

Combating trafficking in children for labour exploitation

A resource kit for policy-makers and practitioners

Book 2: Research and building the knowledge base

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First published 2008

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Combating trafficking in children for labour exploitation: a resource kit for policy-makers and practitioners - Book 2: Research and building the knowledge base / International Labour Office, ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. - Geneva: ILO, 2008 - 5 v

ISBN: 978-92-2-121486-1 (Kit Print); 978-92-2-121487-8 (Kit Web PDF)
ISBN: 978-92-2-121734-3 (Book 1); 978-92-2-121735-0 (Book 2); 978-92-2-121736-7 (Book 3); 978-92-2-121737-4 (Book 4); 978-92-2-121738-1 (Book 5)

International Labour Office; ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

guide / child trafficking / rights of the child / partnership building / data collecting / legal aspect / developing countries

02.02.1

ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data

Acknowledgements
Funding for this ILO publication was provided by the United States Department of Labor (Project GLO/05/51/USA).
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Printed in
Photocomposed by

Italy
International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin, Italy

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CL-Info	Child Labour Information
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO)
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RA	Rapid Assessment
RWG-CL	Regional Working Group on Child Labour in Asia
SELL	Sharing Experiences and Lessons Learned (publication series from ILO-IPEC's TICW project)
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (ILO-IPEC)
STD	Sexually transmitted disease
TICW	Mekong Subregional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women (ILO-IPEC)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US	United States of America

Contents of Book 2

Book 2 provides information on analysing a trafficking or risk situation and gathering knowledge. It includes references to case studies and examples, and to resources that can be used for analysis and information gathering.

This book emphasizes the importance of reliable data as a basis for the development of policy and programming and describes a range of data collection methods. It underlines the importance of profiling children to assess their level of risk to being trafficked (and the profile of traffickers), and of mapping the routes, locations and exploitative end results of trafficking.

It also contains a section on research protocols and some specific guidelines on interview techniques and the ethical issues that must be taken into account both in interviews and in the storage of data on vulnerable children and those who have fallen victim to trafficking.

Target Audience

This book is intended to help those who require knowledge on child trafficking to prepare effective responses (i.e. not necessarily researchers but those that commission research). The book targets programme planners in government and workers' and employers' organizations, organizations that fight trafficking, funding bodies that support counter-trafficking or child protection actions, international agency headquarters and field staff, and those who undertake evaluation and monitoring exercises of anti-trafficking work.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

There are three major obstacles to success in anti-trafficking work:

- insufficient preparation because initiatives have been launched before reliable information has been thoroughly reviewed;
- missing links between cause and effect (often as a result of poor understanding of why or how things happen) that lead to a mismatch between the desired outcome and the actions taken to reach it; and
- false “common wisdoms” that recur throughout the various elements of project design or policy planning and that invariably lead to ineffective (or even harmful) outcomes and a waste of resources on initiatives that have little beneficial impact on the children to be protected.

The key to avoiding these is thorough preparation that includes making sure that the information used to inform the initiative is up to date and reliable and that it has been thoroughly analysed and understood.



Resource 2.1 (on CD ROM)

IPEC: Notions on data gathering and analysis for problem definition, CP-TING, ILO, 2005

This publication is one of a series of documents produced by ILO-IPEC's SIMPOC programme that provide insights into methodologies for data collection and analysis.

2.2 HOW MANY CHILDREN ARE TRAFFICKED?

Most reports on trafficking somewhere include a statement about the lack of reliable data. The criminal and hidden nature of trafficking means that the only data we have are generally based on the few reports that come to light – for example when trafficking victims are found and appear in official police, immigration or social welfare statistics. Some figures are calculated from the data we have on cases that come to court, hospital and health reports on victims, or national data that are often a mix of police and immigration figures, social services input and

other sources of information. By their very nature, these figures underestimate the true picture.

Nevertheless, some attempts have been made to estimate the number of people trafficked each year. The US State Department's annual report on Trafficking in Persons (TIP) estimated in 2004 that a "flow" of between 600,000 and 800,000 people are trafficked across borders every year. This does not include people who are trafficked within their own countries. The report indicated that 80 per cent of trafficking victims were women or girls and that half of the total were minors.

**Resource 2.2**

Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons: *Trafficking in Persons Report*, US Department of State, 2007

This document is re-issued each year. Updated versions are downloadable at: www.state.gov/g/tip

The ILO estimated a "stock" of 1.2 million children in 2000 who had been trafficked and are still in a situation of exploitation. This estimate includes cross-border and internal trafficking. It represents just under 15 percent of the estimated number of children who are in so-called unconditional worst forms of child labour – forced and bonded labour, armed conflict, prostitution and pornography and illicit activities.

**Resource 2.3**

Hagemann F. et al.: *Every child counts: New global estimates on child labour*, ILO-IPEC, 2002



2.3 RELIABLE DATA AS A BASIS FOR PLANNING

Reliable data on child trafficking are of crucial importance in planning effective responses.

Although exact figures may not be available on the extent of trafficking worldwide, it remains important to collect what information is available – both quantitative and qualitative – as a basis for targeted programmes and funding. It is better to miss a funding round and aim for the next one than to begin a project without proper preparations and run a high risk of failing. Authorities anxious to move forward in order to meet international reporting requirements or domestic budgetary deadlines will also achieve better impact that is in the best interests of children if all preparatory phases have been carefully completed.

