathway from a project's activities, outputs, and outcomes</li> <li>Where a causal relationship between the intervention and longer-term changes can be established</li> </ul>	For example, decrease in the number of people trafficked and exploited; decrease in the number of trafficking networks in operation
Indicator	<ul> <li>A quantitative or qualitative variable or measure that provides a simple, valid and reliable way to assess progress toward or achievement of an objective or outcome</li> <li>A tool for reflecting changes connected to an intervention</li> <li>A means of monitoring progress of use of inputs; implementation of activities; realization of outputs; and/or achievement of outcomes, impacts, goals or objectives</li> </ul>	* Measuring "results," refers to measuring outcomes, rather than inputs and outputs only. To do so, outcomes should be translated into a set of measurable indicators that can be measured regularly to assess progress or achievement of outcomes

Sources: OECD Glossary, 2002; Kellogg Foundation, 2004; FYSB, 2012

In response, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT) is interested in reflecting more systematically on the state of evaluation in the sector and developing a pathway to a common framework that can help align goals, define and assess progress, and build a robust and shared evidence-base of effective programmes and practices. At the strategic level, ICAT has sought to draw out the complex, multiple, interlinked and changing modalities of trafficking processes, while seeking to promote the coordination of cross-agency strategies. The Group's work has aimed to increase the relevance and robustness of multi-sectoral responses through a series of issue papers focused on such topics as preventing trafficking, more effective use of international legal instruments, understanding practices that contribute to the demand for trafficked labour, and promoting common counter-trafficking priorities.

ICAT has turned to the issue of evaluation as part of its commitment to understanding and growing the sector, as well as to building ever-more effective responses to human trafficking. ICAT's focus on evaluation reflects the maturation of the sector, and signals the readiness of ICAT agencies to address more directly the longer-standing call to employ a strong, clear, and shared approach to evaluation as a critical step toward building an evidence base for "what works." Toward this end, ICAT commissioned research to review the state of evaluation in the sector and to help develop a road map for guiding and growing evidence of effective counter-trafficking efforts. The purpose of this paper is to stimulate discussion about how to use knowledge gained from (1) experience in the CTIP sector, and (2) evaluation of CTIP efforts to strengthen and build an evidence base of effective responses to human trafficking.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> ICAT was formed in 2007 by a United Nations (UN) resolution (61/180). It includes 16 member agencies: Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO-Interpol), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization on Migration (IOM), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Joint Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UN Women and The World Bank. Six of its member agencies – ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNICEF, and UNODC – guide ICAT as its core Working Group, with UNODC acting as the ICAT Chair in 2016.

#### Methodology and Aims

The process of developing this paper involved a literature review and an online survey. The literature review initially covered 50 documents evenly divided across five categories: a cross-section of individual evaluations covering protection, prosecution and prevention; meta-evaluations and other key literature on counter-trafficking practices (tool kits, indicators and think pieces). A further 57 documents were added to the review, including papers produced or identified after developing the initial list and relevant to the discussion of accumulated knowledge or MEL in the counter-trafficking sector (Section III).

The online survey was sent to 275 counter-trafficking practitioners from ICAT member agencies, government organizations, local and international NGOs and academic institutions. After several extensions to the fielding deadline and follow-up by ICAT focal points and the research team, a total of 78 respondents completed the survey (Appendix 1). These 78 responses provided rich qualitative data, as reflected throughout the paper. The paper does not, however, draw conclusions from the quantitative survey data, due to the low overall response rate of 28.4 percent, which can introduce a potential non-response bias.

The documents and responses that informed this paper have universally reiterated a fundamental lack of data about the results and effects (or evaluation-based outcomes and impacts) of counter-trafficking interventions. They have also reinforced the notion that despite a lack of data, a number of key lessons have been learned and critical knowledge with the potential to improve programming has been accumulated. This knowledge is not, however, always or routinely built into programme design, which, in turn, results in evaluation resources being used to identify and report on issues that are already known. For this reason, there is a need to embed the original focus of this paper – evaluation – in the broader frame of measurement, evaluation and learning to ensure that counter-trafficking interventions better reflect the findings, lessons and promising practices identified through evaluative processes going forward.

As such, this paper will:

- Explore the current state of evaluation in the counter-trafficking sector;
- Reflect broadly on the evidence base of effective responses;
- Pivot from evaluation toward MEL to consider how integrated, shared, cross-sectoral MEL strategies, approaches, policies and practices might improve counter-trafficking responses;
- Chart a way forward a road map to growing MEL in the sector, including a broad strategy and an initial conceptual model to help organize existing knowledge, align trafficking responses, and take steps toward determining 'what works';
- Sketch out next steps for developing a MEL approach for counter-trafficking efforts and building evidence of effectiveness moving forward.

This nascent road map and strategy aims to capture, compile and operationalize what has been learned from the multiple counter-trafficking and related efforts employed to date – the accumulated knowledge of the sector. This knowledge is significant and can be put to work to inform design, development and decision-making about counter-trafficking strategies, policies, interventions, sectoral investments *and* MEL approaches. This accumulated knowledge forms the core of the 'experiential evidence' needed to continue to develop informed programmes that can contribute to building an evidence base of effective counter-trafficking interventions.

### Box 1. What is an evidence-based practice or decision?

An evidence-based practice (EBP) is a component or activity informed by or built on three key types of evidence: best available research evidence, experiential evidence, and contextual evidence. An EBP integrates the: (1) most current, relevant, and methodologically rigorous research evidence, (2) most knowledgeable experience or expertise (including professional insight and skill accumulated over time), and (3) the values, preferences and perspectives of the client, person or community affected by the decision, practice, or intervention (Figure I). The evidence by itself does not drive a decision or activity but can serve as the basis for making a decision, inform a process, or be built into an intervention.

Evidence-based decision-making occurs when the best available research evidence is combined with the field-based experience of experts or professionals and adapted to the specific implementation context as well as the preferences of those directly affected by the decision or intervention. Fully integrating these three components improves the quality of decision-making and the interventions. It also optimizes the likelihood that the desired results of a decision, process, or intervention will be realized.

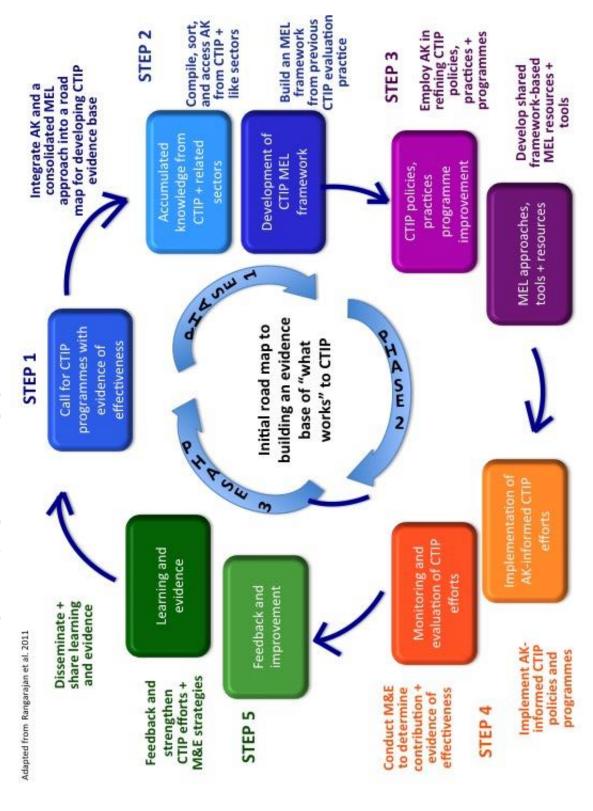
Sources: Puddy and Wilkins, 2011; FYSB, 2013.



So-informed, implementation of these efforts can then unfold clear intervention logics and measurement practices that provide data to monitor, evaluate and learn from their implementation, outputs and outcomes and eventually, to explore impacts.

