

Preparatory steps



Many activities to prevent child trafficking are financed by a donor who is willing to support activities with specific objectives over a limited period of time, in effect a project. Even when this is not the case, the discipline imposed by project planning can be helpful. This means:

- Working out what you (and others) want to be different in the future (i.e. what is to be achieved);
- Working out what changes are necessary to make this difference and how they can be brought about; and
- Finding out subsequently whether the objectives have been met, rather than investing time and money in what sounds like a good idea, but turns out to be misdirected or ineffective.

In effect this means starting at the end (with what you want to have achieved as a result of your efforts) and working backwards!

In order to develop these project objectives and activities, several preparatory steps need to be taken. It is important to:

- Analyse 'the problem' which you want to solve and explore the causes of this problem.
- Understand the range of resources that can be drawn upon to prevent trafficking.
- Explore the risk factors that may affect the success of your project.
- Determine the principles which underpin initiatives to prevent child trafficking.

This part of the report provides guidance on each of these steps in turn.

II.1. Analysing the problem

Organisations have various terms for the process for identifying a 'problem' which they want to solve and for analysing the various causes of the problem, all of which may need tackling if the problem is to be solved. Some call it a 'situation analysis'. Others talk about a 'problem tree' and use various conceptual analyses to identify the relationships between the social, economic and cultural practices which have a causal effect. The Terre des hommes Foundation Project Cycle Handbook does not use any of these terms, but requires an initial analysis of the abuse to which children are subjected as one of the "prerequisites" in a project cycle (Zehnder et al, 2001, Sheet III).

In relation to child trafficking, this problem analysis involves getting hold of accurate information about which children have been affected and the reasons they have been trafficked and analysing it. Understanding the reasons is tantamount to understanding the causes of trafficking cases. In order to prevent trafficking from taking place, it is necessary to address the causes: any other sort of preventive action will simply skirt the surface.

What needs to be found out before project planning can begin

Differentiating between trafficked children and other child migrants

It is often difficult to differentiate between children who have been trafficked and other unaccompanied or separated children, particularly those who have ended up working

or being exploited in much the same way as children who have been trafficked. Any intervention aimed at preventing trafficking must have a clear understanding of the different types of exploitation children suffer in order to respond appropriately.

For example, children from part of northwest Romania emigrate abroad in significant numbers before finishing their compulsory education. In the early part of this decade they were routinely found earning a living by stealing in the Paris region of France. This led child rights defenders to assume they were being trafficked. In reality, the vast majority of the children were not trafficked and did not hand over their earnings to any sort of controller. The nature of the preventive action required in Romania to dissuade young adolescents from emigrating abroad into a life of petty crime is different to the action which would have been appropriate if the children had been trafficked.

It is also important to differentiate between children who have been trafficked into situations of exploitation and others who have been recruited and assisted in finding jobs which they want to stay in, even if other people consider them to be too young to be working full-time (under the terms of international labour standards). At the moment, different organisations draw the line (between acceptable work and unacceptable situations of exploitation) in different places. Consequently, some projects which are ostensibly about stopping child trafficking are in fact intended to stop the flow of children going to work in relatively safe (and, from the child's point of view, acceptable) circumstances. Box 1 provides an example of this below.

So it is sensible to assess the degree of exploitation and abuse to which a child working away from home is being subjected before assuming that it involves trafficking and should be prevented. For example, adolescent girls from a former cocoa-growing rural area in Togo now emigrate to work as live-in domestic servants in Accra, the capital of neighbouring Ghana. There are certainly risks for adolescent girls who work in private homes, but in this case most are reported to be safe in the households where they work. The employment agents who arrange their journeys and employment are reported to keep an eye on them and there are well established channels enabling the children to keep in contact with their families at home.

However, some are subsequently recruited in Accra by different agents and dispatched once again, this time to Lagos in Nigeria, where they are out of contact with home and with anyone who knows them. They are consequently at much greater risk of being abused. In theory the working situations in which the children find themselves are much the same. However, in practice the vulnerability of the children is quite different. It appears to be a much greater priority (to anyone concerned about protecting the children from harm) to prevent children travelling on to work in Lagos than to stop them working in Accra. Of course, this distinction can only be made after an analysis of the circumstances and respective vulnerabilities of the two groups of children. This is only feasible once accurate information about what is happening to children who migrate is available.

Some counter-trafficking specialists distinguish between 'hard' trafficking, involving abductions or fraudulent deception, and 'soft' trafficking, in which a child leaves home deliberately as a result of a decision made by the child or the child's parents (Dottridge, 2004, 16). When it comes to preventing child trafficking, it is useful to know whether children came under the control of a trafficker at the moment they left home or if they left home voluntarily and only came under the control of a trafficker later on. The distinction is important in order to decide how to address the different situations. Furthermore, if only some of the children who deliberately leave home (or who leave their country) end up being trafficked, it is possible to learn from those who avoid being trafficked about how and why they manage this (i.e. looking at their 'positive deviance' and learning from it).

Placing trafficking in context

Not only is it important to clearly distinguish between trafficking and other forms of exploitation or safe work for children, it is also necessary to place trafficking in context. It is important for practitioners and donors to ensure that the amounts of effort and money spent on anti-trafficking projects are not out of all proportion with the abuse being caused. It may be that related forms of abuse, such as domestic violence, rape, child marriage and the exploitation of children who have not been trafficked are all more serious problems for a particular community.

Box 1 – When interceptions are a form of abuse

There are various opportunities to intercept children while they are being trafficked from their usual place of residence to another location. The most common one is when they cross an international border; as immigration officials/border police can check their identity documents and query why they are leaving or entering a country (asking questions either of the child or anyone accompanying her/him).

The authorities in many countries now insist that children leaving their own country who are below a minimum age (such as 15 or even 18) should carry a letter signed by one or both parents giving their formal permission for the child to leave the country. This is more likely to prevent children being taken abroad by one of their own parents, following separation or divorce, than to stop traffickers taking them across a frontier; due to the various ruses which traffickers use.

Border formalities give immigration officials various opportunities for protection, for example to record which children are entering a country in circumstances which, even vaguely, suggest they may be exploited subsequently and to arrange for them to receive a subsequent visit from a social worker to check on their welfare.

However, interceptions can easily become abusive if children who are not being trafficked are refused permission to proceed with their journey.

For example, in Nepal non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been allowed by the authorities to set up check-points on roads crossing the border to India. They employ specialists known as 'physionomists' who are reputed (in Nepal) to be able to identify adolescent girls who are being trafficked. In effect the NGOs concerned have given themselves police powers to stop adolescent girls from crossing to India, transferring the girls instead to their own NGO transit centres, where some are kept, often against their will. The 'physionomists' appear to use criteria based on caste and social class to identify adolescent girls who belong to social groups where a disproportionately high number of girls have been trafficked in the past. Many of the 'physionomists' reportedly come from such groups and act in good faith under orders from the NGOs employing them.

The girls who are detained in transit and 'rehabilitation' centres view the NGO as a powerful institution which is in league with the authorities and whose power they cannot contest. In the worst cases, intercepted girls who have attended residential training courses given by NGOs have been stigmatised on their return home, because the NGO is known to be involved in anti-prostitution activities and the girl is consequently suspected (unjustifiably) of having been involved in prostitution (Hausner, 2005). Such interceptions are reported to have diminished as the number of children fleeing from political violence has increased.

Interception on the basis of little specific evidence that the child concerned is in danger of harm can be justified if the child concerned has not yet reached puberty and is palpably too young to be travelling alone. However, the same does not apply to adolescent boys or girls. In the case of adolescents, it might be justified if there is substantial evidence that the vast majority of adolescents crossing a border are being trafficked—such a large proportion that it is reasonable to make the presumption that most adolescents crossing the border are destined for exploitation. However, in the case of Nepal, NGOs made this assumption without obtaining adequate evidence. It was not until 2005 that an international NGO commissioned research into the reasons why young people crossed the border and concluded that there were numerous good reasons (Hausner, 2005). Furthermore, interceptions are acceptable when carried out by law enforcement officials such as the police or immigration officials. The involvement of NGOs in stopping adolescents or young adults from exercising their freedom of movement is an abuse of power, as well as of human rights.