Gathering information and data is the first step in combating child trafficking, and there are several ways to do this. Since 1998, IPEC's Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) has developed methodologies for measuring child labour, including some of the worst forms, and has developed a number of guides. Most of these can be downloaded from the ILO website.



Resource 2.4

Child labour research section of ILO's website:

www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/index.htm

In addition to research manuals and reports, the site includes an up-to-date list of countries in which SIMPOC has worked with national authorities to carry out surveys and other research.

SIMPOC also regularly partners with governments (often the national bureau of statistics, if there is one) in the collection of data on child trafficking or to put in place data collection systems that will provide usable data in the area of child labour more generally, and a check with the relevant arm of government in a country will often lead to data on child labour that can be used in project or policy preparation.

2.3.1 Aims of data gathering

Before embarking on data collection, it is important to know for what purpose data is needed, and what kind of data that should be. Some of the aims of research might be:

- the need for national estimates to inform or influence policy change for example: the number of child victims and the cost to society; the number of traffickers and the profits they make, and the number of children at risk;
- justification of the selection of geographical areas (i.e. sending areas, transit areas or destination areas) in which to implement policy or outreach interventions;
- forecasting how child trafficking will develop over time without remedial action;
- understanding cause and effect, risk factors and vulnerabilities at both the supply and demand side, for more effective counter trafficking measures;
- effective targeting (for example, already trafficked children or those at risk and/or the traffickers themselves) to aim for maximum impact;
- determining baselines (of number of child victims, children at risk, or traffickers) to be able to monitor progress and measure the impact of interventions;
- documenting learning from pilot initiatives for replication and to contribute to global debate;
- identifying ongoing interventions and unmet needs (mapping) so that gaps can be filled and repetition avoided.

Further considerations with regard to research aims and methods to be selected are covered in



Resource 2.5

Van de Glind, H.: *Research considerations regarding child trafficking (PPT presentation)*, Istanbul, May 2007.

This presentation was given during an international meeting to discuss research methods on the unconditional worst forms of child labour, including child trafficking.



2.3.2 Numbers

Reliable and accurate data on the numbers of children trafficked every year from or to a certain place, nationally, by region or globally are hard to obtain given the clandestine and hidden nature of child trafficking. At best, we have only estimates using various statistical methods with various degrees of accuracy. It should also be borne in mind that children who have been trafficked can be assumed to end up in some sort of exploitation and so are likely to figure in statistics relating to the exploitative sector in which they labour. To avoid double counting, figures on trafficked children are not usually added to the total figures for the worst forms of labour.

Reliable data on numbers are particularly important for organizations that are responsible for arguing to the State Treasury why counter-trafficking actions should receive a certain allocation of the national budget. They need to be able to demonstrate the size of the problem, the trends (increases or decreases) over a certain period, and the costs to society. Information on trends is also important to see whether actions being taken to reduce trafficking are having an impact. Trends can furthermore be used to forecast how the problem of child trafficking will develop over time if no remedial action is undertaken.

When data are disaggregated by sex, age, origin, family characteristics, ethnicity and (dis)ability we are in a better position to understand typical (and atypical) groups of children behind the data sets.

However, a grassroots NGO running a shelter for children who have been rescued from trafficking may not need such figures. Such an NGO may instead need data on the number of children who come to the shelter. This is vital to ensure that individual children receive follow-up assistance and that the support given to them can be evaluated for impact. Knowing how many children under the age of 15 have been reintegrated into school and how well they have coped will indicate whether more attention to this particular action is needed, or whether alternatives must be found.

2.3.3 Beyond numbers – Disaggregation

Aggregate numbers at a national level or at the level of an NGO are not sufficient however – they need to be broken down into smaller categories. For example, how many of these children in the NGO shelter were girls and how many boys? And how old are the children? An average is not useful here – one will need to know how many children under school age, and how many teenagers, etc.

Looking beyond the basic numbers to try to understand the groups of children they represent becomes possible only when data are “disaggregated”, that is collected and recorded according to various categories. These can differ according to the nature of the data and the use it will be put to, but should always, at a minimum, include sex, age, origin, family characteristics, ethnicity and whether the child has a disability (so that special services can be provided if necessary).

2.3.4 Beyond numbers – Qualitative information

For purposes of understanding the nature of trafficking itself (and planning effective responses), it is useful to know about how the children entered into trafficking: were they recruited by someone and if so, who? What methods did the traffickers use to trick children into trafficking? Did their parents or other family play a role and was that active or passive? What sort of transport was used to move them, who paid for it and how was it provided? What kind of work did they end up doing? What was their attitude towards working in the city? Who are the exploiters and what are their motives? There are numerous details that can be collected about the trafficking event itself, and these will help to paint a more detailed picture of the nature of the problem.

Numbers only tell part of the story. It is crucially important to also have qualitative information on recruitment methods, root causes, and for instance risk factors that create vulnerability to trafficking.

Other useful data categories would include whether or not this was the first time the child had been trafficked, where they were trafficked to, the nature of the exploitation they faced, how long the trafficking event lasted, and what their health care needs are. If the data collection exercise also includes children who are at risk of being trafficked, then additional questions can be added relating to the child's perceptions of school, migration for work, whether they are attracted to life in the city, how they formed these perceptions (for example, from friends or the media, or from information being circulated by recruiters) so that protection and prevention initiatives can be properly targeted.