The goal of the road map (Figure II) is to develop and share clear, practical and feasible MEL approaches, tools and resources that can help practitioners in the field harness knowledge accumulated to date and to pursue their work based on logical linkages and planned results. Employing accumulated knowledge and conducting MEL can help align and strengthen efforts in the field and guide the development of a rigorous evidence base to demonstrate what "what works" in countering human trafficking. This learning can then be used to guide and strengthen the development of measures aimed at assisting people to exit sustainably from trafficking, preventing new cases, and reducing the number and reach of trafficking networks.

Figure II. Key steps toward developing evidence-based CTIP interventions



To contextualize this strategy, the discussion paper reviews the state of existing evaluation practice in the sector, including its contribution to the evidence base of counter-trafficking responses (Section II). Despite the relative paucity of rigorous evidence identified, as noted, the sector has accumulated a depth of knowledge that, once compiled, sorted and made accessible, represents valuable learning. This learning can then be used to guide and strengthen on-going efforts in the sector (Section III).

The draft conceptual model offers a preliminary, temporal mapping of this learning (Section IV). It lays out how counter-trafficking interventions – the sector's instruments of change – can be logically aligned with key outcomes necessary to drive longer-term impacts toward responding effectively to, and reducing trafficking in human beings. This still nascent model is designed to illustrate how activation of relevant accumulated knowledge (for example, about change needed) can strengthen counter-trafficking efforts, including both activities and MEL approaches, to learn, to improve and to begin to build an evidence base.

In lieu of a conclusion, the paper ends with a set of proposed next steps to guide elaboration and refinement of the draft strategy and conceptual model, to develop shared approaches to MEL, and to help the sector to develop increasingly effective counter-trafficking interventions and activities (Section V).

# II. High-Level Findings from a Review of Evaluation Approaches

Review of 107 evaluations, compilations of evaluations, and related research on evaluation in and on the counter-trafficking sector, supported by feedback received from the online survey, yielded a robust set of themes. These themes were consolidated into six key findings based on their frequency, breadth and diversity of sources from which they were drawn and to which they apply, and relevance to the strengthening of MEL practices in the sector. These six key findings discussed below fall into two related areas: (1) the approach and quality of evaluations; and (2) the use of previous experience and lessons learned in counter-trafficking programming.

In general, evaluations of counter-trafficking efforts conducted to date appeared limited in approach and quality, had not used rigorous designs or produced evidence of effectiveness, and also infrequently explored contribution to outcomes using mixed methods research designs. Further, putative claims of "good," "effective" or "successful" practices based on evaluation findings often lacked clear evidence of, or even criteria for, determining their value or efficacy. Evaluations frequently also did not include feedback and data about the relevance and quality of services from the people who had experienced trafficking.

Counter-trafficking interventions themselves often appeared not to have employed key evaluation tools and learning that could help programme design and implementation, as well as help provide information needed to understand outcomes. Programmes and evaluations reviewed often lacked an articulated theory of change and programme logic and did not always use knowledge accumulated from earlier anti-trafficking efforts or evaluation-based recommendations and lessons learned, about the relevance and promise of an activity. Evaluation practices themselves tended to be limited by programme design, timelines and resources allocated to evaluation and in some cases, available evaluation skills and capacity.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> All evaluations, compilations of evaluations, and related research on evaluation in and on the counter-trafficking sector reviewed are included in the references section of this paper.

#### **Box 2. Theory of Change and Logic Model**



## What is a theory of change?

- A comprehensive description of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context
- A statement that explains the strategies an intervention will use to achieve its longer-term goals, including the hypotheses and assumptions made in attempting to achieve them and the links between each step in the process
- Key characteristics: \* Articulates pathway(s) to change \* Specifies assumptions informing those pathways \* Explains how and why change is expected to happen



#### What is a logic model?

- · A pictorial representation or map connecting the need for an intervention to the planned results or outcomes of that intervention thus demonstrating the theory of change that underlies an intervention
- · A way to develop logical thinking by revealing connections and links among ideas and how individual components or concepts form a whole to produce results
- Key characteristics: \* Identifies program components \* Shows linkages among components graphically \* Describes how change will happen rather than explaining it

Sources: Clark and Anderson, 2004; Horsch, 2008; FYSB, 2013

#### Approach and Scope of Counter-Trafficking Programme Evaluations

Finding 1. There appeared to be few, if any, rigorous evaluations of counter-trafficking activities and little rigorous evidence of effectiveness.

Few impact evaluations have been conducted to measure their effect on crime reduction. Instead, evaluations have focused on project process and outcomes and used largely qualitative methods (McLoughlin, 2008: 1).

With regard to the evaluations and meta-evaluations of counter-trafficking efforts reviewed, few employed the kinds of rigorous methodologies necessary to determine programme effectiveness or evidence of a causal relationship between the intervention and the desired change or outcome. Further, few had used the mixed methods research designs aimed at exploring contribution to outcomes. 10 Of some 21 evaluations of individual projects reviewed, 19 employed an exclusively retrospective approach to assessing a counter-trafficking intervention. None of these 19 evaluations used a robust or rigorous outcomes-focused approach, for example, collecting baseline and follow-up data to document outcomes or a comparison or control group to determine programme impacts. In addition, only one of the evaluations appeared to have been subjected to an independent peer review process. 11 As a result and while still highly valuable, evaluations to date have not contributed to the development of a rigorous evidence base for responding to trafficking in persons.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Experimental or quasi-experimental designs are necessary to establish causality – that an intervention caused the planned outcome(s). These rigorous designs are generally accompanied by implementation research using mixed methods or qualitative approaches to explore how and under what conditions outcomes were achieved. Mixed methods and largely qualitative designs can also be used to explore contribution of an intervention to the planned outcome(s). The professional evaluation field has and continues to debate the role of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods designs in identifying programme effectiveness and impact. See, for example, <a href="http://www.oecd.org/derec/50399683.pdf">http://www.oecd.org/derec/50399683.pdf</a> and http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1433

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Of course, peer review is not the only way to assess the quality of an evaluation. Most governments, international organizations, philanthropies, foundations and non-governmental organizations, for example, have independent evaluation units or departments that oversee, review, assess and revise evaluations, to provide assurance on the robustness and quality of each evaluation approach conducted or commissioned. This function does not guarantee the quality or rigor of an evaluation, but can help ensure a robust and comprehensive approach.

Several large-scale reviews of evaluations similarly found a dearth of rigorous or peer-reviewed evaluations of programme impact. Three extensive literature reviews, for example, failed to identify any rigorous evaluations. The first reviewed 19,000 documents focused on trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation; the second reviewed seven bibliographic databases of programmes related to trafficking for domestic servitude and garment sector exploitation; and the third assessed 170 evaluations of programmes on trafficking in persons and related forms of exploitation (Van der Laan et al, 2011; LSHTM, 2013). Additional reviews of evaluations by GAATW (2007), the US GAO (2007), the Nexus Institute (2009), and the Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (2010), and an environmental scan conducted for this paper failed to identify any impact evaluations.

Finding 2. Claims of "good," "effective" or "successful" practices were not supported by evidence or clear criteria.

We keep lying to each other about what is being achieved (Senior counter-trafficking practitioner, 2014). 12

Evaluations and reviews of programmes claiming 'good practices' did not appear to include any examples of evaluation-based, peer-reviewed findings informing these practices. Evaluation authors frequently *described* activities or interventions as based on best, good or promising practice, but offered neither supporting evidence nor, with one exception, clear criteria used to determine the source and nature of the practice (Caliber Associates, Inc. (CAI), et al, 2009). In some cases, evaluations cited outcomes as 'good practice' that do not have a clear link to human trafficking, for example, an increase in households in a community hosting tourists (The Protection Project, 2012).

Many evaluations and several survey responses acknowledged the lack of internationally-recognized standards or criteria for determining a good practice as well as a recognized repository for this good practice, accompanied by supporting evidence. This makes it "difficult to know what 'good practices' have been thoroughly tested and evaluated and in what circumstances they are likely to be replicable with success" (Dottridge, 2007: 7). In the wake of this recognition, attempts have been made to define criteria for good practice. The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, for example, considered good practice in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and scalability (2013). Dottridge suggested a wider set of criteria involving: replicability; effectiveness; wider assessment of the impact (including any negative effects); a human rights approach; and sustainability (2007). He further argued that assessing replicability should explicitly involve identification of factors for success and checking whether the approach has already been replicated successfully.