Understanding the process of trafficking

Trafficking is not a single event. As illustrated in Diagram 3, it consists of a series of distinct phases.

In reality, the child's experience is unlikely to be sequential like this. Some children escape (or negotiate their own withdrawal) only to be drawn back into an exploitative situation again. However, Diagram 3 serves to illustrate the basic point, that trafficking consists of a chain of events. There are different phases and each phase involves a different set of actors and different opportunities to influence them.

So, efforts to prevent trafficking and the exploitation associated with it can be made at different points along the trafficking chain. For example, action may be taken to persuade parents not to send their young children to earn money in the pre-trafficking phase. Very different action will need to be taken to influence people who pay for the sexual services of adolescents to reduce children's exploitation once they have been transported.

From the moment that a child enters the first phase of being trafficked—being recruited by someone who has the intention of exploiting her/him or handing the child over to someone else to exploit her/him—it also becomes appropriate to take action to protect the child and provide any assistance which she or he needs. From this moment onwards, the actions necessary to *protect* a trafficked child complement the actions to *prevent* that phase of trafficking from occurring and vice versa. This is illustrated in Diagram 4, which shows how complementary interventions, to prevent trafficking and to protect children who are being trafficked or subjected to other abuse, can be organised at different phases and that the nature of the intervention which is appropriate varies according to the phase in the trafficking cycle.

The characteristics of children who are being trafficked disproportionately

It is important to build up a 'profile' of the victims of trafficking; identifying their salient characteristics in order to investigate why they have been trafficked rather than any other children. The aim is to find out if children with particular characteristics are being trafficked in greater numbers than others. If they are, it may be possible to conclude that children with a certain profile are at disproportionately greater risk of being trafficked than others—and to focus preventive efforts on them. To find out this, it is necessary to identify the salient characteristics of children who have *not* been trafficked and to compare these with those who have. These comparisons should ideally be made between trafficked children and a similar social and economic background who have left home in similar circumstances, but avoided being trafficked. It is not much use knowing that all trafficked children come from poor or single parent families if there are equal numbers of poor children from single parent families who are not being trafficked. Learning from the experiences of children who have not experienced the particular abuse you are concerned about is referred to as 'positive deviance'.

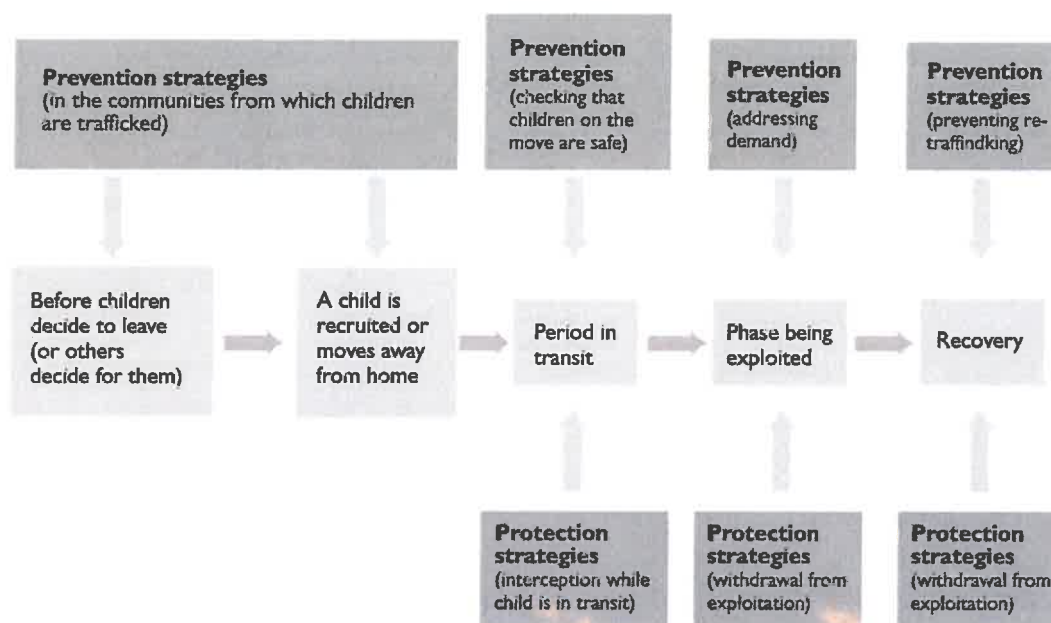
It is not always possible to identify the salient characteristics of trafficked children, particularly when large numbers of children are being trafficked or ending up in situations of exploitation. However, it is always worth trying to find out. The relevant characteristics to look out for vary from region to region. Diagram 5 suggests some to look out for.

The raw data available about children who have already been trafficked is unlikely to reveal any of these characteristics initially, particularly if several different patterns of trafficking coincide in the same area and the available data concerns both. For example, in Albania boys and girls aged 8 to 11 have been trafficked to

Diagram 3: Five phases of child trafficking



Diagram 4: The complementary roles of prevention and protection



beg, while older adolescent girls have been trafficked, generally to different destinations, for commercial sexual exploitation. The combined data about both patterns does not reveal what is happening. However, by disaggregating the data by age and sex, the distinct patterns become apparent.

Furthermore, the diversity of the characteristics which might be relevant makes it hard to identify common patterns. If you are only able to draw very general conclusions ("most trafficked children come from poor households living in rural areas"), you still do not know where to target your preventive efforts. More detailed inquiries based on research about specific characteristics of children who have been trafficked may consequently be necessary. This in turn means developing a better understanding of the causes behind trafficking, so that you know what characteristics to look for.

Further reading

(mentioning various research techniques, including positive deviance)

A M J Van Gaalen. *Review of initiatives to combat child trafficking by members of the Save the Children Alliance*. 2003. http://www.redbarnet.dk/Files/Filer/Rapporter/ChildTrafficking_AllianceWorkingPaperpdf

The underlying and structural causes of child trafficking

In order to prevent trafficking it is necessary to understand why it occurs. Child trafficking, along with other forms of child exploitation such as child labour and the recruitment of children as soldiers, has causes at different levels. The International Labour Organization (ILO) identifies causes at three levels:

Immediate causes are the most visible and obvious: they act directly at the level of the child and the family. Household-income poverty (income not meeting cash needs for subsistence) and cash-flow crises caused by shocks to the household economy are key. For example, with a sick mother, an absent father and no food, the eldest child in the family may well pick up a bucket and cloth and go to wash windscreens.

Underlying causes refer to values and situations that may predispose a family or community to accept or even encourage child labour for boys and/or girls. Perceptions of poverty come into play at this level; for example, "consumerism" may drive children and parents alike to seek to earn more money to buy the consumer goods that are becoming increasingly available.