In order to improve protection of children against child trafficking, it is useful to have a thorough understanding of the root causes and risk factors that make children vulnerable to trafficking. Questions could include: why do some countries have more child trafficking than others? Why is there a higher incidence of child labour exploitation in some cities than in others? Why are traffickers active in some places and not in others? Why do some communities face more child trafficking than others? Why do some poor families face more trafficking problems than others? And why are girls (in most cases) more at risk of trafficking than boys?

Answers to these kinds of questions and issues are extremely important to policy-makers who have a number of options of dealing with trafficking. The data can give some indication of whether child trafficking in a country is largely unorganized, for example operated by village recruiters who work by word of mouth to find people looking to exploit children and then pick up children from time to time to make money from that knowledge. The data might show, conversely, that those who traffic children work in a much more organized way, with semi-permanent recruitment, transport and exploitation networks. The data may also show that in villages within close proximity to schools trafficking is less of a problem than in villages far away from schools. Another example could be that data point out that cities with organized trade unions face fewer child labour cases than cities with a large informal and unregulated economy.

Analysing the exact nature of trafficking in each instance is fundamental to putting in place appropriate policies and

In order to compare data sets across countries or regions and over time it is crucial to have common terms and definitions.

programmes to counter it, and this requires accurate and appropriate data that go far beyond just numbers of children trafficked.

In preparing for interventions, a vital element is normally a “situation analysis”. This is aimed at understanding the particularities of trafficking in a certain country, region or locality before policy and outreach initiatives are designed. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has prepared a useful summary of tools that can be used when analysing the situation of trafficking as it relates more broadly to both adults and children.



Resource 2.6

UNODC: *Toolkit to combat trafficking in persons*, 2006

Pages 13-17 outline survey instruments used in developing situation analyses of human trafficking in Benin, Nigeria and Togo.

2.3.5 Agreeing common terms and definitions

One problem with much of the existing data sets is that they are not comparable to other data and cannot easily be combined to build a bigger picture. For example, some immigration services record data on children returned to their families and then classify the statistics by age group: 0-5, 6-11, 12-15, whereas a neighbouring government might also collect data on returned children, classifying them into age groups of “under 6”, 7-14, 15-18. Often the ranges used are based on such things as the compulsory age for school attendance, the legal minimum age for work, the age of reaching adulthood in national law – and these differ from country to country. Sometimes they are arbitrary. The problem is evident: what happens if we need to know how many children aged between 8 and 12 were returned in each country (for example because we are planning a regional education project)? This can only be determined by going back to the original data for individual children (which may or may not have been stored) and repeating the analysis.

Countries even use different definitions for “child”, basing this on national law and not international agreements that stipulate that any person under the age of 18 is a child for the purposes of guaranteeing her/him special rights and protection.

In order to compare data sets across countries or regions and over time it is crucial to have common terms and definitions.

In the absence of agreed parameters, it is important to know and understand the definitions, terms and categories of analysis before using the data. When data are collected, it is vital to ensure that the parameters fixed for the data are as compatible as possible with other available data collection systems and that the results of the data collection are therefore widely usable. In this context it is highly recommendable that research on child trafficking utilizes the definition of trafficking enshrined in the Palermo Protocol combined with ILO Conventions Nos.138 and 182 for a determination of exploitative end results (see Book 1, section 1.11).



Resource 2.7

IPEC: Manual for child labour data analysis and statistical reports, ILO, 2004

This is a comprehensive guide to analysing and presenting data collected through child labour surveys. It gives examples of work done in a number of countries and provides samples of the nature of data collected and how these can be used.



2.4 RESEARCH METHODS

2.4.1 Secondary data analysis – Sources and reliability

It is not always possible, or indeed necessary, to begin a data collection exercise from scratch. Some statistical data, ideally disaggregated, are already available from a number of sources such as ministries of health, labour, justice, social welfare, children and youth. Court statistics, databases of hotlines, police and immigration services, and healthcare organizations such as hospitals and clinics may also have relevant information at local or national level.

Analysis of such secondary data may help to determine in which geographical area and on which sub group of the population further primary research should be conducted.

Since the data are generally stored anonymously, there is no way to know who the individual children are behind each data set. As a result, there may be some double counting. For example, a child who figures in the data from the immigration services because he was returned to his family may also figure in the health-related data because he had been beaten by his traffickers and needed medical attention. So it is not possible to simply add up numbers from different sources and suggest that they indicate a “total” of any kind.

Although there are regularly calls for these various agencies to collect more data – or to begin collecting data if they do not do so already – what is often overlooked is the reliability and usefulness of the data collected.

An innovative way of analyzing secondary data was undertaken by ILO-IPEC's CP-TING project in China. It analysed over 800 cases of trafficking as reported in the media over a period of two years, which provided increased clarity on the profile of victims of child trafficking.

2.4.2 Household-based surveys

Increasingly, countries are undertaking national census exercises on a more frequent basis. SIMPOC works with a large number of governments to support data collection on child labour through national household surveys or modules

Before starting any new research endeavour one should always do secondary data analysis to ensure new research adds value to existing knowledge.

attached to labour force or living standards measurement surveys. These significant data collection exercises can serve as a vehicle for obtaining other more specific data. They are household-based surveys, which means that households are asked questions about all the members of the household, ranging from their age and sex to household income, educational level, employment, and number of televisions in the home. All types of data can be collected in this way. The ILO has piloted drawing data from specific questions in household-based surveys in relation to child trafficking.