Some organizations have endeavoured to overcome the lack of evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of a particular programme or practice by labelling it 'promising' or 'proven.' In one instance, an end-of-project evaluation listed six initiatives as "proven practice" without specifying criteria or evidence to support this and without referencing the mid-term evaluation of the same project, which recommended that activities not be listed as good practice in the absence of criteria and evidence. Overall, the sector has not tested the effectiveness of promising practices in different settings using rigorous evaluation approaches. This kind of testing is critical to building the evidence base and for understanding how and under what conditions effective programmes can be replicated and scaled up.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Personal comment made to one of the authors during an evaluation of a counter-trafficking intervention, July 2014.

Finding 3. Programmes and evaluations have not systematically collected feedback on the relevance, quality and gaps in services from people who have experienced trafficking

Not one evaluation included trafficked persons in their analysis, despite the fact that they are key recipients of many anti-trafficking programmes and policies and have critical knowledge about trafficking (Hames et al, 2010: 16).

I still hope to persuade organizations that it is unethical and unprofessional to reach conclusions about the impact of counter-trafficking interventions without consulting the intended beneficiaries (Survey respondent, 2015).

The sector suffers from an over-arching lack of systematic information collected from intervention participants. This is most evident, but not limited to, those who have experienced trafficking. 13 This information is critical to assessing the relevance and quality of supports available and to identify gaps in services needed and wanted. The consequent failure of programming to reflect the views of those most affected compromises the capacity of an intervention to be effective, while conversely "the direct involvement of trafficking survivors in designing and implementing prevention strategies has hinted at positive results" (LSHTM, 2013; see also, for example, ICMPD, 2007; Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012).

The reviewed evaluations frequently noted the importance of participant feedback while pointing to issues of confidentiality, access, and multiple ethical considerations involved in obtaining feedback through interviews led by a researcher and stranger and, in some cases, with a third person translator. As one researcher explained, people who have experienced trafficking "commonly have issues of trust, thus requiring more than a one-off interview to gain trust, establish rapport and, therefore, access the information required" (Surtees, 2009: 54). This suggests evaluators and those them need to commissioning devote sufficient time and resources to gaining and listening to this feedback (Box 3).

#### **Box 3. Strategies for Eliciting Participant Feedback**

Ethical issues surrounding the inclusion of people who have experienced trafficking in external evaluation remains a complex challenge. While appropriate expertise, real world experience, and sufficient resources can help overcome this, an alternative or complementary approach is to build participant feedback directly into assistance programmes. Possible options include

- Anonymous suggestion, complaint, and commendation boxes
- Confidential one-on-one or group conversations
- Continuously available technology-assisted questionnaires in multiple language(s)
- Staff documentation of individual, spontaneous requests and responses to available services in client files
- Exit surveys

These options can be used alone or in combination with one another. An Albania-based programme, for example, offers an anonymous suggestion box and conducts client satisfaction surveys every three months, which, staff report, garner "some extraordinary ideas and feedback." In another evaluation of three US-based programmes, 34 one-one-one client interviews identified shifts in client "acute, short-term needs" for shelter, clothing and medical care to a desire "to build skills and resources to normalize their lives," even in the face of some unmet needs for medical car e or non-shelter-based housing. While these approaches require sufficient literacy and trust, the results suggest their value and recommend their wider use.

At the same time, this feedback reflected the views of only those persons who decided – or were compelled – to seek assistance. Alternative methods of learning from those who refuse assistance are also needed to understand their perspectives and the role that service type and quality plays in their decision to forgo offers of assistance (Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> While this finding focuses on feedback from trafficked persons, Dottridge (2007) and others have highlighted the importance of engagement of other programme beneficiaries in both the design and evaluation of programmes. The literature review found limited evidence of engagement of programme beneficiaries in programme design. More involvement of beneficiaries was evident in evaluation, although this was not universal and often secondary to feedback from programme implementers.

## Use of Evaluation Tools and Findings in Counter-Trafficking Efforts

Finding 4. Counter-trafficking interventions tended to lack a theory of change and programme logic, failing to clearly link activities with intended outcomes and leaving evaluations without guidance on what to measure and how (indicators and benchmarks, and needed data).

The problem is sometimes not the lack of a logical framework but rather the poor quality [of it] (Survey respondent, 2015).

Study data, including evaluations, meta-evaluations and survey responses, frequently cited concern over counter-trafficking efforts' lack of clear or articulated programme logic — one linking activities to outcomes or impacts. Many programmes did include a logical framework, but not one that established or articulated linkages between activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts, nor the assumptions underlying these linkages. These programmes also did not include a narrative statement or logic model that established a primary hypothesis of how these linkages worked — and that could be used to guide and structure the evaluation. This gap in programme logic and tools frequently appeared in prevention programmes, particularly those focused on raising awareness of risk and increasing local employment opportunities.

As a consequence, counter-trafficking project designs were commonly based on assumptions that were at best not supported by, and at worst contrary to, existing experiences and learning in the sector. For example, Nieuwenhuys and Pecoud found that many awareness-raising programmes appeared to be based on the assumption that people 'leave' when "they do not know what awaits them; if they know, they will not leave" (2007: 11). Such an assumption implies several additional assumptions about migrants – for example, that they: (1) lack information about migration and therefore do not understand the risks involved; (2) base migration decisions on available information; and (3) "real" information about migration risks will deter it. There is, however, little evidence that any of these assumptions are correct, applicable or accurately reflective of migration opportunities, risks or decision-making processes.

The logic around many programmes to build capacity in the criminal justice system to apprehend, prosecute, and deter traffickers also appeared to contain assumptions that were not necessarily supported by existing knowledge. For example, in relation to investigative training, these include: (1) training participants have the prerequisite basic investigative skills on which to build counter-trafficking training; (2) systems and incentives are in place to encourage and allow investigators to change their behaviours and to operationalize the training; (3) rotation periods are long enough to allow investigators to apply the training (but not so long as to be vulnerable to corruption); and (4) no other factors are present that might negate improvements in investigation, such as poor judicial capacity or vested interests. These kinds of gaps frequently challenge capacity building activities across many sectors, and the anti-trafficking sector would benefit from recognizing and addressing them directly.

These examples suggest that many efforts – including the majority of awareness raising programmes considered in this review – might have been based on unspecified, unexamined, or unsubstantiated assumptions and did not test these assumptions by, for example, determining baseline knowledge before the intervention.

In other examples, some evaluations labelled interventions as 'effective' or 'successful' once planned outputs were achieved and without attempting to link the outputs to a specific counter-trafficking-related outcome or impact. In some cases, implementers or evaluators asserted impact without providing evidential support for it, for example, assuming that increased awareness was the same as reduced vulnerability to, or increased resilience against, human trafficking (Chames et al, 2012).

Finding 5. The design of counter-trafficking responses often failed to reflect either the recommendations of previous evaluations or critical knowledge accumulated over time in the sector and beyond.

To grant the entire population of equally vulnerable children and youth the same value of benefits as the participants in these centers would be an economic impossibility (Ouédraogo et al., 2008: 19).

Evidence of the results of counter-trafficking interventions includes 'promising' practices, lessons learned, formal research and anecdotal observations. Although this does not constitute evidence of impact as aligned with international standards of rigorous evaluation, these practices, lessons learned, and research findings constitute an evolving knowledge base that could be used to strengthen the design and evaluation of counter-trafficking responses. In addition, other sectors or disciplines (for example, criminal justice, public health, and social protection) have accumulated a rich body of often evidence-based knowledge highly relevant to the counter-trafficking sector.

Despite the existence of this knowledge, the literature reviewed included multiple examples of programmes and, in some cases, evaluations that had failed to use this information. For example, data suggests a potential "displacement effect" similar to that found in other forms of organized crime, whereby a reduction in trafficking in one location or among one group of individuals cannot be assumed to be a reduction in the overall size of the problem. <sup>14</sup> One implication of this is that, for prevention activities to be effective, they would need to be extended to the entire population at risk. Yet, as suggested by the quote above, such an expansion is not feasible for many of the prevention strategies currently pursued.