Structural or root causes act at the level of the larger economy and society, influencing the enabling environment in which child labour can

Diagram 8: Four sets of characteristics which may reveal salient characteristics about trafficked children

<p>1. Identity and place of origin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place of origin from which child migrated or was trafficked (country, region, specific administrative area) • Nature of place from which trafficked: hamlet, village, small town, large town, capital • Nationality or ethnic origin • Age • Sex • Any other characteristic linked to the child's identity?
<p>2. Education and what the child was doing at the time she/he was trafficked</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At school, unemployed, working (if so, at what – e.g. an occupation which traffickers deliberately target, such as waitresses or sex workers) • Level of school completed • Did the child drop out before completing her/his compulsory schooling? • Any special characteristic of schooling (e.g. attended boarding school or lived in an orphanage)
<p>3. Characteristics of the household from which a child was trafficked</p> <p>Nature of family with whom trafficked child lived before being trafficked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • living with both birth parents • single parent family (unmarried mother, parents divorced/separated, widowed) • 'reconstituted' family (one or more step parent) • polygamous family • living with relatives or elsewhere, either because orphan (both parents dead) or one/both parents emigrated <p>Other characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income level of household (i.e. poor, very poor, middling, one or both parents unemployed, family known to have received income support, etc.) • Level of school education achieved by father and mother • Numbers of siblings and where trafficked child is situated (eldest, youngest, middle) with respect to all siblings, to those of the same sex and to those with the same mother • Occupations of parents and siblings • Any report of domestic abuse (whether mentioned as a direct cause of leaving home or not)
<p>4. Circumstances in which a child left home or was trafficked</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Soft' or 'hard' trafficking, i.e. was child abducted, were parents genuinely deceived, etc. • Did the parents receive a loan or advance on the child's subsequent wages (which has the effect of 'bonding' the child to a particular employer later on)? Does their need to take this loan reveal any characteristic about the household? • Did the child leave home of her/his own accord or was the child passed into the hands of a trafficker directly from home?

either flourish or be controlled. Aggregate national poverty (low Gross Domestic Product) operates at this level.¹

Particular categories in which it is useful to group the causes at each of the three levels are:

- Income-related (e.g. lack of income, lack of land, family indebtedness);
- Crises or 'shocks';
- Demand-related (i.e. demand for cheap labour or a specific demand child labour), including cultural practices, such as the extent to which paying for commercial sex is regarded as normal by men and boys in a society;
- Identity-related (i.e. linked to a child's racial, ethnic or social origins), including racial or ethnic discrimination and denial of citizenship to entire groups of people;
- Gender discrimination and other issues relate to gender, including cultural practices (such as discrimination against girls owning or inheriting land or other property) and marriage practices (such as dowry and bridewealth²);
- Education-related (e.g. certain children dropping out of school or not making the move from a local primary to a more distant secondary school);
- Levels of respect for the rule of law (concerning e.g. levels of corruption and coordination between different branches of government or law enforcement agencies, or the lack of it).

When listing the causes, it is useful to distinguish those which are relevant predominantly in the areas where children are recruited and which are relevant in places of destination.

Trafficking has many different causes, so understanding how these interact with each other is useful, but difficult. For example, a cluster of causes are linked to school education, so providing better schooling, or better schooling for girls, or more relevant classes at school are often seen as appropriate strategies in response. This is illustrated in Diagram 6. The analysis in this diagram suggests that it is often *cultural attitudes* in the wider community that need addressing, rather than simply a lack of knowledge or skills which can be remedied by teaching children an additional subject at school.

The causes at the structural level are likely to provoke more problems than trafficking alone.

They are frequently being addressed by other initiatives, such as efforts to reduce violence against women and girls (including domestic violence) and curriculum reform. It may be appropriate to reinforce these efforts rather than launching a specific project to prevent trafficking. More often than not, initiatives addressing structural problems are not tackling some of the more specific causes of trafficking, so there is still something specific to do. However, it is usually sensible to coordinate with others and to ensure that any new project complements existing efforts, rather than duplicating or contradicting them.

A further complication is that some causal factors turn out not to be specific causes of trafficking, but causes of something else, and trafficking is a bi-product of certain other conditions. In many parts of the world, adolescents decide to leave home for a wide range of reasons: poor relationships with their parents, a sense of adventure and ambition, etc. Some of these adolescents turn out well while others are trafficked. Understanding why boys and girls chose to leave the environment they are familiar with (home or somewhere else) is important in such circumstances, as well as understanding the alternatives available to them when they do so (and boys often have more options than girls). This is essentially the same analysis that is necessary to understand why children leave home to live and work on the streets.

Understanding the demand for the services or products of trafficked children

Many recent international agreements urge that the 'demand' for the services of trafficking victims should be tackled more systematically by governments. However, few spell out what they mean by 'demand'. Frequently it is assumed to refer primarily, or solely, to men and boys who pay for commercial sex and whose money ends up in the hands of traffickers and pimps. However, the main 'demand' for women and children who are trafficked comes from those who make a profit out of them, either in the course of recruiting them and passing them onto someone else or once trafficked children are earning money for them and being paid little or none of the proceeds. This demand is driven by the desire of pimps and exploitative employers to make money easily and also by their ability to do so (on account of the authorities' failure to enforce basic labour standards or the public's

Diagram 6: Possible causes of child trafficking perceived to be linked to education

Immediate causes	Underlying causes	Structural or root causes
Poor levels of education of parents, who do not consider attending school to be useful and do not encourage their children to remain in school (or urge them to start work)	Cultural attitude in a particular community that school education is not useful	Insufficient financial or political commitment for education and failure to make the school curriculum seem relevant
Children drop out of school before completing their primary (compulsory) education	Tolerance of child labour by parents and wider community	Failure to enforce laws on compulsory education and minimum age for admission into full-time employment
Girls attend primary school but most do not transfer to lower secondary school to finish the final years of their compulsory education (while boys do)	Tolerance of girls dropping out of school. Failure to guarantee the security of girls travelling some distance to school (or to provide transport for them)	Cultural attitudes towards girls and women: that they do not need school education; that girls move away at marriage and are not worth much investment; that it is legitimate for husbands and fathers to subject them to violence
Ignorance by children and parents of risks when they leave their own community and of how to cope with such risks	Lack of information about how to migrate safely and about the situation in potential destinations	Government policies which discourage migration and dissemination of inaccurate information about migration (e.g. either exaggerating or underplaying the risks)
Children's lack of knowledge about career opportunities, how to apply for jobs and what precautions to take when they travel away from home	Education system which emphasises academic knowledge and not life skills; teachers' own ignorance of the 'outside world'	Government's failure to modernise the education system.

ignorance of what standards are appropriate with respect to children).

A study of 'demand' for trafficked adults and children working in two unregulated sectors concluded that:

"...three related factors are key to explaining the exploitative conditions experienced by many migrant domestic and sex workers: (a) The unregulated nature of the labour market segments in which they work; (b) the abundant supply of exploitable labour and (c) the power and malleability of social norms regulating the behaviour of employers and clients. The continued expansion of any unregulated market is likely to require and facilitate the exploitation of vulnerable labour." (Anderson and O'Connell Davidson, 2003, 5).

Some members of the public represent a 'demand' factor by contributing money to traffickers without consciously preferring to pay for the services of a child rather than an adult, yet alone someone who has been trafficked. Members of the public who contribute money to child beggars can be said to act out of the best motives, while traffickers know that child beggars will inspire more pity (and earn more money for them) than adult beggars, as well as being easier to control. In some countries this means there is a specific demand (by traffickers and the 'beggar masters' who control begging children) for children with disabilities. People who donate money represent a causal factor and can potentially be influenced to prevent children being trafficked to beg.

Demand for commercial sex has particular characteristics. Men and boys who pay for sex generally place a high premium on youthful looks: in some places this results in a specific demand for girls under 16 or paedophiles deliberately seek out children who have not even reached puberty. While some men and boys who are willing to pay for sex with an under-18-year-old do not specifically seek out adolescent children rather than young adults, traffickers and pimps are evidently able to intimidate adolescents into obedience more easily than adults, despite the risk in many countries of more severe punishment if they are caught.

Further reading

ILO-IPEC. Regional Project on Combating Child Trafficking for Labour and Sexual Exploitation (TICSA-Instant Images). *Demand Side of Human Trafficking in Asia: Empirical Findings*. ILO, 2006.

Causes due to institutional failures

Trafficking is facilitated by a series of institutional failures. While these may not look like direct causes, if your analysis suggests that such failures are contributing to trafficking occurring, it means that, by remedying the failures, you would bring about improvements that would, in turn, reduce the number of children being trafficked. So, these improvements have a preventive effect. Examples of these are set out in Diagram 7.

Determining which causes are of most significance

It is easy to get lost in a mass of data about different causes of child trafficking and to emerge confused, without seeing clearly which causes should be addressed as a priority or which ones should be addressed by your organisation. One helpful technique is to avoid using the term 'trafficking' altogether. Instead, be specific: itemise the different activities linked to trafficking that are occurring in the area over which you might have some influence.