Resource 2.8

Habiyakare. T.: Estimating child trafficking through household-based surveys, (PPT presentation)

This PowerPoint presentation provides an outline of the methodology for household-based surveys and how the data collected can be used.

Additionally, SIMPOC has produced a comprehensive manual on the different kinds of surveys that can be undertaken, including surveys of children on the streets, in schools and in workplaces.



Resource 2.9

IPEC: *Child labour statistics: Manual on methodologies for data collection through surveys*, ILO, 2004

Another publication from the SIMPOC series on data collection, this one dealing specifically with methodologies that can be used for surveys.

While census data is being collected, it is useful to add questions relating to a specific issue, such as whether and how many children are economically active and their ages. This is called piggybacking on a bigger exercise.

In Lao PDR, the ILO's Mekong Subregional Project on Trafficking in Children and Women (TICW) trained trainers on research and data collection techniques and piggybacked a National Statistics Bureau poverty survey, covering 900 villages in Khammouane province. The aim was to obtain an overview of the status of migration in one province as comprehensively as possible. If TICW had organized a survey independently of the national poverty exercise, it would have been too costly to cover all 900 villages, but adding a few migration-related questions to the poverty survey, allowed the needed data to be collected at

Birth registration is crucial to protect children and give them access to services. It also makes it easier to follow children in administrative records.

less cost and more efficiently. One of the lessons of this experience is that birth registration of all children is extremely important. Once a child is registered at birth, s/he is more easily followed through life – in school records, health records and so on. The child's age can also be known with more certainty, and this helps if ever there are questions of law relating to whether or not the child is old enough to work, marry, do military service, and of course whether s/he should be considered a child if s/he falls victim to traffickers.



Resource 2.10

IPEC: *Number crunching with baselines*, ILO, 2002

This brief document contains more information on the Lao PDR exercise. It also includes lessons learned on research and data collection from Phase I of the ILO-IPEC Mekong subregional trafficking project, TICW.

When there is not a bigger exercise to piggy-back, or where the necessary resources are available, it may be possible to do a stand-alone survey. These can be on child labour generally or on a specific type of child labour. They can cover the entire country or a specific area and may include questions to determine whether children were trafficked into situations of child labour.



Resource 2.11

National Institute of Statistics and ILO-IPEC: *Child domestic worker survey report*, 2003

This survey, undertaken in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in 2003, is a good example of how preliminary information on the scope and nature of a worst form of child labour – in this case the very hidden phenomenon of child domestic labour – can be collected. The survey is geographically limited because of the complexity of the issue but nevertheless results in invaluable information that can be used for planning, advocacy and as a basis for more comprehensive data collection.

Child domestic labour is often highly exploitative. Because children in domestic labour in other people's homes are generally hidden from public scrutiny and there is no way of knowing the conditions under which they are labouring, an increasing number of countries recognize child domestic labour as high risk and one of the worst forms of child labour. Many children also end up in child domestic labour as a result of being trafficked, so surveying child domestic labour opens the doors to collecting data that helps us to understand a range of issues, including on the percentage of children that were trafficked into domestic labour.

Surveys can be household based, establishment (or workplace) based, school based or street based.

In Cambodia, a survey was conducted in all the districts of the capital, Phnom Penh, and a number of randomly selected villages. In each city district or village, 20 households were randomly chosen to provide a random sample of 2,500 households. This survey identified 293 children working in domestic labour in these households. The next stage – to add qualitative information to the quantitative data – was to interview these children. They were asked about their family circumstances, how they entered child domestic labour, their conditions of work and other basic demographic information.

Data from surveys that are limited in geographical scope (for example administered in one city or in one province) may not be representative of the situation elsewhere. The results of these surveys can nevertheless be used to plan actions in the places where they were collected.

2.4.3 Other kinds of surveys

In addition to being household based, surveys can be establishment or workplace based, or they can be random surveys for street children, or school based surveys.

Establishment-based surveys gather data from children in the workplace and employers. The establishments are often chosen from among a list of workplaces identified by working children during a National Child Labour Survey. The kind of information gained from establishment-based surveys includes working hours and conditions, benefits, injuries children sustain, why employers hire children and how they recruit them. Among this information there may be some insight into the situation of trafficked children, for example, children may reveal that they began work several years before and that they were brought to the workplace by a recruiter who moved them from their home village. It is unlikely, however, that much information will come to light about illegal situations, since an employer of children who knows of such illicit practices will probably not cooperate with the survey team or will insist on being present when the children are interviewed so that they are unable to speak openly.

Random surveys of children living or working on the streets and their employers and/or clients provide information that cannot be captured through household-based surveys.

Such surveys are important to reach out to children at high risk of trafficking such as runaways, homeless children and children working on the street.

School-based surveys provide information on students, teachers and school management. Information can also be gained on the quality of the teaching and how children feel about their education. This information is useful in the planning of child trafficking prevention programmes, because keeping children in school is an important element in reducing vulnerability to trafficking.