The potential for a displacement effect thus calls into question the rationale behind the large majority of "supply-side" prevention programmes, which target only a portion of the population deemed to be at risk. Despite its possible implications, the issue of displacement was not discussed in relation to any of the prevention programmes reviewed or in any of the prevention project evaluations. This suggests that there has been little consideration or use of a key piece of knowledge accumulated across the sector. Perhaps as a consequence, neither the extensive metaevaluations (Finding 1), nor widespread canvassing of counter-trafficking practitioners unearthed a single peer-reviewed example of a prevention project that has succeeded in reducing the number of people entering trafficking situations in overall terms.<sup>15</sup>

Other key lessons from the anti-trafficking sector also sometimes appeared to have been left out of programmes, especially in relation to the potential for negative consequences from direct

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> The phenomenon of displacement has been well documented with regard to multiple crime types including drugs and smuggling (Laffiteau, 2010; Countthecosts, undated). Also sometimes known as the "balloon effect" or "push-down pop-up" displacement refers to the situation where action taken against criminal activity might not necessarily reduce the magnitude of the activity but rather displace this activity to other locations (Farrington and Walsh, 2002). Available data suggests a similar phenomenon with respect to trafficking in persons. For example, although an evaluation of a programme to counter child sexual exploitation in the Philippines found that the number of minors available to researchers posing as customers had decreased, "anecdotal evidence suggests that to some degree commercial sexual exploitation of minors has moved to less visible markets and other geographic locations." (Jones et al., 2005: 31). This is consistent with reports from organizations working with hotels on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism. Other anti-trafficking respondents in the Philippines also report a change of trafficking routes and tactics from traffickers in response to CTIP action.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> A review of the literature identified projects that made key contributions to criminal justice outcomes (increase in prosecutions/convictions) and direct assistance outcomes (an increase in victim identification and a wider range of support services), but did not identify any prevention projects or programmes with equivalent outcomes. Even allowing for methodological issues related to demonstrating a counter-factual, the lack of examples of evidence-based, effective prevention efforts after 15 years of sizeable investment is worth reflection.

assistance efforts. For example, research and evaluations have documented the negative impact of restrictions on the movement of 'vulnerable' individuals, including through detention in 'shelters' (sometimes called 'protective custody') and failure to include 'non-punishment' clauses in counter-trafficking legislation. Effectively this has resulted in trafficking victims being detained and prevented from accessing opportunities that could regularize their stay in a country and to access available assistance and protection mechanisms (GAATW, 2007; OSCE, 2013). Yet, although the studied documents suggested progress in recognizing and addressing the potential for negative consequences, this information did not appear to have been fully integrated into current counter-trafficking programming or practice. In some cases, this might have been the result of national laws that require deportation or prevent access to support without cooperation with investigation and prosecution. In other cases, it appeared to have involved instances of not fully integrating knowledge accumulated in the sector to date.

Study data suggested that efforts to improve the use of accumulated knowledge have been hampered by the lack of a general repository for collating and validating accumulated knowledge and presenting this knowledge in a form that is readily accessible and adaptable to future programme design and implementation. While this offers a partial explanation, study data also indicated that recommendations and lessons learned from existing evaluations were not routinely reflected in programming, even within one organization. As early as 2002, and as recently as 2014, policy makers, programme implementers and researchers have called for stronger programme logic, better defined target groups and risk factors, baseline data to inform intervention focus and use of benchmarks against which to measure progress, among other strategies.

As noted, these lessons have not always been heeded and, in some cases, CTIP programmes, without demonstrated promise or evidence of a contribution to change, continue to be implemented. As a result, limited resources continue to be allocated to activities that have been prematurely or mislabelled 'good' or 'effective.' This limits resources available to invest in developing and using accumulated knowledge, implementing promising programmes and compiling evidence of effectiveness (see Section III for further discussion).

Finding 6. Programme design, timeframes, and resources allocated for evaluation themselves often diminished the potential of evaluations to add value.

Although research was planned into the programme, it took place too late to inform the design of the programme (Chames, 2012).

A number of factors appear to have limited the value evaluations of counter-trafficking efforts could provide. For example, some programmes were not designed with a clear measurement and evaluation plan or component. They often lacked clear and logical links between the intervention and the intended outcome(s) (Finding 4). This limited the extent to which outcomes could be assessed in relation to the planned inputs, activities and outputs. Further, most programmes did not collect baseline data needed to: (1) inform project design; (2) strengthen implementation in real time; (3) monitor progress; (4) assess outcomes and impacts; and (5) understand what might be needed to replicate or scale a promising or effective project or programme.

Another key issue with programme design that affected evaluation involved the lack of a clear focus on the specific problem being addressed and thus a clear strategy for responding to it. Interventions tended to focus on trafficking in a highly general and generic sense, within some broad geographic area. They lacked information on, and strategy for, addressing specific forms and modalities of trafficking or distinct trafficking patterns the intervention was meant to address (Bryant, 2015). This meant that it was difficult to develop evaluations able to capture the results of a strategy so broadly defined.

Reviewed evaluations also highlighted a silo effect in intervention designs. Most designs focused exclusively on prevention, protection or prosecution, treating these areas as separate and distinct, without flow or interaction among them. None of the reviewed evaluations described a project in which a range of responses was strategically brought to bear against a specific trafficking pattern at source, transit and destination. This absence of interventions that address more than one aspect of trafficking (and evaluations that consider them) suggested a missed opportunity for increasing learning and effectiveness of counter-trafficking responses.

ICAT stakeholders have also noted a disconnect between intended outcomes and project timeframes, highlighting a common need to explore the length of time required to realize and to document change. In particular, many responses to trafficking involve influencing social norms, something that may not always be achievable within a typical one-to-three year project cycle. There may also be natural delays between actions and intended results. For example, the need for due process means it will take time for a strengthened criminal justice response to reflect an increase in the quality and number of convictions — something which might not be detectable during project implementation, but aspects of which could be identified in the shorter and longer term using appropriate evaluation techniques.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The tendency to categorize responses as either prevention or protection or prosecution rather than in relation to specific patterns of trafficking can also have the unintended effect of excluding strategies that do not fit neatly into any of these categories. For example, seeking to reduce kidney trafficking by increasing legally available supply (Section W)

Other issues cited frequently in study data included: (1) lack of resources (staff, skills, time, budget, etc.) to collect data to assess implementation and progress toward outcomes; (2) failure to build evaluation into project planning to support real-time programme improvement well implementation, outcomes and impact analysis; and (3) the uneven quality ofthe evaluations themselves including weak methodologies, the use of unproven assumptions and failure to adhere to international evaluation standards, such as the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria evaluating Development Assistance (OECD, 1991).

Finally, the failure to build on knowledge existing and recommendations (Finding results in evaluation resources being devoted to identifying and reporting issues that are already known and, in some instances, as lessons learned information that was already publically available elsewhere. Study data suggested that in several cases, many of the problems

# Figure III. Checklist of CTIP MEL Do's and Don'ts

- ☑ Do develop an MEL plan during programme planning and incorporate MEL throughout all phases of a CTIP project. This includes early engagement of evaluators, if possible at project outset, and independent review of the evaluation by MEL and subject matter specialists
- ☑ Don't embark on MEL activities without sufficient time, funding and resources in place to ensure their usefulness
- ☑ Do limit evaluation and learning questions to those key issues of greatest interest to MEL stakeholders
- ☑ Don't allow **either** self-reporting **or** external evaluation to be the only way to ascertain learning
- ☑ Do choose those methods best suited to the nature and purpose of the CTIP project or programme
- ☑ Do train all staff involved in a project on MEL, including those developing and funding CTIP policies
- ☑ Don't forget to include those who have experienced trafficking directly among the key MEL stakeholders
- Don't focus exclusively on assessing outputs at the expense of exploring outcomes and impacts, including unintended consequences of any CTIP effort
- ☑ Do emphasize that M&E is about learning from experience and developing plans that implement resulting recommendations, action items and learning
- Do disseminate findings widely and creatively to the benefit of the CTIP and related sectors

Sources: Wagner et al, 2005; Gosling, 2010.

identified by retrospective project assessments could have been identified at programme outset by a review of the design. As is true for most social protection and development interventions, engaging evaluators during CTIP programme planning to help develop a theory of change, logic model, and MEL plan for the work (rather than exclusively at the end of programmes) has the potential to address this gap clarify the logic underlying programme design, and ensure that learning, programme improvement, and understanding of outcomes can be tracked throughout the life of a project.