This method enables you to distinguish between cases in which the circumstances of a child's departure are abusive (e.g. abduction or sale) and those in which children set out on a journey of their own choice but subsequently come under the control of traffickers. In the latter case, the main 'problem' may be that young people are leaving home ill-equipped to make their own way in the world. In the destinations to which children are trafficked, it is the specific forms of exploitation to which children are subjected that constitute 'problems' to be prevented: either commercial sexual exploitation or various forms of forced labour.

Once you have identified a specific issue to tackle, you will find it easier to work out what intervention might make a positive difference—or at least you will have a better chance than if you seek to prevent 'trafficking' as a general occurrence from happening. In many ways, the term 'trafficking' simply blurs matters and makes it more difficult to work out what specific problem needs addressing.

Possible sources of information

Accurate information about current and recent patterns of human trafficking into or out of a country or specific area is vital before any meaningful preventive action can be planned. As

Diagram 7: Examples of institutional failures which facilitate trafficking

Examples of failures	Institution involved	Cause (to be remedied)
<p>Inability to identify children who are vulnerable to being trafficked.</p> <p>Inability to use child protection measures (particularly to prevent vulnerable children from being trafficked).</p> <p>Failure by social services to analyse information about children who have been trafficked (both within the country and abroad) or subjected to related forms of abuse.</p>	State social services and child protection agencies.	<p>Lack of government commitment to establishing effective agencies.</p> <p>Lack of resources.</p> <p>Lack of knowledge of appropriate techniques and lack of training.</p>
Inadequate laws (on trafficking, forced labour, labour protection, prostitution in general or child prostitution in particular).	Government, national legislature (parliament).	<p>Inappropriate laws, e.g. laws which punish children making money from prostitution because providing commercial sex is treated as a crime.</p> <p>Lack of political will to enforce laws linked to prostitution.</p>
Inadequate enforcement of the law, sometimes arising from a lack of understanding of the law (or of recently revised definitions of trafficking in persons).	Law enforcement officials, including police, immigration service and labour inspectors.	<p>Lack of political will.</p> <p>Lack of training.</p> <p>Lack of resources (including inadequate salaries).</p> <p>Corruption.</p>
Inadequate coordination between separate agencies within one country.	Agencies involved in child protection and anti-trafficking activities in the same country.	<p>Absence of mechanisms for coordinating overlapping efforts by different ministries or agencies and failure of government to insist on coordination or to introduce a coordination mechanism (e.g. national referral mechanism, now common in Eastern Europe).</p> <p>Tradition of institutional independence (not working together).</p>
Inadequate coordination between agencies based in different countries which are concerned with different ends of the same trafficking chain.	Agencies involved in anti-trafficking activities and child protection, consular officials and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.	<p>No adequate mechanisms set up by inter-governmental organisations.</p> <p>Government officials in the countries where children are exploited think the responsibility for prevention lies entirely with the children's countries of origin.</p> <p>Bilateral agreements (between states) slow to be negotiated.</p>

a first step, it is important to review what information has already been collected by academics, governments, UN agencies or NGOs, and to assess the quality of this material. Such data may include records kept by NGOs or UN agencies of trafficked children who they have dealt with, and research studies conducted by academics. Although in some cases this secondary data is of high quality, all too often it is based on meaningless definitions or is inaccurate. Gathering information on hidden and illegal activities such as trafficking is challenging. Before you use any evidence from other agencies, it is essential that you are confident that these organisations or individuals have been able to meet this challenge. Questions to ask about any secondary data include:

- Does it look at general trends or provide information on the specific type of trafficking we are planning to focus on?
- What definition of trafficking is being used? Does this match with our understanding of the issue?
- How many people were included in the research or record keeping (for example, it is hard to draw general conclusions from interviews with only 10 children)?
- Did relevant people, closest to the problem participate in the research? (e.g. were children consulted? What about their parents?)
- Did the organisation who gathered the information have the skills needed to do so? What is their reputation in this field?
- Does the organisation have any hidden motives for exaggerating or denying the scale of the problem, or putting a particular slant on it? (e.g. some governments may exaggerate the problem to gain funding, others may deny it as it threatens their reputation)?
- Is the information qualitative, looking in-depth at the reasons behind trafficking, or does it just focus on numbers?
- Are there any ethical considerations related to our use of this data? (e.g. protecting the anonymity of the children involved)?
- Is all the information we need available or are there gaps in our understanding? For example, does the information explore the reasons why children are trafficked? Does it look at the characteristics of trafficked children? Does it **examine** the types of existing interventions available and the lessons learnt from these

efforts? Does it explore all stages in the **process** of trafficking, and look at both sending the receiving communities?

If you find that existing information is lacking, it is important to gather your own data to supplement it. There are many different techniques for doing this, including questionnaires, in-depth interviews and group discussions, and the methods that you choose will depend on the information required. Generally, it is important to look in detail at the reasons why children are trafficked, and it is not possible to do this through the use of questionnaires alone. Children respond well to group discussions which make use of diagrams, pictures and games. In-depth interviews exploring individual life-histories can also be extremely helpful. Whichever techniques are used, it is essential that children and their families are consulted, and that efforts are made to ensure that no harm comes to them as a result of taking part in the research. For example, it is important that children do not get into trouble with employers for taking time off to speak to you. An excellent source of information about these ethical concerns, and the different tools that can be used in research on trafficking can be found in the Regional Working Group on Child Labour in Asia Handbook on research on the worst forms of child labour. It is recommended that anyone planning research on trafficking consults this handbook first.

Further reading

Regional Working Group on Child Labour in Asia (RWG-CL). Handbook for action-oriented research on the worst forms of child labour, including trafficking in children. Compiled by Joachim Theis. Bangkok, 2003. <http://www.developmentstudies.org/PolicyAdvocacy/pahome2.5.nsf/crresourceTrain70770A3D23432DB88256E460083621B?OpenDocument>

Whilst it is important to speak to children who have been trafficked, in some situations information from children who have had some similar experiences but who have not been trafficked may be valuable in designing initiatives to prevent trafficking. Through talking to such children, it may be possible to work out how vulnerable groups can avoid being trafficked. This is the 'positive deviance' approach mentioned above.

In addition to understanding the perspectives of the actual or potential victims of trafficking, it is

also important to gain information from others who have insights into the issues. These include:

- the child's parents or other family members,
- the trafficker or employment agent who recruits a child,
- the pimp, employer or other person who subsequently makes money out of the child,
- and the individuals who pay money to buy the child's services or products (generally referred to as 'clients' when they buy sexual services and 'consumers' when they buy manufactured products; there is no specific term to refer to would-be benefactors who donate money to child beggars),
- NGOs and UN or government agencies engaged in actions to prevent or respond to trafficking.

It is also appropriate to analyse information available about *adults* who have been trafficked as well as information about children. Firstly this is because a lot of data recorded about young people who have been trafficked does not indicate accurately whether they are under 18 or over; and, even when it does, details may be recorded about adults who were still children at the time their trafficking experience started. This is particularly the case when there is a pattern of trafficking in girls and young women for commercial sexual exploitation, in which traffickers recruit older girl children and young adult women indiscriminately. Secondly, it is useful to be able to situate any specific pattern of trafficking in children within wider patterns of trafficking and migration. Some of the causes of children and adults being trafficked may be the same. However, looking at all the cases may also reveal aspects of child trafficking which are quite different to those involving young adults.

Some of the most valuable information for preventive purposes has been obtained when organisations working at the opposite ends of a trafficking chain have begun working together—both comparing and exchanging information. Some of the same benefits have been obtained when researchers from the children's area of origin have been deployed in the areas where they are being exploited: Albanian social workers talking to Albanian children working in the street in Greece, for example.

Misdiagnosis

Once an issue like human trafficking becomes 'flavour of the month' with journalists, governments and donors, there is a strong possibility that similar practices and patterns of abuse will be diagnosed as 'trafficking' when they are not and, in effect, false solutions will be offered to real problems and money will be wasted.

For example, in numerous cases a pattern of migration has been branded as 'trafficking', and efforts deployed to stop young people moving altogether on the grounds that they are being trafficked, when they are not ending up in commercial sexual exploitation or forced labour (the main 'outcomes' associated with trafficking). An example of such misdiagnosis is included in Box 2 below.

