Preface

About Human Trafficking

Human trafficking or trafficking in persons is one of the most heinous crimes imaginable, often described as a modern day form of slavery. Human trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, harbouring and/or exercising control, direction or influence over the movements of a person in order to exploit that person, typically through sexual exploitation or forced labour. The victims, who are mostly women and children, are deprived of their normal lives and compelled to provide their labour or sexual services, through a variety of coercive practices all for the direct profit of their perpetrators. Exploitation often occurs through intimidation, force, sexual assault and threats of violence to themselves or their families.

Human trafficking is an offence under the Criminal Code of Canada and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. The extent of human trafficking, either in Canada and internationally, is difficult to assess due to the hidden nature of the crime, the reluctance of victims and witnesses to come forward to law enforcement and the difficulty of identifying victims. We know that men, women and children fall victim to this crime, although women represent the majority of victims in Canada to date. Those who are likely to be at-risk include persons who are socially or economically disadvantaged, such as some Aboriginal women, youth and children, migrants and new immigrants, teenaged runaways, children who are in protection, as well as girls and women, who may be lured to large urban centres or who move or migrate there voluntarily. (Source: http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/hmn-trffckng/index-eng.aspx)

About the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking

The Government of Canada launched the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking (National Action Plan) in June 2012, which consolidates ongoing efforts of the federal government to combat human trafficking and introduces aggressive new initiatives to prevent this crime, identify victims, protect the most vulnerable, and prosecute perpetrators. The National Action Plan aims to better support organizations providing assistance to victims and it builds on the federal government’s current responses and commitment to work together with partners to prevent and combat this disturbing crime. It leverages and builds on Canada’s international and domestic experience to date and provides aggressive new initiatives in order to address human trafficking in all its forms. Public Safety Canada leads the Human Trafficking Taskforce, comprised of key departments, and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the National Action Plan commitments and for coordinating the federal anti-human trafficking response and reporting annually on progress to the public.
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Acknowledgements

Public Safety Canada, on behalf of the Human Trafficking Taskforce, would like to extend a sincere thank you to the individuals and organizations that took time out of extremely busy schedules and important work to participate in the recent online and in-person stakeholder consultations. The information flowing out of these consultations will be used to inform government priorities as Canada seeks to build on current efforts to address and combat human trafficking in all its forms.

Introduction

Human trafficking is a horrific crime that robs its victims of their most basic human rights. A complex issue with a diverse range of victims and circumstances, it deprives individuals of their normal lives and forces them to provide their labour or sexual services through a variety of coercive practices - all for the direct profit of their perpetrators, who are often linked to gangs and organized crime.

On June 6, 2012, the federal government launched the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking (National Action Plan), which outlines federal anti-human trafficking efforts under the ‘4 Ps’ – prevention of the crime, protecting its victims, prosecuting offenders and building partnerships, both at home and abroad.

As the National Action Plan was developed, it was clear that the key to its long term success would be communication and engagement with stakeholders and experts in Canada who play a unique and integral role in preventing and combatting this crime. That is why, as part of this Plan, Public Safety Canada committed to engaging in various ways with stakeholders and experts from across Canada to learn more about how this crime is occurring in different parts of the country.

In fall 2012, Public Safety Canada conducted an online consultation with stakeholders. The findings from this online consultation were then used to inform a series of five regional roundtables across Canada in Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, and Edmonton. The two consultation mechanisms were designed to engage with organizations and individuals working in the area of human trafficking and to gather information on national and regional human trafficking trends, anti-trafficking efforts and initiatives, challenges, barriers, and gaps, and, priority issues and areas requiring more focus.

The online consultation survey was sent to over 200 stakeholders across the country, and close to 80 responses were received. The same number of stakeholders also took part in the face-to-face regional roundtables that followed. Participants included representatives from civil society, non-governmental organizations, victim service providers, law enforcement, provincial/territorial ministries and academia, as well as survivors.

Following the fall consultations, in March 2013, Public Safety Canada, over a period of two days, met with stakeholders and individuals in a small fly-in community located in southern Nunavut. As information collected from the fall consultations had indicated that human trafficking in
northern Canada may be different than in the southern provinces, travelling to Nunavut provided the opportunity to explore and share a unique northern snapshot of the issue as it manifests in a particular community.