That counter-trafficking programme designs appeared to limit the value-add of evaluations has important implications for improving evaluation practice in the sector. This means that programmes may not be developed or mature enough to support certain types of evaluations. As the field of evaluation has long cautioned, for example, it is important to remember that rigorous experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations and mixed methods approaches that include implementation research to explore how and under what conditions outcomes were (or were not) achieved tend to be expensive and time-consuming, and should only be conducted on mature programmes and only after conducting an evaluability assessment, demonstrating programme

readiness for them (CAI et al, 2009; Zimmerman et al, 2015: 32). <sup>17</sup> This emphasises the importance of not separating evaluation practices from the process of improving programme design. The effect of this would be to ensure that evaluation resources are devoted to assessment of activities that are built on documented programme logic; assumptions supported by available data; and existing lessons related to effective programming.

Overall, these findings suggest that:

- There is a growing body of accumulated knowledge about workable and non-workable counter-trafficking strategies and responses, but it is not consistently used to inform programme design.
- There is a lack of, but strong desire to build, an evidence base of effective countertrafficking efforts through; (1) improved identification and testing of promising practices and (2) more rigorous and robust monitoring, evaluation and learning.
- Many current counter-trafficking programme designs limit the ways in which evaluation

   and more robust MEL strategies can be conducted and evidence of effectiveness can be compiled.

# III. Accumulated Knowledge

As discussed in the previous section, there is a lack of rigorous evaluation of counter-trafficking efforts, and as a consequence, a lack of evidence of their effectiveness that meets international standards. This lack of a strong evidence base complicates both the development of counter-trafficking interventions and, just as importantly, decisions on how to prioritize use of counter-trafficking resources across different intervention types. At the same time, however, there are a significant and growing number of lessons, programmatic experience, promising practices, and formal and informal research in the counter-trafficking sector that should be put to work in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating new programmes and activities. There is also a growing body of evidence from other sectors and disciplines that is highly relevant to apply in developing counter-trafficking responses. These lessons learned and evidence from other fields form a body of knowledge that could be better captured and harnessed to improve efforts in the sector. Indeed, this is a crucial step towards strengthening the design and, in turn, the evaluation of counter-trafficking activities.

This section briefly discusses some key examples of this accumulated knowledge and implications for programming, drawing on: (1) common themes emerging from this review and discussions with counter-trafficking practitioners; and (2) responses to other forms of organized crime and other sectors focused on social protection. Although these examples are intended as preliminary and illustrative, rather than exhaustive, some have potentially significant implications for existing counter-trafficking efforts. The section then outlines possible steps towards organizing, managing and expanding on this accumulated knowledge and to increasing its use in design and evaluating counter-trafficking programmes.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> As suggested in footnote 2, there are a number of different approaches to evaluation that have merit and can establish contributional or attributional outcomes. They include quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods designs. To date, many evaluations of counter-trafficking interventions have demonstrated the achievement of outputs and some have established a direct contribution of an intervention and planned or desired (and even unintended) outcomes. None identified for this review have demonstrated that a particular intervention has caused a significant impact.

## Learning from Counter-Trafficking Efforts

Over the past 15 years, the countertrafficking sector has evolved and grown, deepening understanding of and developing innovative responses to human trafficking. The sector has, for example, recognized that men as well as women become trafficked into a wide range of industries - from agriculture to construction to domestic service to petty crime and begging - and that they require different kinds of service to address their exploitation. This recognition comes from working with people who have experienced trafficking and learning about the types of exploitation they have experienced. There is not always definitive evidence of the scope, nature or results of this knowledge. However, it is valuable information and experience that can be used to strengthen the impact of counter-trafficking responses and improve their results.

**Training results.** Few of the evaluated programmes attempted to measure the actions taken by stakeholders following trainings, more commonly using pre- and post-tests of knowledge and using participant satisfaction as an indicator of training effectiveness. A growing number of stakeholders, however, are beginning to question the return on investment of training workshops, particularly one-off trainings. One survey respondent, for example, explained that:

"...results of monitoring (of formal classroom based training) tend to show that there is an increase in knowledge, but poor application

## **Box 4. Developing Indicators**

In an effort to develop a more systematic monitoring system for criminal justice responses, staff of the Asia Regional Cooperation to Prevent People Trafficking project (ARCPPT) developed 32 factual and interpretive indicators in seven categories:

- 1. A comprehensive legal framework in compliance with international standards
- 2. A specialist law enforcement capacity to investigate trafficking
- 3. A frontline law enforcement capacity to respond effectively to trafficking in persons
- 4. A strong and well informed prosecutorial and judicial response to trafficking in persons
- 5. Victims are quickly and accurately identified and provided with immediate support and protection;
- 6. Victims of trafficking are fully supported as witnesses
- 7. Systems are in place to enable effective international investigative and judicial cooperation on TIP cases.

The indicators, supported by more detailed operation indicators, provided not just a way to track progress but also a tool to assist governments to prioritize next steps. In 2006, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted the indicators as 'Quality Standards' to report progress by its member States.

These indicators could form the basis for internationally-agreed common measures of progress in criminal justice responses to trafficking, ones from which other organizations could draw, adapt, and supplement, as appropriate.

Sources: Dottridge, M. (unpublished) and ASEAN (2011).

of skills, and poor prospects for sustainability of an impact. As a result, I have shifted focus to a mentorship approach to capacity development, with more intensive one-on-one skills transfer with strategically important counterparts."

This suggests the respondent utilized previous experience to refine and strengthen activities, based on accumulated knowledge – which could then be evaluated to determine results.

Similarly, among the issues raised in the literature are:

- questioning the value of trafficking investigation training for legal officials lacking basic investigative skills, in underdeveloped criminal justice systems or in environments where participants may be complicit in trafficking;
- high turnover of trained staff; and
- lack of follow-up in terms of monitoring and support.

Different responses to these issues include:

(1) developing a system to follow-up on training participants six months after training

(UNODC);

- (2) placing training in the context of a wider systems framework (see Box 4, also Jones et al, 2010);
- (3) seeking to build TIP into the curricula of training academies (ARTIP); and
- (4) re-assessment and re-focusing of project training approaches (ILO). Where implementing agencies lack control over choice of training participants, one approach has been to develop a two-tier training programme, with only the top students from the first training attending the second. As these examples suggest, ICAT agencies and other organizations are starting to pilot solutions to concerns over the value of training that may be of wider interest.

From less migration to safer migration. One area in which accumulated knowledge has clearly been put to work is the reduction of risk during migration. Early post-Protocol responses to trafficking sought to deter this migration through: (1) awareness raising aimed at scaring potential migrants; and (2) governments forcibly restricting migration through, for example, tougher border controls, travel bans on young women, and attempts to intercept young migrants *en route* to their destination based on perceived risk of trafficking. While the literature review highlighted one example of a programme involving interception as late as 2008, recent programmes more commonly focus on attempts to make migration safer. This includes promotion of efforts to increase legal migration options.

To date, however, there have been few attempts to consolidate existing evidence about migration risks and protection gaps, with the result being a limited basis on which to develop safe migration initiatives. Although outside the scope of the current literature review, there are a range of different initiatives and ideas about measures that might be taken to improve migration policies and practices that could lend themselves to collating and disseminating for consideration in different environments.