II.2. Identifying the resources and opportunities available

A wide range of resources can potentially be mobilised in efforts to prevent trafficking. However, they are sometimes overlooked by project designers on account of their prejudices or lack of familiarity with the context in which they are operating.

Consequently a 'mapping exercise' (to identify other stakeholders) and 'stakeholder analysis' are necessary to understand what other organisations pursuing similar objectives are trying to achieve, whether their objectives are compatible or not with efforts to prevent child trafficking and how you can potentially ensure that activities with similar objectives are coordinated. Preparing a diagram along the lines of Diagram 8 can help identify these other actors.

Labour recruiters

There is usually an assumption that the criminals responsible for recruiting, transporting and employing trafficked children are a set of actors who are beyond the influence of anyone except the police. This is not the right starting point to try and help children. Indeed, stereotypes about who traffickers are and how they operate can

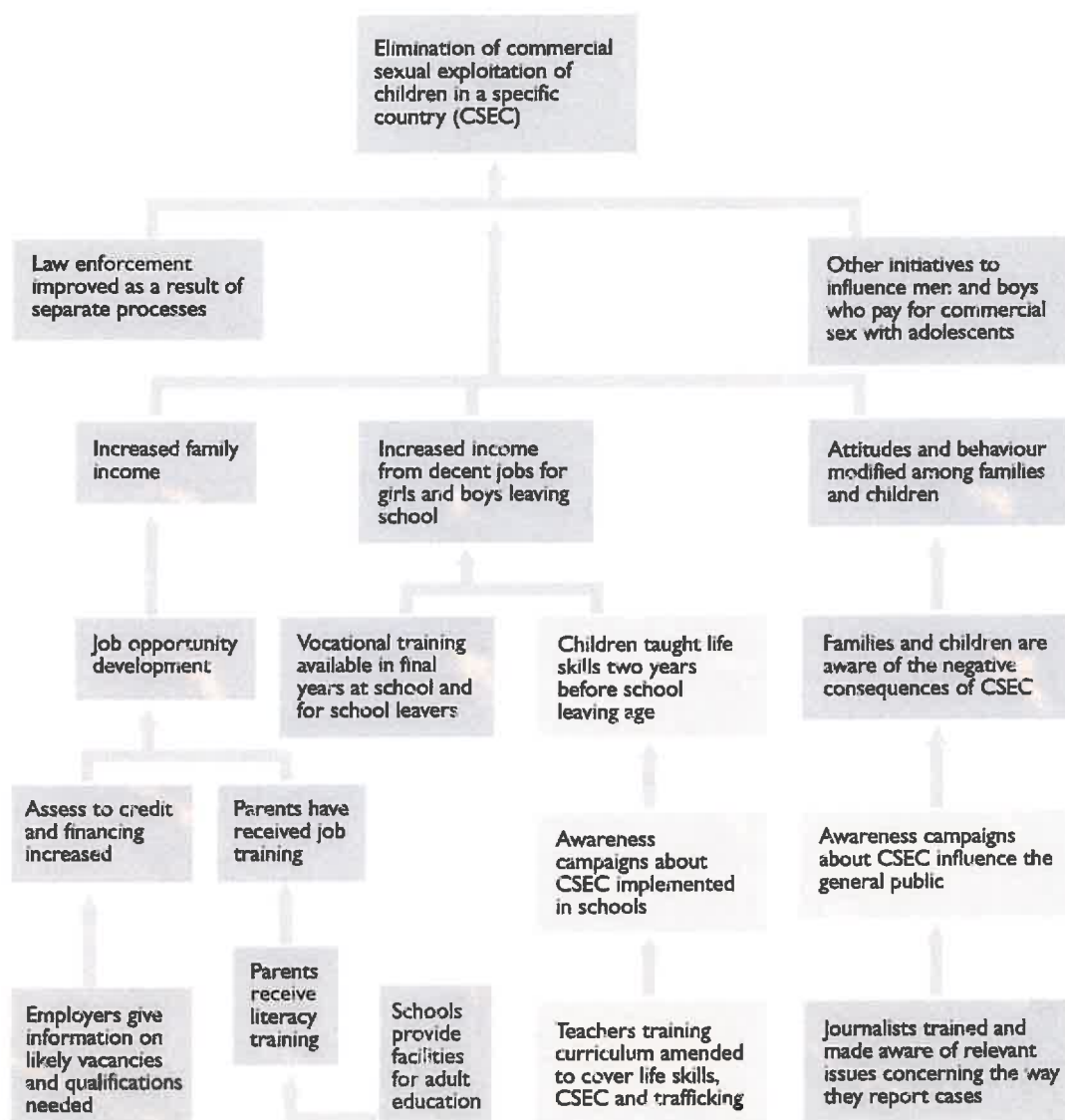
Box 2 – When a misdiagnosis results in children's rights being violated

The classic misdiagnosis (which has resulted in the wrong strategies being used, with dire results) was in West Africa. Publicity surrounding cases in which children migrated over long distances and ended up working in circumstances which were clearly abusive (notably as domestic servants in Gabon) precipitated a string of measures in West Africa to stop adolescents from seeking work in neighbouring countries and even to keep young people from migrating from extremely poor villages to seek work in towns in their own country. In effect this was the approach taken by various totalitarian governments in the past, denying peasants the right to migrate to towns.

The starting point for designing efforts to halt abuse was probably right: just because child labour is the norm in West Africa, there is no reason not to initiate action to stop the worst cases from occurring. However, both the problem tree and the remedies offered were designed in large part by outsiders in NGOs and IGOs based in Europe or North America, sometimes under pressure from Western businesses (such as cocoa importers and chocolate manufacturers). These paid scant regard to local realities and recommended strategies based on an international standard that adolescents aged under 18 should not be involved in any work deemed 'hazardous'. This was probably interpreted inappropriately (by international organisations) to refer to any agricultural work involving the use of a machete, a farming tool used on most farms throughout West Africa. These strategies were interpreted broadly in countries such as Burkina Faso to stop any adolescents under 18 from leaving their villages and travelling to seek work abroad or in towns. This has resulted in adolescents being intercepted on their way to town (whatever their reasons for travelling), detained in transit centres and sometimes ill-treated, albeit not intentionally, before being sent home. One consequence in Burkina Faso is that adolescent girls who used to travel in groups to protect each other now travel alone or in pairs and feel more vulnerable to abuse. When such children have been (forcibly) returned home, some parents have been arbitrarily forced to pay fines. Community watchdog groups, ostensibly set up to stop child trafficking, have become part of the problem, reinforcing the arbitrary use of power at local level, rather than being part of a solution (see Box 6 below).

None of this is surprising, as the initial diagnosis that all cases of children under 14 migrating to work and of older adolescents migrating to work in agriculture were cases of trafficking or were inherently abusive (and consequently should be stopped) simply did not make sense. This diagnosis might reasonably be the basis for a long-term plan, but was not viable as a guide to what action should be taken in the short-term. The strategies which resulted were as unsuitable and counter-productive (for children) as the efforts to transform African agriculture in the 1940s and 1950s by importing tractors and other inappropriate technology, efforts ridiculed by text books on economic development.

Diagram 8: Activities intended to contribute to eliminate the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), with the actions of one sepecific organisation highlighted



mislead project designers, as well as adolescents exposed to inaccurate stereotypes.⁴

Some individuals who are denounced as 'traffickers' see themselves as professional labour recruiters and, if approached as such, turn out to have scruples. They can sometimes be persuaded to change their behaviour and do more to protect children, rather than precipitating them into abuse. The work of traffickers is also facilitated by a range of intermediaries. Some are hardened criminals, but others can be influenced. Understanding their

motivation and the benefits which trafficking gives them is a good starting point.