2.4.4 Rapid Assessments

Rapid assessment is a way of quickly gathering information that describes hidden or illicit forms of child labour (for example child domestic labour and commercial sexual exploitation) and in a limited geographical area. Rapid assessment methodology has been used by the ILO and UNICEF to respond to the need for more data and information on the worst forms of child labour, including trafficking.



Resource 2.12

ILO and UNICEF: Manual on child labour rapid assessment methodology, 2005

Presentation of the methodology used in rapid assessments and recommendations on the approach. The methodology was extensively field-tested before this final version of the manual was produced.

Rapid assessments provide useful qualitative information that may help in designing focused responses to child trafficking but the findings cannot be extrapolated beyond the sample itself.

It is important to recognize that rapid assessment does not provide representative statistical data but does give important qualitative information on issues that otherwise remain hidden. It should not be used for extrapolating beyond the sample or for making general conclusions on the child population as a whole. SIMPOC has produced a set of lessons learned on using the rapid assessment methodology when investigating the worst forms of child labour.



Resource 2.13

IPEC: Lessons learned when investigating the worst forms of child labour using the rapid assessment methodology, ILO, 2004

This document provides a detailed analysis of the lessons learned by ILO-IPEC in using the rapid assessment methodology in 38 data collection exercises over two years, from 2000 to 2002.

Results of rapid assessments allow project design to begin while other sources of data are gathered to build up a bigger picture. In addition to the conclusions of rapid assessments, policy-making in a particular area also needs to take into account updates on experiences and direct actions at grass-roots level.

Rapid assessment methodology is valuable because it provides information that comes from the children themselves and from those who have been involved with them (teachers, social workers, family members, NGO representatives), so that there are cross-checks to the information that improve its reliability. Rapid assessments, results are particularly useful in attempts at profiling children who might be at risk of trafficking or other worst forms of child labour. They also allow initiatives to be targeted to sectors to which children may have been trafficked – (for example carpet factories, tourist bars and restaurants or cocoa plantations in receiving/destination countries) on the basis of information the children provide.

Rapid assessment can also help us to understand mechanisms and means of trafficking because the children surveyed generally include some who have been trafficked and the information they give is based on real experience. Typically, the children participating in a rapid assessment exercise on child trafficking will include children who have returned from trafficking and those who have never been trafficked but may in some cases have been approached by a recruiter. It is quite rare for children who are actually in the process of being trafficked to participate since their traffickers will keep them away from anyone asking questions and, in any case, the exercise would be high-risk for both the children and those asking the questions. When children feel threatened during the interview, they are also less likely to give truthful answers to the questions for fear of reprisals.



Resource 2.14

IPEC: The commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in Belize, ILO, 2006

This document provides an overview of some of the obstacles encountered in carrying out a rapid assessment exercise to gather information on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Belize. It also explains how the methodology was implemented and the results analysed.

2.4.5 Participatory research methods

Participatory research provides information that is highly targeted to a particular use within a defined context and community. It generally involves a number of different ways of collecting information with the target children themselves and presumes that the target children will also be involved in analysing the data collected and consulted on how it is used to design responses. The engagement itself, if truly participatory, will empower the children to be better protected against trafficking.

Common techniques used in participatory research include direct observations (usually in a pre-selected place where at-risk children will be, such as bus stops, and routes to and from school or work), which are recorded in a systematic way. Focus group meetings are also frequently used as an element of participatory research. These can range from unstructured free discussion groups (although with careful noting of the discussion so that it is not lost) to more structured groups with carefully planned questions, role-playing activities or exercises. In some circumstances, where the level of the participants' literacy requires, picture card prompts or other visual aids can take the place of written questions or exercises.



Other creative activities can also elicit valuable information. These include the creation and/or performance of songs, dance and theatre excerpts, or painting, drawing and even video recording. Individual or small group interviews can also be used and whether or not these are recorded depends on the use to which they will be put and the acceptance of the recording by the interviewee.

ILO-IPEC's Mekong Subregional Project on Trafficking in Children and Women (TICW) has produced a lessons-learned brochure on participatory and action-oriented research from its first phase of project experience. This lists common research problems and contains general guidelines for research on the worst forms of child labour and trafficking. It also outlines the principles of action-oriented research (research that is designed to lead directly to project/programme planning) and has some notes on important issues such as how to gain access to children who are in child labour and the ethical issues that are involved.



Resource 2.15

IPEC: Participatory and action-oriented research on worst forms of child labour, including trafficking, ILO, 2002

This document captures lessons and experiences in conducting participatory and action-oriented research on worst forms of child labour including trafficking.

There is a useful overview of the issues that need to be considered in developing action-oriented research on the worst forms of child labour, including trafficking, in a handbook produced by the Regional Working Group on Child Labour in Asia. The handbook includes a strong argument for involving children and young people in research where possible and appropriate, and highlights the importance of targeting geographical areas of particular sub-groups of people, on the basis of preliminary research, perhaps using secondary data. This allows more focused primary data gathering of a more participatory nature in the selected target area at a next stage.



Resource 2.16

RWG-CL: Eliminating the worst forms of child labour including trafficking: A handbook for action-oriented research, 2002

2.5 ZOOMING IN ON THE CHILDREN, TRAFFICKERS AND ROUTES THEY USE

Profiles of victims of child trafficking are useful to understand the factors that made these children vulnerable to trafficking, and are crucial in determining the type of assistance needed to protect children at risk that are in similar situations.