**Identification and referral.** Despite extensive efforts to set up identification and referral systems (for example, national and transnational referral mechanisms), actual identification and referral of cases of trafficking appears quite low compared to estimated numbers of victims (see Section I). For example, the number of people identified as trafficked globally tends to be in the tens of thousands each year (US State Department, 2013; UNODC, 2014). Although not directly comparable, estimates of cases of forced labour, which include trafficking, are estimated to be around 21 million (ILO, 2012). It would thus appear, that only a small proportion of cases of trafficking are identified each year and there is work to be done to refine, improve and target identification and referral processes.

Among the possible explanations for low levels of identification are that current practices and programmes do not involve the right people in looking in the right places for cases; local and national authorities do not collect or properly record data on people who have experienced trafficking; some people do not consider themselves to have been trafficked; and some do not want to be identified. There are data to support all of these possible explanations. For example, in terms of not targeting the right places, the UN Inter-Agency Project (UNIAP), for example, undertook research on the Thailand-Cambodian border, which estimated that at least 20,492 people meeting the definition of a trafficked person were deported from Thailand to one Cambodian border point alone in 2009 (UNIAP, 2009).

IOM, UNHCR and other organizations are working to expand the range of actors who are trained to identify and refer cases of trafficking, such as medical practitioners, labour inspectors, migration office staff and those working with asylum-seekers, refugees, stateless and internally

displaced persons. 18 Further work in this area will both add to, and draw on, our understanding of trafficking patterns and trends.

**Declining assistance.** Research in the sector has found that many victims decline assistance from counter-trafficking programmes. One NGO reported that when it presented 58 detainees they considered probable cases of trafficking with information about available services, 54 chose to be deported as irregular migrants rather than seek assistance.<sup>19</sup> Research has identified several reasons for declining assistance, including restriction on freedom of movement while residing in a shelter, the condition of the shelter itself, lack of opportunities to regularize stay in a country or for family reunification, required return to a country of origin, stigma related to the label, a lack of suitable or relevant services that address a person's primary needs and non-recognition of the self as a 'victim,' among others (Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012).

More specifically, information learned from programme implementation and research has suggested that many people who might fit the definition of having been trafficked are most interested in receiving payment for unpaid wages than in any direct assistance, for example, shelter, food, clothing, safe return (Brunovskis and Surtees, 2012). This information can be used to refine and refocus counter-trafficking responses, for example, to shift resources from direct assistance to support for restitution and legal remedies.

Victim-centred approaches. As well as improving processes for receiving and acting on feedback from trafficked persons, field-based experience has long suggested the quality and suitability of support programmes for trafficked persons would be increased through wider adoption of victim-centred approaches. In a victim-centred approach, the victim's wishes, safety, and wellbeing take precedence over all other issues and drive programme activities and processes (Office for Victims of Crime, 2015). This approach has the potential to support not only better reintegration outcomes, but also to increase the likelihood that victims will seek assistance and cooperate in the identification and prosecution of traffickers. For example, providing foreign trafficked persons with access to residence permits removes a disincentive to coming forward unlike with mandatory return. The OHCHR notes that "the presence of the trafficked person in the country in which remedies are being sought is often a practical – and sometimes a legal – requirement if that person is to secure remedial action" (2010:25). A victim-centred approach requires that such incentives should not be made dependent upon cooperation with the criminal justice system. Available evidence suggests this approach is also more effective in securing criminal justice outcomes as more coercive approaches can deter cooperation or trust in the process.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> This expansion of actors needs to be accompanied by functioning referral practices both in terms of ensuring that trafficking persons are promptly and accurately identified and they services they are able to access are not dependent on which agency identified them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup>Personal comment to evaluator from Foundation for Women staff member.

Use of all available tools and **instruments.** In previous research, ICAT has highlighted how "relying on the obligations created by the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol is not sufficient to ensure a comprehensive and effective response to human trafficking" (ICAT, 2012: 3). A comprehensive response requires a more systematic use of additional legal instruments standards, particularly in ensuring sufficient support for people who may have experienced trafficking. To facilitate the better use of existing resources, ICAT's paper, "The International Legal Frameworks concerning Trafficking in Persons," summarizes state obligations codified in a range of international instruments relevant to counter-trafficking. National efforts to leverage existing tools to counter trafficking include the incorporation of anti-trafficking provisions into government procurement guidelines and the use of existing financial regulatory mechanisms to identify proceeds from trafficking and prevent these from entering regular financial channels (for example, the banking system, money transfer systems, etc.). The next step is to ensure these tools are brought to bear in a more strategic and targeted manner, in particular through strengthening the focus on individual trafficking patterns and flows. For example, the package of tools appropriate to respond to trafficking in the context of widespread irregular migration to meet genuine labour shortages will necessarily differ from those required to combat the coercion of minors into the sex trade. (The issue of more targeted responses is discussed further in Section II).

# Box 5. Common Counter-Trafficking Programme Pitfalls

- This review of evaluations identified several common limitations embedded in the design of counter-trafficking programmes. These shortcomings, discussed throughout this paper, can be summarized as follows:
- Generic problem definition. Lack of information about the specific trafficking patterns the project is attempting to address and the enabling factors underlying these patterns.
- Programme logic. Lack of clear or articulated programme logic that links planned activities to intended outcomes or impacts and clearly articulates the assumptions underlying these linkages.
- Displacement. Failure to consider the possibility that project actions may displace the TIP problem rather than reduce it and the implications this would have for programme logic
- Beneficiary involvement. Insufficient elicitation and incorporation of participant feedback on the relevance, breath, quality and 'impact' of available support and services
- Awareness as a proxy for behaviour change.
   Assumption that awareness-raising will deter migration that can increase vulnerability to trafficking, without locating the activities within a wider behaviour change context and involving appropriate expertise
- Training as a proxy for capacity building. Conflation of attending a training with the ability to operationalize new knowledge, attitudes, skills and intentions without providing the support necessary to ensure (and document) that any new knowledge and skills acquired translate into new behaviours
- One-off projects/projectization. Attempts to generate long-term outcomes through short-term projects without providing the follow up resources necessary to sustain, expand, or deepen any initial progress

## **Learning from Other Sectors**

Anti-organized crime responses. Previous activities and research aimed at addressing other types of organized crime, such as drug trafficking and migrant smuggling, offer the countertrafficking sector information it can use to improve and strengthen its efforts. The criminal justice sector has learned, for example, that interventions to reduce crime in a particular area often lead to displacement of the problem. Reppetto identified five types of displacement: temporal (change in time), tactical (change in method), target (change in victim), territorial (change in place), and functional (change in type of crime) (1976). The potential for displacement has led many countertrafficking practitioners to question the likely effectiveness of "supply side" prevention solutions such as poverty reduction, where the supply of potential migrants who might become vulnerable to trafficking is too extensive to be addressed through poverty reduction schemes (Berman and

Marshall 2011: 76). Significant prevention resources, however, continue to be devoted to interventions whose success implicitly depends on an absence of the displacement effect.

Responses to other forms of organized crime also raise questions on the value of individual prosecutions, particularly where the focus is on quantity of prosecutions, favouring the targeting of smaller, generally disposable players in trafficking networks. Recognizing this, some countries are now putting increased emphasis on targeting entire networks, including through Joint Investigation Teams, on targeting assets through increasingly stringent legislation.<sup>20</sup>

Evaluations are also beginning to reflect a desire to go beyond prosecution data as a measure of criminal justice progress. Some organizations, for example, have used case analysis to assess the nature and quality of prosecutions as well as identify weaknesses in the investigative and prosecutorial processes (David et al., 2011), while Jones et al. have attempted to assess the effect of criminal justice actions on commercial sexual exploitation of children by using the availability of minors to researchers posing as customers as a proxy for prevalence (Jones et al., 2011).

Consideration is also needed to the potential for new criminal networks to move into the space created by successful legal action against existing networks, as has been reported with respect to drug trafficking (Tree, 2007). This highlights the importance of complementary initiatives to reduce the "business opportunities" for traffickers. Examples might include: the establishment of new clean recruitment companies to "crowd out" the more exploitative ones, and policies to bring migration policies into line with labour market and demographic realities, thus eliminating the need for migrants to interact with criminal groups to arrive at destination.