Ignoring the positive role which some labour recruiters might play is part of a more general blinkeredness on the part of project designers who are foreigners or outsiders and who do not understand the specific roles that different individuals play in a community and who accept stereotypes too easily. In countries with a reputation for lawlessness or organised crime, outsiders easily assume that community leaders are in cahoots with traffickers or that all the

labour recruiters visiting rural communities are traffickers, when some are not. Taking a sideways look at who is involved and how they could potentially be playing a more positive role and contributing to stopping trafficking is consequently a key part of identifying the potential resources available.

Further reading

June Kane. *Child Trafficking – The People Involved. A synthesis of findings from Albania, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine*. ILO-IPEC, 2005. http://www.humantrafficking.org/uploads/publications/ippec_balkana_05.pdf

Children and their communities

There is also a tendency to see the children in communities where trafficked children originate as 'victims' or potential victims, rather than a major resource to prevent child abuse. Both children in general and children who are assessed as being at high risk of being trafficked can participate actively in preventive efforts. This is discussed in more detail below.

Beyond its children, the community as a whole is also a resource (or a specific minority group within a community, if their children are the main ones recruited by traffickers). Many communities have mechanisms for protecting their children, even if these are informal and not linked to those organised by their government. As these child protection systems (like those put in place by governments) allow some children to fall through the net, projects can potentially strengthen them, rather than introducing completely new tactics from outside.

When government agencies, IGOs or NGOs have stepped into a community where children from a minority are being trafficked and begun activities to prevent trafficking without consulting leading members of the minority, they have been criticised by the communities concerned. However, ensuring meaningful participation can be a challenge, especially if the community in question has different views on what problems need confronting as a matter of priority. In South East Europe, for example, Roma community leaders initially disputed the evidence that Roma children were being trafficked in disproportionately high numbers and that the traffickers themselves were predominantly Roma. Later on they criticised projects benefiting Roma children, which were staffed uniquely by non-Roma.⁵ One conclusion in such

circumstances is that it is difficult to pursue a specific objective concerning the welfare of children belonging to a minority group without getting involved in wider efforts to promote the rights of that minority and to challenge the discrimination against them across the board.

Other stakeholders, including institutions

Obvious stakeholders include organisations with a specific concern about children: schools/education service, government social services or child protection services, NGOs providing services to children or campaigning against child abuse, etc.

Schools and the education service (the ministry of education or other authority responsible for authorising the curriculum in schools) are potentially key partners when it comes to implementing strategies which involve giving school children knowledge or new skills. However, other stakeholders have a say in curriculum content, such as politicians and religious groups, and can easily be adversaries rather than allies. In one East European country, for example, a Church with influence at national level blocked the introduction of life skills education into the school curriculum in 2005 (which, among other things, was going to provide students with information about trafficking).

Stakeholders potentially include a wide range of government agencies and inter-governmental organisations (IGOs) concerned with law enforcement, child welfare and relations between the different countries involved in a single trafficking chain: police (notably those with a special responsibility for crimes committed by children or against children), immigration service/border guards, labour inspectors, truancy inspectors, consular officials and others.

In some countries and regions there is already a de facto division of labour between agencies addressing trafficking, which is helpful. For example, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) promotes more effective child protection systems, the ILO supports vocational training, the UN Office for Drug Control (UNODC) helps develop criminal investigation and prosecution techniques and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) provides assistance to victims of trafficking returning from overseas and helps them rebuild their lives. These IGOs work respectively with the ministry responsible for social affairs or children,

the ministry of labour, the ministries of justice and interior and the ministries of foreign affairs and health. However, divisions of labour also result in confusion if the strategies advocated by different IGOs are not well coordinated, and in gaps arising along the fault lines between separate initiatives.

Consequently it is helpful to use a flow diagram to map out the various interventions which are intended to prevent trafficking. This enables you to see who is doing what and also to detect how different initiatives with a preventive effect are expected to combine or interact (intentionally or not) to produce the results required. Such diagrams can also be used to help coordinate action by different agencies, showing others explicitly how their contributions are expected to inter-act, so that the sum total is greater than the individual contributions. Diagram 8 is an example of the use of such a diagram to chart efforts to eradicate the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).

In the case of trafficking, it is likely that at least two diagrams are needed: one concerning prevention in areas of origin and one for the areas where children are exploited. The complication is that these are sometimes in two different countries and being addressed by two different and sometimes uncoordinated projects. Some stakeholder analyses also try to measure the degree of influence or power of specific stakeholders. This is helpful in assessing the extent to which they must be involved directly or kept informed if they are to continue supporting a project.

Further reading

ILO-IPEC. *Time-Bound Programme, Manual for Action Planning, Strategic planning in TBP's [Time-Bound Programmes]*, prepared by Peter Wichmand and Florencio Gudiño, September 2003.

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/themes/monitoring/spif.htm>

UNICEF Evaluation Office and Division of Policy and Planning. *Understanding Results Based Programme Planning and Management. Tools to Reinforce Good Programming Practice*. September 2003. http://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/RBM_Guide_20September2003.pdf

Opportunities

In addition to assessing the resources available, it is essential to understand what special opportunities or circumstances exist which are favourable to an intervention to prevent child

trafficking. For example, if the number of children leaving home to seek work before reaching the end of their compulsory education has been increasing, basing your project to stop trafficking on the assumption that you can end such departures altogether is likely to be a mistake: you have not taken economic trends (or some social issues) into account sufficiently. Conventional techniques for assessing both favourable and unfavourable factors include PEST and SWOT analyses.⁵

II.3. Assessing the limitations, obstacles and risks

All projects face some limitations due to their project structure, for they are intended to achieve something within a limited time and with a limited amount of money. More worrying, however, are the external risks over which the organisation implementing a project has no control. There is no point in trying to ignore obstacles, threats and other constraints, or simply hoping that they will not materialise. At best, threats require managing with a strategy to minimise their damage. At worst, they are a reason for opting for a quite different strategy—one which cannot be undermined by the threat.

The various assumptions which you make when predicting the effects of your project's interventions also have the potential to undermine your success (if they turn out to be wrong). You must also identify these explicitly so that you can monitor them subsequently and react if it becomes obvious that some assumptions have turned out to be false. The most common assumption which turns out to be inaccurate is that certain other organisations which say they are supportive fail to support, or even sabotage, your activities later on.

Threats from possible allies

Some stakeholders, as well as other organisations, have the potential to be either allies or adversaries. If little can be done to influence them to become allies, they represent a risk. This was the case in the example cited above of a religious institution opposing the introduction of life skills education. The message here is that potential allies cannot be taken for

granted: your project may need to allow for time and effort to be deployed in trying to influence and persuade them. Other problems may emerge when stakeholders disagree on the roles they should play.

The experience in South Eastern Europe suggests that the establishment of a formal national referral mechanism enables government agencies to work more easily with NGOs and IGOs. In any situation where one of the parties fears that the division of responsibilities with another organisation may become blurred (or not be observed), a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) may be a suitable solution.

Security threats posed by traffickers or criminals

Any initiative which successfully reduces the numbers of children being trafficked also reduces the income of people making money out of trafficking. The possibility (or probability) that they will retaliate in some way needs to be anticipated and should affect the methods used from the outset.

In southern Albania Terre des hommes was careful to avoid being identified too closely with the police, even though both were involved in attempts to stop traffickers taking young children across the border to beg in Greece. The NGO suspected that being identified closely with the police would increase the threat to their staff of retaliation by traffickers, and also that it would reduce the inclination of beneficiary families (whose children were at risk) to allow the NGO's staff to enter their homes and maintain close contacts with them.

In Albania Terre des hommes also avoided using the term 'trafficking' when talking to people in the community whose children were being trafficked. The term implied that a crime was being committed, so telling parents that a child sent to Greece had been trafficked suggested that the parents were accomplices in a crime—a sure way of encouraging them to break off relations with the NGO. The alternative was to avoid jargon and describe exactly what was happening: that children were being taken to Greece, missing out on schooling which would probably help their future, forced to work long hours in harsh conditions and sometimes tortured or beaten to make them obey orders.

In theory there is an alternative approach—to form a close alliance with the police and operate under their umbrella. While this may be an appropriate partnership in initiatives to provide protection and assistance to children already trafficked, it is much less likely to be effective in preventive initiatives, which involve operating in the wider community and working with people rather than provoking them against you.