This report summarizes the national and regional themes and key findings from the fall 2012 and March 2013 Nunavut consultations\(^1\). Information gathered from the consultations will be used to help inform future federal anti-human trafficking priorities and policies.

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\(^1\) Note that the views expressed herein are those raised by the participants and do not necessarily reflect those of Public Safety Canada and/or the participating organizations.
National Outlook – Summary of Common Messages and Key Findings

While a number of regional differences emerged as a result of the consultations, nationally there were common threads. Stakeholders clearly highlighted the need for both general and more targeted awareness and education efforts as necessary components of prevention, as are early identification and intervention. The importance of collaboration, cooperation and communication between the various actors involved in anti-human trafficking work was also identified as key to the development and delivery of effective responses.

The following sections will highlight some of the national themes pertaining to: 1) current and emerging trends; 2) anti-human trafficking efforts and initiatives; 3) challenges, barriers and gaps in addressing this crime; and, 4) priorities and future areas of focus.

Current and Emerging Trends

Nationally, a number of consistent themes were identified regarding current and emerging human trafficking trends. These included, for example, the identification of domestic sex trafficking as the main form of human trafficking taking place in Canada and the particular vulnerability of some Aboriginal women and girls to falling victim to the crime. Familial trafficking (i.e., trafficker and victim are from the same family) was also identified as a trend that is occurring within some Aboriginal communities.

At the same time, stakeholders spoke of an increase in cases of labour trafficking of foreign nationals and concerns surrounding the exploitation and trafficking of migrants and temporary foreign workers. As an example, the temporary nature of their immigration status and fear of being sent back to their country of origin were identified as creating situations of potential vulnerability for foreign workers who may be afraid to report exploitation or abuse. Structural issues within the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, including workers being tied to one employer and the inability of provinces, in many cases, to confirm whether a temporary foreign worker is working for their identified employer (or if they arrived in Canada as expected), were raised as also providing possible avenues for exploitation.

Across the country, reference was also made to industries in which situations of vulnerability and/or opportunities for human trafficking may occur, whether for the purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labour, including, for example, resource extraction industries (i.e., fishing, mining, oil, logging); the transportation industry (i.e., trucking, taxis, buses); and, the travel industry (e.g., hotels). For instance, some believed trafficking could increase as resource extraction industries increase in certain parts of the country.

The role of organized crime in human trafficking in Canada (with a particular focus on sex trafficking), including links to drug trafficking and gangs, and the operation of these enterprises across jurisdictions, was identified as an ongoing trend. For example, stakeholders from Eastern Canada spoke of local gangs recruiting young girls from schools who are then trafficked to different parts of the country (e.g., involvement of gangs such as North Preston’s Finest).
The use of online technology and social media, particularly for the purposes of recruitment and/or grooming was identified as an emerging issue that requires more focus. Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, My Space) are used to recruit and groom youth for the purpose of exploiting them and online classified sites (e.g., Back Page, Craigslist) are used to advertise for sexual services for girls and women forced into prostitution by traffickers. With respect to youth and online technology, there appears to be a potential overconfidence about the level of security and safety offered online, which may make young people more vulnerable to victimization.

**Efforts and Initiatives**

Regarding anti-human trafficking efforts, stakeholders across the country are involved in numerous activities and initiatives focusing on prevention, protection and partnership-building. Outreach, awareness, education and training initiatives are occurring in multiple jurisdictions and by a range of actors across the country. These initiatives include, for example: targeted training for first responders and service providers, events to raise community awareness, awareness campaigns targeting specific sectors (e.g., transportation industry, youth/students), conferences, workshops and information forums and the development of education and awareness materials (e.g., information toolkits, pocket cards, newsletters, presentations, public service announcement).