Behaviour change. Another area from which lessons can be drawn is behavioural science. To be able to contribute to responding effectively to and reducing trafficking in persons, an activity must result in a change in behaviour. For example, a potential migrant acting on an awareness campaign; a training participant acting on the skills they have learned; a policy maker introducing a new policy; a labour inspector identifying a case of trafficking and assisting them to access support. There is a large body of evidence around behaviour change developed in the public health sector, as well as in the response to other related issues like sexual and gender based violence. Although behaviour change is complex, there are a number of accessible lessons that are not routinely reflected in counter-trafficking programmes. For example, the importance of: (1) ascertaining existing knowledge levels of the population and their trusted sources of information; (2) developing positive rather than negative messages like do's rather than don'ts; (3) pre-testing these messages with the target population; and (4) understanding the constraints that target groups might have in acting on the information provided. The behaviour change field also offers approaches for addressing these constraints, ranging from influencing social and cultural norms at community level to identifying individual cases of positive deviance.<sup>21</sup>

Perhaps not surprisingly, given a lack of adherence to basic behaviour change principles, the literature review suggests the majority of awareness raising campaigns fail to generate meaningful outcomes, or in some cases have been counterproductive. Examples include, using media that are not trusted by the target group, leading to an assumption the message must be untrue; messages that have alerted people to the presence of people who might help them migrate; and messages that young female migrants will end up in the sex trade, leading to stigmatization of returnees (GAATW, 2007; Davies, 2009).

<sup>21</sup> Positive deviance refers to the capacity of individuals or communities "to confront challenges, constraints, and resource deprivations" using "uncommon" but frequently successful strategies that often lead to better solutions than those that others might more commonly employ (<a href="http://betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/positive\_deviance">http://betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/positive\_deviance</a>)

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> The United Kingdom, for example, has legislation allowing for confiscations of all assets of persons deemed to have a criminal lifestyle, not just those assets pertaining to the crimes for which they were convicted. See http://www.iap-association.org/getattachment/e45fd52f-da76-469c-8a4d-0e13c43c4981/9ERC\_Gary\_Balch.pdf.aspx <sup>21</sup> Positive deviance refers to the capacity of individuals or communities "to confront challenges, constraints, and

### Putting Learning to Work in the Counter-Trafficking Sector

For years we have discussed that we need a tool that would not require additional work (and staff and financial capacity) but rather that combines the data we already collect and have (Survey respondent, 2015).

I doubt I would read a[n anti-trafficking] 'bible' but a three-page summary of the most important lessons and promising practices would have been extremely useful when I started this work (Counter-trafficking practitioner, 2015).

Across counter-trafficking and related responses and over time, knowledge and experience with clear potential to improve current anti-trafficking strategies and practices have been amassed in the sector. This information is not, however, currently being used to maximum effect to inform either programme design or programme evaluation. It is in this context that this paper seeks to set out a path towards harnessing and learning from these data to strengthen programming and improve results — toward building evidence of effectiveness. This would require: (1) consolidating and validating current knowledge accumulated; (2) making this knowledge more accessible to and useable by programme developers; (3) developing and disseminating tools to support sharing and using this knowledge; and (4) evaluating the use of this knowledge to determine what is relevant, effective and can improve results, thus (5) contributing to a stronger evidence base for counter-trafficking.

Study data suggest a strong interest in platforms and tools to assist practitioners in employing this knowledge in programme design and implementation to ensure that they better reflect what has been learned and increase the potential of achieving planned results. Stakeholder feedback suggests a preference for synthesized and distilled evidence drawn from multiple evaluations and relevant sources, rather than wide distribution of individual evaluation.

Without dismissing the complexity of trafficking and responses to it, a high proportion of the shortcomings identified can be grouped into a relatively small number of lessons *not learned* (Box 4). This suggests that there is scope for developing concise user-friendly tools that can assist in revising or eliminating interventions based on assumptions that are not supported, while increasing information about possible knowledge-based alternative approaches available. Although this could be undertaken as a stand-alone process, it is highly complementary to, and would be enhanced by, progress towards a common conceptualization of MEL approaches and practices (Section IV). An introductory tool might include a set of questions to ask during the design of different types of interventions (Appendix 2).

# IV. A Draft Conceptual Model for Counter-Trafficking Interventions

The overall objective of this discussion paper is to propose a roadmap to developing a MEL approach for counter-trafficking interventions. The MEL approach aims to build a credible evidence base of effective counter-trafficking initiatives including how and under what circumstances they can be effective. Learning generated from monitoring and evaluation of the interventions can then inform planning and decision-making about which, how, where and when counter-trafficking programmes and projects should be implemented, evaluated, replicated or scaled up.

Conceptual models provide a high-level, comprehensive map to show how a set of linked activities can contribute to a broader goal or objective of an initiative, programme or sector – here

by responding effectively to and working to reduce human trafficking. The purpose of a conceptual model for initiatives responding to human trafficking is to draw out an underlying theory of change that articulates the kinds of activities needed to promote key changes or outcomes counter-trafficking interventions might pursue. These outcomes are, in turn, hypothesized as necessary to produce the desired results or impacts shared, at a high-level, across the counter-trafficking sector. For instance, the reduction of the number of people trafficked, in situations of exploitation and trafficking, and the diminution of the number and reach of trafficking networks (Figure II).

The purpose of the model is to (1) map out the shared interim to longer-term outcomes or objectives that are (2) hypothesized as leading to the longer term impacts, toward (3) achieving the broader goals as mapped out in the model. More succinctly, as a map, the model lays out the levels of change hypothesized to take place over time and through intended logical pathways. As such, it is designed to inform development of counter-trafficking interventions as well as a shared approach to MEL. It can then be used by practitioners to clarify how their interventions align with the results included in the model, and by evaluators to determine what to test and measure depending on those desired results.

## A Conceptual Model in Five Steps

The draft conceptual model for the sector draws out key steps on the way to achieving its broader, longer-term and shared objectives. It includes the accumulated knowledge and change instruments or activities that are hypothesized to influence change areas or interim outcomes and longer-term results. Each level is hypothesized as a necessary step toward, necessary antecedent to, and direct influence on the level above. The model visualizes and helps explain how change instruments contribute to a shared set of desired results across the arenas that constitute the counter-trafficking sector, while documenting those shared goals and objectives at the level of outcomes and results (Figure IV).

Change wstrumen. Areas · Change Change Strengthen legal frameworks and norms Increase (strategic) prosecutions + confiscations reach of trafficking networks Disrupt more trafficking networks Reduced Figure IV. Draft Conceptual Model: Aligning Efforts to Respond to Trafficking in Persons Accumulated Knowledge from Combatting Trafficking in Persons Knowledg trafficking + exploitation Less profit Strengthen financial systems barriers Reduce enabling environment Shrink markets for goods/services PBTL Clean supply chains Intervention Space people trafficked and Reduced number of Results Space data + more evidence of "what works" exploited More use of Develop quality standards Improve data + data systems Increase Norms Fewer people entering trafficking networks Address context-based risk migration pathways and actions Develop safer Strengthen social protection Ì Improved participant satisfaction with services Influencing I ı ı Increase relevance + quality of support Strengthen victim-centered responses ...... Improve compensation identifications More people sustainably exiting trafficking Increase . . . .

Accumulated knowledge. As discussed in Section III, fifteen years on from the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, counter trafficking has grown into a rich and continually maturing sector. While this sector has not yet built evidence of effectiveness, it has accumulated a tremendous amount of valuable knowledge about responding to trafficking that can be better put to work to strengthen efforts going forward. Compiled, sorted and operationalized, this accumulated knowledge can improve the quality and results of interventions and activities aimed at responding effectively to and reducing human trafficking. This knowledge and experience forms the fundamental building block of the conceptual model, underscoring the importance and urgency of assembling, updating and more systematically putting to work what has already been learned in and by the counter-trafficking sector.