Dangerous assumptions

Ultimately more projects to prevent trafficking have run into difficulties because they made false assumptions about their likely impact than because they faced security threats or were let down by other stakeholders. These include assumptions concerning the political environment and the continuing commitment of other stakeholders. Assumptions made about government support include, for example:

- “Government does not place obstacles in the way of the project”; and
- “Continued cooperation of government authorities at relevant levels to permit participation in committees coordinating preventive initiatives and also sufficient government resources to allow such participation”.

You should try and identify additional factors in the external environment, which might be relevant. Recent projects have had to cope with quite unrelated 'risks', such as epidemics and armed conflict.

There is a danger that projects concerning trafficking make many assumptions without being aware of how unreliable they are. These include assumptions about the nature of migration (that child migrants are being trafficked when they are not, or that large numbers of adolescent girls are migrating alone, when they are not) and about the aspirations of those involved (that trafficked children want to return to their home country, or will be reasonably happy to do so, when they are not).

One way of checking your assumptions is to ask someone who is not part of the design team to act as 'devil's advocate' and to ask testing questions based on what they perceive to be the false assumptions (or over optimism) being made by the designers. This testing approach, based on common sense about how human beings behave

'in real life', is just what every project to prevent trafficking needs.

II.4. Key principles and values

In the course of planning a project, there are a variety of questions to answer about the basic principles and values you want to observe. These principles and values shape both project aims and objectives and have practical implications for how activities are implemented. In its work on trafficking, Terre des hommes aims to promote a human and child rights based approach.

A human rights approach

The motivations and priorities of different organisations mean they adopt startlingly different objectives when seeking to stop human trafficking. Some see their task fundamentally as a question of stopping crime, illegal immigration or prostitution; others see it as a problem linked to unequal economic development or slavery; yet others see it principally as a question related to the status of women and girls.

A human rights approach places the person or people whose rights are violated at the centre of action to stop trafficking. This approach makes it a priority to involve the people whose rights are violated (or likely to be violated) in the process of assessing what forms of action are most appropriate to stop trafficking. It means the goal of all efforts to prevent trafficking (and also of efforts to protect people who have already been trafficked) is to enable people to exercise their human rights.

The principles underlying the human rights approach to trafficking are set out in the *Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking*, issued by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2002.⁷ The first of these principles states: "The human rights of trafficked persons shall be at the centre of all efforts to prevent and combat trafficking and to protect, assist and provide redress to victims."

Practically speaking, a human rights approach places people, in this case the children who have been trafficked, or might be, at centre stage and assesses strategies on the basis of their impact on these individuals. The approach involves identifying the vulnerabilities of individuals or

groups of persons to trafficking, analysing who is accountable for protecting them, and recommending what measures are required to ensure that their rights will be upheld and protected more effectively.

A related principle concerning the primacy of human rights points out that measures to prevent trafficking should not "adversely affect the human rights and dignity of persons" (Principle 3), either of people who have been trafficked or others (such as migrants, refugees or internally displaced persons). The principle is similar to the requirement that doctors and other health professionals should 'do not harm'. The Recommended Guidelines suggest that both governments and NGOs should monitor and evaluate "the relationship between the intention of anti-trafficking laws, policies and interventions, and their real impact" and distinguish "between measures which actually reduce trafficking and measures which may have the effect of transferring the problem from one place or group to another" (Guideline 3).

Certain other principles underlie all human rights treaties, notably the principle of non-discrimination, meaning that action to promote and protect human rights and prevent abuse should not favour some individuals or groups of people and exclude others on the basis of their "race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status".⁸

A child rights approach

In the case of children, a human rights or child rights approach means ensuring that in all actions affecting an individual child or group of children, their best interests are a primary consideration (in accordance with article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).⁹ In relation to trafficking, this means that, for example, government concerns about reducing immigration must take second place if children's rights are threatened. In some countries, such concerns have led to the deportation of trafficked children even when it may not be in their best interests to return to their countries of origin. Considering children's best interests also means looking at how a range of child rights relate to one another. In relation to trafficking, it is particularly important to consider how children's right to be protected from exploitation affects other rights, such as rights to survival and

development or education. This is examined further in Box 3 below.

A child rights approach also means listening to children and taking their views into account in accordance with the age and maturity of the children voicing their views (article 12).¹⁰ At a minimum this means that information from children who have been trafficked should inform all efforts to prevent child trafficking. However, the implications are wider. Children also have rights to freedom of expression and association and to participate fully in cultural and artistic life (guaranteed by articles 13, 15 and 31 of the Convention). Taken together with article 12, these rights constitute children's right to participate in efforts to exercise their rights, including their right not to be trafficked.

Although many anti-trafficking initiatives are designed and executed uniquely by adults—even when it is mainly children who are being trafficked—it is desirable and perfectly feasible to involve children in many of the phases of a project to prevent child trafficking: for example the stages of design, implementation of activities (particularly advocacy and awareness raising), and monitoring and evaluating the project activities' impact. Peer-to-peer education, for example, is one way to involve children in conveying information about trafficking (and other topics) to other children (see Child Rights Information Centre, 2004).

In order to ensure that children are able to exercise their rights to participate it is essential that their participation is an integral part of programmes, and that participation is meaningful. The token involvement of a few children and the manipulation of children by adults are not participation, nor is children's engagement in projects as beneficiaries, for example, through 'participating' in an adult organised art competition. When engaging in children's participation, it is important to always take measures to minimise the risks to children of abuse and exploitation, or other negative consequences of participation.

Different ways for children to participate in projects on trafficking

One of the most significant ways in which initiatives to prevent child trafficking enable children who have been trafficked to take part is at the design stage. This does not mean that children draft project documents or propose

'logframes'. But it should mean that the project is based on their experience. Boys and girls who have been trafficked can be asked about what happened to them, and those that have managed to avoid the traffickers can explain the strategies they used. In some cases it is possible and appropriate to consult children during the design stage with hypothetical 'what if' questions. "If a project had enabled your parents to earn money from so-and-so, what effect do you think it would have had on your family and on you personally?" However, the ability to answer hypothetical questions is closely linked so a child's development, so these sorts of questions are only appropriate for older children.

Consultations with girls and boys should not stop once projects are up and running. Children's views should be constantly sought during the monitoring and evaluation of project activities. Children who have been exposed to efforts to prevent trafficking can explain what they found to be helpful and what they didn't. All of this information can then be fed into efforts to improve the project in the future.

Although such consultations with children are often the most effective starting point for efforts to engage boys and girls in decision making, there are also other ways in which children can participate. Children who have been trafficked and exploited can sometimes make a major contribution by speaking to others about their experience. Their personal and emotional involvement with the issue makes them particularly influential. However, this is only appropriate in occasional cases. There is a significant risk, particularly if a trafficked child has been subjected to sexual exploitation or suffered trauma, that recalling painful memories may reawaken their own anxieties or result in their being stigmatised.

With help and encouragement, it is possible for trafficked children to establish their own organisations. In Nepal a group of young people who were trafficked to India as children and released from captivity in 1996 formed an NGO of their own, which campaigns against human trafficking involving girls, boys or adults. Surprisingly, some of the other organisations involved in anti-trafficking activities in Nepal see this NGO as a threat. This may be because the NGO, composed of individuals (now adults) who have first-hand experience of being trafficked, backs particular strategies, raising questions about the

Box 3 – A child's right to be protected (and ensuring this does not stop children exercising their human rights)

Alongside the various freedoms which children have a right to exercise, the Convention on the Rights of the Child also requires governments to protect children against a wide range of abuse. These include:

- all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child" (article 19);
- economic exploitation (and "from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development") (article 32);
- the use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (as well as preventing the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances) (article 33);
- all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse (article 34); and
- all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare (article 36).