Provincial and community coalitions, committees and action plans are also in place, or in the process of being established. For example, British Columbia recently launched a provincial action plan (*BC’s Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, March 2013*) and Manitoba has in place “*Tracia’s Trust: Manitoba’s Sexual Exploitation Strategy, December 2002*”, its provincial strategy to address the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children, youth and adults. With respect to coalitions and committees, the Action Coalition on Human Trafficking in Alberta (ACT Alberta), the Coalition Québécoise contre la traite des personnes, which was recently established, the London Coalition Against Human Trafficking, the Toronto Counter Human Trafficking Network, and the Nova Scotia Inter-Agency Group on Human Trafficking, are but a few examples. In addition, less formal networks have also been established that are based on personal contacts and pre-established relationships.

There are also initiatives in place specifically related to victim support, including:

- help lines (e.g., Chrysalis Network’s 1-800 national trauma helpline),
- 24hr/7day mobile victim care (e.g., by Walk with Me Victims Services),
- language interpretation services (e.g., Mosaic),
- emergency funds to provide for immediate victim needs/relocation (i.e., through Chrysalis Network, BC’s Crime Victims Assistance Program, among others), and,
- specialized shelters (such as the Salvation Army’s Deborah’s Gate).
Initiatives to address factors that make individuals vulnerable to human trafficking (and re-victimization), including social leadership programs (e.g., the Child and Youth Care (CYC) Experiential Worker Training out of Manitoba), have also been developed.6

**Challenges, Barriers and Gaps**

A general lack of awareness of the issue by the public as well as with front line workers, law enforcement officials, the judiciary (i.e., prosecutors and judges) and the various levels of government (i.e., federal, provincial/territorial, municipal) was identified as one of the challenges to addressing this crime, as are those created by a lack of common understanding and differing definitions of human trafficking across the various actors involved. With respect to the former, stakeholders felt that, while progress has been made to raise awareness amongst front-line service providers and enforcement officials, there is still a lack of knowledge and uptake of the Criminal Code human trafficking provisions by police, prosecutors and judges, which limits both the number of charges being laid and successful prosecutions.

Stakeholders also noted that it is difficult to assess the scope of human trafficking in Canada because of its clandestine nature and complexity. While trafficking victims may sometimes be identified by organizations and stakeholders who are aware of the various forms of human trafficking and the different methods of exploitation used by traffickers, challenges remain related to the fact that many trafficking victims, whether they identify themselves as such or not, are scared to report wrongdoing or exploitation because of, among others, threats to their physical safety, their immigration status, or a lack of awareness of their rights. This in turn creates challenges in responding to the crime effectively.

Another challenge faced is the lack of sustainable, predictable and reliable funding to support anti-trafficking efforts. Stakeholders indicated that there are barriers to accessing the funding that is available, particularly as it pertains to understanding the different funding programs and their specific requirements and application processes. In addition, they noted that there is a lack of funding to support core services (e.g., victim supports) as the majority seems to be more project-based, duration-specific funding (e.g., for education or awareness campaigns).

With respect to victims, stakeholders spoke of gaps in relation to protection and support given the level of trauma and harm suffered. In particular, stakeholders referred to the lack of specialized services for victims of human trafficking (taking into consideration the differences between female and male victims; and children and youth)7 after their immediate needs are met (within the first 24-72 hours), including trauma counseling, secondary housing and shelters, job skills and employment training, and an overall sustainable continuum of care that is in place from the moment an individual is identified through the entire recovery process. They also noted a lack of services and housing supports that are geared towards victims of labour trafficking and whose needs may be different than those that have been victims of sex trafficking.

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6 [http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/traciastrust/continuum.html#B3](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/traciastrust/continuum.html#B3)

7 Stakeholders at one roundtable also highlighted a gap in services targeting gay, lesbian and transgendered victims of human trafficking.
As to anti-human trafficking efforts and initiatives focusing on education and awareness in particular, stakeholders highlighted that there is often unnecessary duplication, in that different organizations (sometimes receive funding to) undertake similar activities or projects when there are already tools and materials available that can be utilized or built upon. This duplication results in the ineffective use of limited available resources towards common outcomes and/or these funds not being used to support areas requiring more focus, such as support and services for victims.