2.5.1 Profiling child victims and children at risk

Qualitative data – the who, what, how, why – is necessary for profiling children, which allows us to identify those at risk of trafficking and move to protect them before they become victims.

Profiling of children who have been trafficked helps us to draw up vulnerability profiles based on which we can identify children at risk in a target area. For example, we may have learned that trafficked children in country or town X were generally from Province Y and from families with more than five children, where one parent only was working. The children may overwhelmingly come from a particular ethnic group. They may comprise many more boys than girls and most of the children may have dropped out of school between the ages of 12 and 14. If the profile is confirmed across the range of children surveyed, it gives a good idea of the children we need to target immediately as at high risk of trafficking. In this case we might consider project activity designed to run in schools and to target boys aged 10-11 (approaching “drop-out danger” age). Social programmes might be targeted at large families, and programmes to help large families increase their income (for example by mobilizing the women in the family to start up small businesses) will address another of the risk factors that create vulnerability to trafficking.

Vulnerability profiling is one way of making sure that the actions proposed are matched to the actual protection needs of the children and their families and communities. Such actions are likely to have a positive impact on reducing child trafficking because there is a direct cause and effect between the problem and the solution proposed.

2.5.2 Profiling the traffickers

Profiling can also help us to understand more about the traffickers, who they are, and how they operate.

When profiling traffickers one should look beyond those that kidnap children: recruiters, intermediaries, document

providers, transporters, corrupt officials, service providers and employers of children can all be considered traffickers if they contribute to trafficking with the intent to exploit, even when they take part only in a small fragment of the whole process.

In finding out more about how traffickers operate, surveyed children may shed light on the general method of recruitment in their area. If for instance, the research points out that the recruitment is done by adolescents who have returned from trafficking and who earn money by providing new children to an adult who visits once a month, then this information can be used to set up better community mobilization programmes.

2.5.3 Mapping of routes, locations and exploitative end results

Surveys and participatory research (particularly at community level) that collect qualitative information from children and adults on the ground can also provide some insight into the routes that traffickers take to move children, and the places of recruitment and exploitation. This allows law enforcement officers from police and immigration services to intercept traffickers before children are exploited. An interesting example of such mapping was undertaken by the Federal Highway Police and ILO in Brazil. They mapped the points of vulnerability where commercial sexual exploitation of children might take place, such as gas stations, restaurants, motels, bars and nightclubs nearby federal highways.



Trafficking routes change all the time. Information may therefore be out of date or may quickly become unusable. Traffickers are known to employ information specialists who advise them on when certain routes are being policed or when new routes are opening up.

The places where trafficking can be interrupted and where children may need support can also sometimes be identified from surveys. Bus terminals, railway stations and places where children hang out such as sports fields may all attract traffickers or form part of their infrastructure. Again, be aware that these will change as traffickers learn that they are being watched and are no longer safe.

The people who work in some of these places – for example food vendors at bus stations, attendants at petrol stations, porters at railway stations – may also be able to provide insight into traffickers' movements or unusual patterns of movement of children. They can also be surveyed.

Research may also cover likely exploitative end results for instance in domestic labour, organized begging, and children in agriculture. In undertaking such research, one could also attempt to determine how many of the children working there were trafficked into this work.

2.6 RESEARCH PROTOCOLS

Always clearly define key terms and concepts prior to starting the design of research tools, or even better, define these in the terms of reference for a research project.

For each research initiative to be undertaken, a research protocol should be designed and agreed upon by all those involved in the exercise. The protocol spells out definitions, timing of data gathering, research tools to be used, interview techniques, and ethical issues. The research protocol acts as an agreed set of rules that govern what is done, why, how and by whom. It should be followed at all times.

2.6.1 Definitions

It is important to clearly define key terms and concepts prior to designing research tools. The definition section of the research protocol should cover the purpose and nature of the research, the specific context and group under study

(for example the sex, age and risk level of the children, or the particular labour context in which they are to be found). It should also cover key terms and concepts, for example “out of school” (dropped out or never been in school or playing truant?) or “on the street” (living permanently on the street, or working there during the day?).

In any research on child trafficking IPEC recommends use of the following resource:



Resource 2.17

IPEC: Child trafficking; its elements broken down for ILO operations, ILO, 2007

This note breaks down child trafficking in its constituting elements along with an illustrative table that distinguishes child and adult trafficking and also spells out exploitation.

2.6.2 Timing of data gathering

Trafficking is not a “nine-to-five” business. Depending on the nature of the information being sought, it is important to time the data gathering to be sure that no valuable information slips by while the researchers are absent. For example, if children are at risk of being intercepted by recruiters while they are walking home from school, there is little point in gathering information in the middle of the day while classes are in progress. If children are at risk of trafficking between two different crop seasons for example in the month of June in Africa when the rice planting season ends and the cocoa season starts, then there is little point in gathering information on that form of trafficking in October.

If the research is very preliminary and is being done to gain some first ideas of the levels of risk, the nature of the problem and the way recruitment/trafficking/exploitation occur, then it will be important to have 24-hour coverage throughout the week by teams of observers/researchers to ensure that no elements are missed.

In gathering data it may be necessary to interview the same child more than once, first to establish a rapport and then later to gather information. Sufficient time should be built into the research plan for this type of follow-up.