The many forms of protection involved have the potential to limit the extent to which children can exercise the rights guaranteed by the Convention. In theory, the Convention itself stipulates how a balance should be found, by stressing that all actions concerning children must make the "best interests" of the child a primary consideration and that a child has the right to have his/her views listened to and taken into account in accordance with his/her age and maturity in any matter affecting him/her. However, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (set up by the Convention) has expressed concern that governments do not do enough to treat adolescents as "rights holders".¹¹

Indeed, too many initiatives to prevent children being trafficked assume that stopping children leaving home (whatever their age) is an essential first step to stopping them being trafficked after they leave home. Similarly, they tend to assume that keeping adolescents living in their home communities is a justifiable objective in itself, on the grounds that it enables children to continue attending school. In contrast, a child rights approach suggests that priority should be given to making it safe for adolescents who leave home, not keeping them at home in an environment which may not automatically promote their education, their ability to exercise their human rights or their general well-being. Of course, a child rights approach also means working to improve children's access to education, health care and protection from domestic violence.

A fundamental human rights principle which can help get the balance right between protecting children and enabling them to exercise their rights is the principle of proportionality, requiring protective measures to be proportional to the problem or abuse against which they seek to protect adults or children.¹²

legitimacy of organisations which disagree with these and prefer different approaches.

Children's ability to participate should not be underestimated. If efforts are made to make proceedings child-friendly, children can engage in national and international policy debates. In South East Asia children from five countries were brought together in 2004 to agree what action they wanted their respective governments to take to stop human trafficking. The Mekong Children's Forum on Human Trafficking was held shortly before representatives of the governments of Cambodia, China, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand and Viet Nam were scheduled to finalise a series of joint commitments to stop trafficking, in an effort to influence the decisions taken by these government representatives. The children attending included some who had been trafficked, some who had worked as child labourers and others who had no personal experience of exploitation.¹³

Numerous organisations have prepared handbooks and guides on how they think it is appropriate to enable children to 'participate'.

Further reading

(describing activities in one region which put a strong emphasis on child participation)

Galit Wolfensohn. *Responding to Child Trafficking. An introductory handbook to child rights-based interventions drawn from Save the Children's experience in Southeast Europe*. Save the Children, Regional Child Trafficking Response Programme, Southeast Europe. Tirana, 2004.

Gender and non-discrimination

A child rights approach to trafficking means recognising that all children have rights, regardless of their age, sex, ethnicity, disability or any other status. All efforts to address trafficking should consider such issues of discrimination. One of the most relevant issues relating to discrimination and trafficking is gender. Although men and boys are trafficked, the majority of trafficking victims are female and a large proportion of those who are trafficked are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation.¹⁴ Many of the causes of trafficking are linked to the way that societies portray

women and girls, both in areas of origin and places where exploitation occurs. Projects to prevent trafficking can make a positive contribution to combating gender-based discrimination in a variety of ways. These include giving careful consideration to the status and roles given to women and girls within the project. Just as it seems inappropriate for a project aiming to stop trafficking in indigenous or minority children to be staffed uniquely by non-indigenous or non-minority personnel, so it would be inappropriate not to give women a major role in running projects which focus largely on the situation of girls. It would also be inappropriate *not* to give attention to increasing the awareness of project staff of gender issues in general.

Working together with others

A characteristic of many effective initiatives to prevent child trafficking is that they involve two or more organisations pursuing similar objectives in the same or different countries. This requires special attention to be given to coordinating with others. Indeed, without paying attention to how different organisations can or should coordinate their efforts, little is likely to be achieved in efforts against trafficking.

Sustainability

'Sustainability' is another buzz word in projects. The implication is that projects should make a permanent difference so that their benefits do not vanish once the project comes to an end. In some situations this is interpreted to mean that local people should be trained up to take over control of a project and run a further phase themselves. This is relevant if the weakness of child protection systems at national or local level is diagnosed as one of the reasons why children are being trafficked, as the process of reform may take a long time. However, in other cases, a single project can (in theory) be so successful at reducing rates of trafficking that the same work does not need to be continued after the project ends (indeed, to do so might be a waste of money).

Preparatory steps - Checklist

1. Complete a problem analysis which:
 - Clearly distinguishes between trafficked children and other child migrants.
 - Examines the different stages in the trafficking process.
 - Places trafficking in context, determining whether or not it is a priority issue for the communities in which you work.
 - Explores the reasons why children are trafficked in relation to: the immediate causes; the underlying and structural causes, and institutional failure.
 - Highlights the most significant causes of trafficking, requiring priority attention.
 - Identifies any groups of children being trafficked in disproportionately higher numbers than others or any salient characteristics among children who have been trafficked.
 - Determines which groups of children, households and communities or places where children are exploited you want to focus on.
 - Is based on information from a trusted and reliable source.
2. Identify resources and opportunities available, through:
 - Mapping out the individuals and organisations who may play a role in addressing trafficking in the areas about which you are concerned.
 - Exploring potential complementary activities and overlap with the work being done by other organisations.
3. Assess limitations, obstacles and risks, including:
 - Identifying threats from possible allies.
 - Exploring security threats posed by criminal elements.
 - Checking dangerous assumptions which could threaten the success of the project.
4. Consider how to implement a human and child rights approach to trafficking, through:
 - Ensuring that achieving child rights and working in children's best interests are placed at the centre of all objectives and activities.
 - Including strategies to engage children in decision making and help them to achieve their own rights.
 - Considering the different needs of different groups of children to avoid discrimination.

Footnotes

1. From *A Future Without Child Labour*, 2002, p.47.
2. I.e., payments made by the bride's family to the bridegroom's (known as dowry) or the other way around, by the bridegroom to the bride's (known as bridewealth).
3. The national referral mechanism is a procedure designed by OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to ensure coordination among government ministries, NGOs and others that are involved in caring for victims of trafficking and making decisions in regards to them.
4. For example, a girl in Moldova had seen propaganda materials about seedy male criminals recruiting and trafficking girls; she failed to realise that her own aunt was recruiting her for the same purpose. (Dottridge, 2006).
5. See ODIHR, (Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, Human Rights Department, Anti-Trafficking Programme), Awareness Raising for Roma Activists on the Issue of Trafficking in Human Beings in South-Eastern Europe, Warsaw, April 2006. This is found at: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/18160.html>.
6. PEST analysis: an analysis of Political, Economic, Social and Technological factors and trends. SWOT analysis: Analysis of the Strengths and Weaknesses of an organisation, and the Opportunities and Threats it faces.
7. UN document E/2002/68/Add.1, 20 May 2002. This is found at: [http://www.unhcr.org/ref/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(Symbol\)/E.2002.68.Add.1.En?OpenDocument](http://www.unhcr.org/ref/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.2002.68.Add.1.En?OpenDocument).
8. Standard phrase in various human rights treaties, appearing in Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).
9. Article 3.1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates that, "In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration".
10. Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child says, "States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child".
11. Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 4 (2003), Adolescent health and development in the context of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN Document CRC/GC/2003/4, 1 July 2003.
12. The Human Rights Committee, set up under the terms of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, has pointed out that, "Restrictive measures must conform to the principle of proportionality, they must be appropriate to achieve their protective function; they must be the least intrusive instrument amongst those which might achieve the desired result; and they must be proportionate to the interest to be protected... The principle of proportionality has to be respected not only in the law that frames the restrictions, but also by the administrative and judicial authorities in applying the law". Paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Human Rights Committee's General Comment 27 ('Freedom of movement', Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights), UN Document CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.9 (1999).
13. See Save the Children UK and ILO, Mekong Children's Forum on Human Trafficking: Making History – People, Process and Participation, Bangkok, 2005. <http://www.iilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/child/trafficking/publicationsresearch.htm>.
14. In 2005 the ILO estimated that the number of people subjected to forced labour at any given time as a result of trafficking was 2.45 million, of whom 43 per cent had been trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation (i.e. 1.05 million) and 32 per cent for economic exploitation (i.e. 784,000). Source: ILO, *A global alliance against forced labour: Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, 2005, page 15. The ILO noted that only 2 per cent of those subjected to forced labour involving sexual exploitation were men and boys (while they account for a much larger proportion – 44 per cent – of those subjected to forced labour involving economic exploitation).