**Stakeholder Priorities and Future Areas of Focus**

A number of priorities and areas requiring focus were identified by stakeholders in order to enhance anti-human trafficking efforts nationally, including the overall need for initiatives that are evidence based to ensure that what is being done is effective. It was noted that this requires not only conducting research and data collection on the scope and nature of the crime in Canada (nationally and region-specific) in order to better target efforts but also the objective analysis and evaluation of programs already in place to determine their effectiveness and to identify promising practices.

With respect to prevention efforts, the continued need to raise awareness of the crime across all sectors (e.g., different levels of government, law enforcement and the judiciary, civil society, the public and front-line service providers) was identified. Also identified was the need for more targeted campaigns focusing on the issue of demand (for both sexual services and labour), as well as the need for improved education and awareness targeting children and youth, with age appropriate messaging at different stages of childhood/young adulthood (e.g., human trafficking modules being introduced as part of school curriculums).

Enhanced services and supports for victims of human trafficking, both immediate and long term, as well as the availability of funds for these services were key priorities of stakeholders across the country. Related to this is the development of a mechanism or system to facilitate the identification of the services and supports that are already available in the different provinces and territories, and the ability of front line workers and service providers to connect with the appropriate organizations or people inter-jurisdictionally (i.e., so that a victim could be moved from one province to another for safety purposes).

Many stakeholders believed that further research is required on the human trafficking of Aboriginal peoples (including First Nations, Metis and Inuit and non-status), particularly on the issue of familial trafficking (i.e., the trafficker and victim belong to the same family) and the underlying risk factors that inform this activity. Additionally, stakeholders identified the need for targeted research on human trafficking for forced labour as an emerging issue in Canada and on the potential role of businesses and the supply chain in the labour trafficking continuum.

To address concerns raised about the potential for some industries to create situations of vulnerability and opportunities for human trafficking, stakeholders indicated that the private sector should be brought to the table, whether through targeted awareness raising, involvement in stakeholder dialogue, or as partners in specific anti-human trafficking initiatives. Additionally, expanding the conversation to include unexpected or unconventional partners (e.g., truck drivers,
banking/financial sector, labour unions, municipal by-law officials, the media, hospitals and convenience stores) should also be examined as a way to further support anti-trafficking efforts.

With the rise in use of online technology and social media in the trafficking process, which can take the crime further out of the public eye and make it harder to detect, another stakeholder priority was the need to identify and develop effective response approaches, both with respect to prevention and awareness raising and the investigation/identification of cases.

Finally, stakeholders highlighted the continued importance of ensuring that the voices and perspectives of victims of human trafficking, as well as the analyses, approaches and expertise developed by those who work on the ground are heard and taken into consideration in the development of anti-human trafficking policies in the country.

**Regional Perspectives**

A number of region-specific themes and messages emerged from the different roundtables and in the responses to the online consultations, highlighted briefly below.

**Atlantic Canada**

According to stakeholders in Atlantic Canada, the region is often viewed by other parts of the country as a starting point for a national circuit in which domestic victims of human trafficking (primarily women, for the purpose of sexual exploitation) are moved from the region to Quebec, Ontario and then eventually to Western Canada. The particular vulnerability of some Aboriginal women, in some cases along major highway routes (i.e., Truro-Halifax), where they are being exploited for sexual services was raised. Concerns were noted about the increased use of online technology (i.e., online recruitment methods; use of online classified ads) in this crime, which effectively makes it less visible and therefore more difficult to assess and address. The presence of oil, fishing and ship-building industries in the region as sectors vulnerable to human trafficking (e.g., labour trafficking of migrant workers and women being forced into prostitution to meet the demand of a primarily male workforce) was also identified as an area of concern.

In Atlantic Canada, which in comparison to other regions has proportionally seen far fewer identified cases of human trafficking, awareness raising and the coordination of services appear to be a key focus. In Nova Scotia, for instance, an asset-mapping exercise was recently conducted, which identified available services across the province that can be leveraged to support trafficking victims and awareness materials are being developed and events organized to enhance public understanding of the issue.

**Quebec**

According to stakeholders in Quebec, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labour is occurring in the province. Stakeholders reported foreign nationals (i.e., women) being subject to domestic servitude and forced labour after coming into the country legally under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, and expressed concerns about the rise in the number of
massage parlours in certain cities, which often serve as fronts for prostitution and human trafficking.