Change instruments. The logic of the conceptual model unfolds from bottom to top. Instruments driving change form its second-level foundation. These are the broad types of interventions that aim to respond to trafficking by building cooperation and partnerships; systems and structures; advocacy and influencing; supports and incentives; capacity, skills and knowledge; or (international) instruments, policies or legislation – all efforts squarely aimed at responding effectively and working to reduce trafficking.

Each of these areas encompasses a broad set of activities with a shared change-oriented focus. For example, activities aimed at: (1) increasing understanding of how trafficking works; (2) increasing the number and types of groups with identification and safe referral skills; and (3) ensuring judicial decision making is consistent across trafficking cases seeking restitution all aim to expand capacity, skills and knowledge in the sector. The purpose of this level is to ensure that each individual effort or activity is reflected in the model *and* located in relation to the change it seeks to achieve. In response to Finding 4, regarding the lack of programme or intervention logic among anti-trafficking projects, this recognition aims to encourage programme implementers to articulate the change they believe their effort will achieve, how the planned effort will achieve it, and how the effort links into key change areas that drive toward the broader objectives in the model.

**Change areas.** The change instruments in the model refer to activities that set off action in one or more of the identified change areas. All of these change areas lead with active verbs pushing toward the first level of expected results of a counter-trafficking intervention or activity. Each verb focuses on achievement: either increasing or improving anti-trafficking knowledge and good practice, or shrinking and reducing areas in which traffickers can manoeuvre.

Together, this level indicates the results and progress needed in the shorter or interim term to ensure longer-term change occurs. Linking the intervention to change in the shorter or interim term can help ascertain whether an intervention's specific expected outcomes are concrete and well-defined, and clearly linked to a longer-term outcome that drives change toward the primary objectives at the top of the model. The model thus hypothesizes at a high level the areas that will contribute to or have an influence on the named results. — or, interim to longer-term outcomes - hypothesized as antecedents to the results the sector is pursuing more broadly.

**Results space.** The next level of the model is the direct foundation upon which the sector's primary objectives are built. It is populated by nouns that demarcate the kind of change hypothesized as needed to get to impact. They represent outcomes that can be measured to detect progress toward the overarching change wanted – the key objectives at the top of the model. For example, if more people exit from and remain out of trafficking situations, then the number of people trafficked will be reduced. If less profit and more risk accrue to traffickers and trafficking networks, then the number and reach of trafficking networks will be reduced. The purpose of this

level is thus to specify the kind of change needed to ensure that primary objectives sitting atop the model can and will be realized. It is the level of fundamental change.

Responding effectively and working to reduce trafficking in persons. While there is not a general pretence to achieving the two primary goals deployed and installed at the top of the model, there is a need to think through the purpose of the sector more broadly. Articulating the inexorably linked need to reduce the numbers of persons trafficked and the numbers and reach of trafficking networks, reinforces the fundamental purpose of the sector and clarifies the direction of the needed pathways pursued. Whether or not achievable, they can inform the logic of each relevant intervention and develop a consistency that can increase the effectiveness of each attempt to make progress toward them. It helps ensure the focus of any intervention is not on the achievement of its own immediate objectives, but instead focuses on how the intervention links to larger, fundamental, and shared impacts and goals (CAI et al, 2009).

### Conceptualization of the Response

The six proposed areas in the result space of the model are consistent with the "3Ps" of counter-trafficking: prevention, prosecution and protection. To these three, the model adds two additional, separate result areas – one on generating and using data and one on addressing the profitability of trafficking. The former is consistent with the call for more MEL over time and across the sector. The latter recognizes the measures that can be taken against criminal businesses go beyond prosecutions to include actions to reduce opportunities. For example, the market for trafficked kidneys arises from a gap between the demand for kidneys and the supply of legally available kidneys. Measures to increase the legal supply of kidneys close this gap and reduce opportunities for traffickers. Similarly, actions targeting goods and services produced by trafficked labour have been included under this outcome area rather than grouped with programmes targeting trafficking vulnerability factors under 'prevention.'

The outcomes "fewer persons entering trafficking networks" and "more people sustainably exiting trafficking" are grouped together under the goal of reducing the number of people trafficked and exploited. This connection highlights that reducing the size of the trafficking problem requires assisting people to exit and to remain out as well as preventing new cases. In so doing, the model encourages reflection of the division of resources between those who might at some point in the future be trafficked and those that are currently in a trafficking situation. In highlighting the link between sustainable exit from this trafficking situation and a reduction in the size of the trafficking problem, the model also suggests the need for longer-term monitoring of the reintegration process – noted as lacking in both the literature review and in survey responses.

Developing and working from a conceptual model provides a framework for linking specific activities with clearly articulated and desired results. Some activities contribute to more than one outcome and the priority given to these outcomes will affect the assessment of effectiveness. For example, a training of under-resourced police officers who lack basic investigative skills might not contribute to disruption of trafficking networks, but might help increase the number of trafficking cases identified. A trafficking hotline might not increase the number of cases of trafficking identified, but might be an effective source of information for people wishing to reduce the risks of migration. Securing back pay for exploited workers might facilitate their sustainable reintegration without acting as a disincentive for their employers (who are no worse off than if they had paid the wages in the first place). Using the model to develop an intervention's logical linkage to results over time can help ensure a clear and systematic assessment in relation to the documented outcomes.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Partnerships, sometimes referred to as the 4<sup>th</sup> P, is reflected as an enabling factor in the intervention space, rather than as a result itself.

# V. Next Steps

There are several key next steps for ICAT and for the broader sector to consider in moving toward harnessing the accumulated knowledge of the sector and developing a high-level and comprehensive, shared approach to MEL, as antecedents, or two lanes on the road to building evidence of effectiveness in the counter-trafficking sector. Their development will need to be iterative and evolutionary, requiring discussion, debate, collaboration and the technical expertise of multiple stakeholders within and beyond the sector. It will also require critical data and other resources and articulation of expected results. These next steps might follow two tracks simultaneously, one focused on accumulated knowledge and the other on MEL.

### The Accumulated Knowledge Track

The first set of steps are aimed at ensuring that what has been learned from the multiple counter-trafficking and related efforts employed to date, as represented in the accumulated knowledge or experiential evidence of the sector, are better captured, compiled, and put to work to inform design, development and decision-making about counter-trafficking strategies, policies, interventions, and sectoral investments. These steps might include:

- compilation and organization of accumulated, not-yet-validated, knowledge by intervention type and change area;
- input and validation from key experts and stakeholders on the substance and classification of the accumulated knowledge;
- elaboration of criteria for designating an intervention or individual practice as 'good' or 'promising practice' and processes for making the assignation including independent peer review;
- agreement on the structure and format of a searchable repository and/or platform for accessing counter-trafficking accumulated knowledge, promising practice and eventually evidence; and
- development of simple, accessible reference or guidance tools for practitioners and funders to use in designing, prioritizing and selecting counter-trafficking programmes to implement.

#### The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Track

Next steps toward developing, one, an MEL approach and , two, tools for the sector focused on learning to support programme improvement in real time and building an evidence base, might involve:

- further refinement of the broad assumptions and theory of change underlining the conceptual model, as well as of the conceptual model itself;
- articulation of a set of preliminary core learning and evaluation questions, grouped in broad categories that cut across intervention and change areas and drive methodological choices for evaluation activities;
- formulation of measurement and evaluation approaches to answering each of the core learning questions, as aligned with implementation strategies, timelines and realities on the ground and including logic models;

- development of a menu of shared indicators by intervention type and change area, that can be used to track implementation and progress toward outcomes in a feasible, tenable and comprehensible manner;<sup>23</sup>
- provision of guidance on adaptation of these resources, including theory of change, learning and evaluation questions, logic models, and indicators to specific countertrafficking efforts; and
- consideration of dissemination and learning practices aimed at sharing emergent promising practices and initial evidence of effectiveness to inform intervention replication and scale up, as well as build the evidence base of effective countertrafficking practices and interventions.

23 This will draw on existing indicators developed by IOM, UNICEF, ILO, ARTIP, UNODC, USAID and others.

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This will draw on existing indicators developed by IOM, UNICEF, ILO, ARTIP, UNODC, USAID and other

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