2.6.3 Research tools

A research protocol should also spell out the research question to be answered (or aim) and how this will be answered. This requires a listing of research methods to be used and the development of research tools specifically developed for the purpose of the particular research. Such research tools could be a direct observation sheet to systematically note down any observations, or a questionnaire to be used when interviewing parents, or a visualization exercise for a focus group discussion with children. For more information on this please see the handbook for action-oriented research on the worst forms of child labour including trafficking, listed as Resource 2.16 in section 2.4 of this book.

2.6.4 Interview techniques

Information that comes directly from children is of great value in planning actions to counter child trafficking, protect children from it and help those who have been victims. It is also valuable to some extent to inform policy and decision making at the level of local and national authorities. However, there are some important principles that must always be followed before and during interviews with children:

- Minimize the risk of reprisals. Children who are at any risk of reprisal if they are interviewed – or even thought to have been interviewed – should not be approached for interviews at all. The best interests of the child must prevail and so discretion is important at all times when children are in a situation where someone else is controlling them. This is especially true if they are in a worst form of child labour such as sexual exploitation or have been trafficked into labour. It is better to interview a child who has exited from the situation and who is no longer at risk of any danger.
- Make sure the child has given informed consent. Any child who is interviewed should agree freely to be interviewed and should understand why s/he is being interviewed. It is advisable to proceed slowly and build a relationship of openness and trust before any interview is attempted.

Children at risk of harm resulting from interviews should not be interviewed at all.

- Be aware of any trauma that the child might be experiencing, especially if they have recently experienced abuse or trafficking. A traumatized child should not be used as a subject of general research. When it is vital to interview children in this position – for purposes of judicial process, for example, then there are detailed guidelines that must be followed. These have been drawn up by UNICEF and focus clearly on the rights and best interests of the child.



Resource 2.18

UNICEF and UNMIK: *Let's talk: Developing effective communication with child victims of abuse and human trafficking*, 2004

This manual was produced for use with abused and exploited children in Kosovo, in the wake of conflict and displacement. However it is more widely usable as a guide to communicating with children and keeping their best interests in mind.

- Inform the child. Children must be told exactly what will be done with the information they provide, who will see it and how they will be protected.
- Ensure confidentiality. There must be clear plans in place for ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of all information received. There should be written rules on who can access the information, how it will be stored and how it can be used.
- Cross-check information. Cross-check and supplement information from the children through interviews with other respondents (“key informants”) – parents, teachers, social workers – who can comment on the children’s situation from a different point of view.
- Encourage child participation. Where possible, train children themselves as researchers and interviewers. They are more likely to receive informative replies. Alternatively, gather data through trained adults but the age gap should not be too big.
- Make sure the child feels safe. Remember that children who feel threatened are likely to give the answer they think the interviewer wants to hear, and not the answer they want to give. Children should be helped to feel confident, supported and safe.

- Do not repeat the same question more than once, even if you are not satisfied with the reply. When children think they have not been believed, they are more likely to change or invent a new answer.
- If someone else insists on being present during the interview (which should be discouraged), be aware that this may affect the child's answers. This is especially true if the person present is a parent, employer, teacher or someone else whose reaction the child might fear or wish to influence.
- Interviews with children can be one-on-one, or done in groups. Be aware of group dynamics, though, and try to observe how these might influence the information given. For example, does one child try to dominate and so exaggerate? Are the girls timid when boys are present?
- Mix one-on-one interviews with focus groups to get better results. Consider one-on-ones and follow these with structured focus groups at which you can test some of the information you have received (used so that it cannot be recognized as coming from one child, of course).
- Avoid asking direct and confrontational questions. Consider asking children about their dreams, hopes and things they like and don't like first.
- Never pretend to be someone you are not. For example, do not pose as a labour inspector to gain entrance to a workplace; do not pretend to be a client to get into a brothel. These situations are not only unethical, they are dangerous.
- Leave sensitive topics until last and only address them when you feel that an adequately trusting relationship has been built with the child. Remain sensitive to the child's feelings and reactions at all times.
- It goes without saying that all interviewers, data handlers, analysts and others working on data gathering exercises should not only be thoroughly trained in the skills and techniques used but should also understand and commit to the protocols and codes set up to protect the children and the data gathered.

- Make sure that these codes and protocols are in place and are monitored at all times.

2.6.5 Ethical issues

Ethical issues are often mentioned but not always taken into consideration when designing systems and structures. Always remember that children have a right to be protected – including from well-meaning people who put them at risk through carelessness or lack of thought.

When one gathers data about children at risk, one holds in one's hands exactly the kind of information that traffickers want. This information must be safeguarded to ensure that the children are not put at even greater risk.

Children also have a right to privacy. Although we may wish to help them, we do not automatically have the right to know all about them and to have access to their personal information. We should only have access to the information that we need to be able to do our jobs properly – no more. Focusing only on the essentials also helps to keep the research task manageable.

So the questions to ask are:

- Do we really need this data? Do we need to do research with children or can we find the information we need from secondary sources, such as a desk literature review? (Obviously, if you need information on a particular group of children you are going to work with, then this question will not apply.)
- Are we sure we know which data we need and what we need the data for? Data gathering, research and information should have a practical use, not be an end in themselves.
- Have the children (and any guardians) agreed to provide the information freely? Has there been any kind of pressure on them to speak to us and, if yes, what can we do to make sure that the children are indeed willing to speak to us?