There is a relatively strong grassroots movement in place in the province, in which partnerships are being formed and the coordination of services being established. To illustrate this, a coalition of organizations working with trafficking victims in Montreal was created in 2011 and then expanded throughout the province to become the Coalition Québécoise contre la traite des personnes. At the same time, stakeholders felt that there must be more direct support for and involvement in anti-human trafficking efforts on the part of the provincial government. This includes the development of a provincial government supported anti-human trafficking strategy that is both culturally and linguistically appropriate, includes a gender specific lens and which takes into consideration the particular needs of youth under 18 years, including their protection.

Some stakeholders in Quebec also spoke of barriers in accessing available funding to support anti-human trafficking work, in part due to a lack of familiarity with the different funding programs and their specific requirements and application processes.

**Ontario**

In Ontario, stakeholders reported seeing an increase in instances of human trafficking for forced labour, with some of these cases involving Roma. They also highlighted the role of organized crime (and the links with drugs and gangs) in human trafficking in the region, as well as the trafficking of young girls (aged 14-21 years) by street gangs. A pipeline linking cities in the United States, with Windsor and cities along the 401 highway (Toronto, Barrie and Montreal) was also identified by Ontario stakeholders as being used to move women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

Stakeholders’ main concerns in the province revolved around specialized supports for victims of human trafficking, and the lack thereof, particularly as it pertains to the long-term continuum of care necessary for recovery. This includes second stage housing and shelters, trauma counseling, skills development and employment (re)training to support successful (re)integration into society. Without appropriate supports and efforts to address the factors that made a victim vulnerable to trafficking in the first place, stakeholders highlighted the probability of re-victimization occurring.

**Prairies (Manitoba and Saskatchewan)**

Stakeholders at the Prairie roundtable reported seeing both human trafficking for sexual exploitation and forced labour occurring in the region. With respect to the latter, an influx of temporary foreign workers has raised concerns about issues within the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (e.g., being tied to one employer, improper monitoring of employers) creating the opportunity for exploitation and human trafficking to occur. Concerns were also raised about human trafficking occurring in rural communities (which may be more hidden in nature than that occurring in cities), as well as the recruitment of girls from rural areas to urban centres for the purpose of sexual exploitation.
The vulnerability of Aboriginal women and girls falling victim to this crime, in Manitoba in particular, and the issue of familial trafficking, were also raised. Stakeholders also indicated that there needs to be more attention paid to the trafficking and sexual exploitation of boys/young men, which is also occurring, but not receiving the same degree of attention by anti-trafficking stakeholders.

On the demand side, particularly as it pertains to the demand for sexual services, stakeholders highlighted the need for funding resources and prevention and intervention initiatives that focus on men (as offenders/perpetrators/purchasers), including resources for healing, rehabilitation, and education on health relationships to reduce recidivism/re-offending.

Manitoba’s provincial collaboration with service providers was identified as being leading-edge in Canadian responses to human trafficking, and offers promising practices and models for other regions. Manitoba is the first province to introduce human trafficking specific legislation (Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act), which became law in April 2012. As a result, stakeholders in Manitoba promoted the development of human trafficking legislation and strategies by all provinces and territories in Canada. This is also the only province with legislation that allows child care workers to file a complaint on behalf of a child victim and the only province with integrated teams including police and child welfare workers, designed to protect and rescue children from sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

**Western Canada (Alberta and British Columbia)**

Stakeholders in Western Canada echoed many of the concerns highlighted by the other regions but also indicated that with the continued economic growth in the region, there may be potential for cases of human trafficking to occur (due to an increase in employment opportunities and the influx of new people to the region). Stakeholders concerns in this region were focused on human trafficking involving international victims as well as the trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls.

Stakeholders also spoke of the lack of quantifiable data available to support decisions being made regarding how the issue is being addressed and noted the importance of this type of information and data in influencing public opinion. They felt that the more the public is aware and as calls for action increase, the more resources and efforts will be directed to the crime.

It is noteworthy that British Columbia (BC) continues to be the only province with a dedicated provincial office to coordinate efforts to combat this crime (via the BC Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which is located within the Ministry of Justice), while Alberta is the only province with a provincial anti-trafficking network, coordinated by a non-governmental organization (ACT Alberta) to do the same.

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Northern Canada

With the exception of some broad stakeholder statements regarding the presence of resource extraction industries in the North creating opportunities for exploitation and human trafficking, as well as the potential trafficking of Inuit girls from remote northern communities to cities in southern Canada, it is not possible to provide a full picture of the crime in this region given its vast geographic scope. However, it is possible to provide a snapshot of the issue as it occurs in one remote community located in Nunavut. Because awareness of this issue is in its infancy in the North and because of the remote nature of many of this region’s communities, the roundtable discussion focused on vulnerabilities and risk factors that may create opportunities for this crime to occur.

Challenges faced by the community, which may create conditions of vulnerability and risk, include the relative isolation of the community itself making it difficult to escape exploitative situations and/or to access resources and services. Generally, individuals are required to leave the community (and any of the social and family supports in place) in order to access available services elsewhere, which may not be culturally appropriate. The presence of safe houses or shelters for victims is made moot by the fact that, as a small community, it is difficult to keep their location secret. Overcrowding as a result of inadequate housing for their growing population also creates vulnerability as individuals look for places to stay (e.g., situations of ‘couch surfing’/need for shelter). While employment opportunities are available, individuals in the community do not necessarily have the skills or education required to fill these positions and, as such, there is a reliance on social welfare benefits. Finally, access to drugs (e.g., marihuana and cocaine) and alcohol can create dependencies, which in turn open up possible opportunities for exploitation (e.g., women forced to prostitute themselves for drugs, shelter, and money).

Certainly, many of the risk factors and vulnerabilities highlighted above are not limited to this particular community or region of the country; however, these factors, in combination with its relative isolation and the challenge with accessing basic needs (e.g., housing, health and social services) may be unique to remote communities.

International

The majority of the stakeholders participating in the consultation process focused on domestic human trafficking, although some represented organizations that also worked globally. These organizations highlighted the unique needs of boys and men who are trafficked, often for labour exploitation, recognizing that many global anti-trafficking efforts and initiatives target women and girls, who represent the majority of victims worldwide. In addition, the role of supply chains in the trafficking continuum and the potential link back to Canadian businesses was also raised as an area requiring more focus. Stakeholders highlighted the need to ensure that Canadian businesses overseas do not use exploitative labour practices, particularly those related to child labour (such as, for example, the mining sector). Finally, there is the continued need to address the social health determinants that create conditions of vulnerability to trafficking as a means of preventing the crime from occurring.
Moving Forward

Moving forward, the Government will use the findings from the recent stakeholder consultations to inform the development of future anti-human trafficking priorities that fall under federal jurisdiction, including those identified under the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking*. The annual report on progress identifies a number of future federal areas of focus.

Canada is committed to addressing human trafficking as we know it now and as it evolves. In order to do so, and in recognition of the important work that is being done by organizations and individuals across the country, the government, through the Human Trafficking Taskforce, will continue to engage with stakeholders and experts working on the ground via a variety of means to identify new and emerging trends, challenges, barriers an gaps, and priority areas of focus.
Annex A – Consultation Questions

1. What are the human trafficking trends and/or issues of concern in your community (i.e., region, province/territory, city)?

2. What anti-human trafficking efforts or initiatives are underway in your community (or area of expertise)?
   a. What is working well and could any be considered a ‘promising practice’?
   b. Please include if you have undertaken any evaluations.

3. What organizations (i.e., private industry, non-governmental, governmental) are you currently collaborating with and what is the nature of the collaboration? Are there any that you consider key players? Please be specific.

4. What challenges, barriers or gaps exist in addressing this crime in your community (or within your area of expertise)?

5. What are three priority areas/issues that require better attention to address this crime in your community (or within your area of expertise/focus) (e.g., human trafficking for forced labour, awareness raising, victim support)?

6. Are there any research gaps on human trafficking that you have identified? Alternately, have you identified any key research on the issue? Please specify.

7. Do you have any additional comments?