- What will be the result – for the children – of their providing information? If there is any chance that the children will be harmed (through reprisals, being singled out because they have spoken out, even of having raised expectations that will lead to disappointment), then do not proceed. The children can receive something positive in return for their cooperation (such as a meal), but not a gift or money, since that might influence their answers.
- How will the children and other informants get to know the results of the research? Find a way to give them some feedback. In fact, one of the most important things you can give to children to acknowledge their contribution is a sign that their input was taken into account through feedback or follow up in terms of programming action.
- Are the field workers who are gathering the data safe? This is particularly important if there may be recruiters, traffickers, pimps or employers of children in the area. Try not to send researchers into interviews unaccompanied.
- Does the researcher speak the same language as the children? If not, then make sure there is an interpreter present who understands and commits to all the ethical issues covered here and who is trained in the research methods being used.

To handle data on children and information from children ethically, it is necessary to set up protocols on how the data will be gathered, stored and used, and a code of practice that all those handling the data will agree to follow.

Protocols on how the data will be gathered, stored and used should cover:

- Means to ensure that the data are stored and used in such a way that an individual child cannot be identified – unless that is necessary (for example by health personnel who need to have direct access to the child). One way of doing this is to assign each child a reference number and to note the number only on the information/data. The child's personal details can then

Data should be stored and used in such a way that individual children cannot be identified.

be stored, with the same reference number, separately from the data/information, and access to the reference number key can be highly restricted, perhaps with a system for double-checking anyone who requests access to this key.

- A clear plan for who can have access to the data/information, and which data/information they can see. Access should be restricted on a needs only basis – the data/information are not for general interest but for practical uses only.
- A statement on how data/information will be used. This should be prepared before the data/information are gathered so that those providing the information can be told truthfully what will be done with it. This should not be subsequently changed.
- These ethical questions should form part of the training of all those involved in the data/information exercise and should be regularly reviewed and updated.

2.7 VALIDATION, REPORTING AND DISSEMINATION

Before publishing findings, these should be validated through a consultative process. This may help to ensure acceptance of findings on sensitive issues by the government. Findings of recent research on child trafficking in Uganda were for instance validated in communication with key government officials. The launch of the report during the Day of the African Child was attended by a key minister and resulted in a lot of media attention.

Reports resulting from any research should spell out what was known already prior to the start of the research (based on secondary data analysis) and highlight new findings that add to the knowledge base.

Reports should include a chapter that describes how the research was undertaken and any methodological issues worth mentioning. This in turn will facilitate secondary data analysis by future researchers.

Once completed, share the report (or the essence thereof) with relevant policy makers and practitioners in one-on-ones, during press events, meetings or conferences.

Also, ensure that the report and the raw data that led to it are stored and made accessible easily for future use.

RESOURCES REFERRED TO IN BOOK 2

On data gathering and information sources	
Resource 2.1	IPEC: <i>Notions on data gathering and analysis for problem definition</i> , (CP-TING), (ILO, 2005)
Resource 2.2	US Department of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons: <i>Trafficking in Persons Report</i> (Washington, 2007)
Resource 2.3	Hagemann F. et al: <i>Every child counts: New global estimates on child labour</i> , (Geneva, ILO, 2002)
Resource 2.4	www.ilo.org/ipsec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/index.htm
Resource 2.5	Van de Glind, H: <i>Research considerations regarding child trafficking</i> (PPT presentation), Istanbul, May 2007
Resource 2.6	UNODC: <i>Toolkit to combat trafficking in persons</i> , (New York, 2006)
Resource 2.7	IPEC: <i>Manual for child labour data analysis and statistical reports</i> , (Geneva, ILO, 2004)
Resource 2.8	Habiyakare, T.: <i>Estimating child trafficking through HH-based surveys</i> , PPT presentation (Geneva, ILO, no date)
Resource 2.9	IPEC: <i>Child Labour Statistics: Manual on methodologies for data collection through surveys</i> , (SIMPOC), Geneva, 2004
Resource 2.10	IPEC: <i>Number crunching with baselines – SELL-1, (TICW)</i> , (Bangkok, ILO, 2002)
Resource 2.11	National Institute of Statistics and ILO-IPEC: <i>Child Domestic Worker Survey Report</i> (Phnom Penh, 2003). See: http://www.nis.gov.kh
Resource 2.12	ILO and UNICEF: <i>ILO/UNICEF Manual on child labour rapid assessment methodology</i> , (Geneva, 2005)
Resource 2.13	IPEC: <i>Lessons learned when investigating the worst forms of child labour using the rapid assessment methodology</i> , (Geneva, ILO, 2004)
Resource 2.14	IPEC: <i>The commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in Belize</i> , (San Jose, Costa Rica, ILO, 2006)
Resource 2.15	IPEC: <i>Participatory and action-oriented research on worst forms of child labour including trafficking</i> , (Bangkok, ILO, 2002)
Resource 2.16	RWG-CL: <i>Eliminating the worst form of child labour including trafficking: A handbook for action-oriented research</i> , Bangkok, 2002
Resource 2.17	IPEC: <i>Child trafficking; its elements broken down for ILO operations</i> , (Geneva, ILO, 2007)
Resource 2.18	UNICEF and UNMIK: <i>Let's talk: Developing effective communication with child victims of abuse and human trafficking</i> , (Kosovo, 2004)