Draft Evaluation Report

Evaluation of Victim Identification Data Collection Systems

Submitted by:
DevTech Systems, Inc.
1700 North Moore Street
Rosslyn, VA 22209
www.devtechsys.com

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CFO</td>
<td>Commission of Filipinos Overseas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNVS</td>
<td>National Vigilance and Surveillance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFA</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOLE</td>
<td>Department of Overseas Labor and Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoLISA</td>
<td>Department of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOS</td>
<td>Department of State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSWD</td>
<td>Department of Social Welfare and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ET</td>
<td>Evaluation Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFEMS</td>
<td>Global Fund to End Modern Slavery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IACAT</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICMS</td>
<td>Integrated Case Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP</td>
<td>International Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>Key Informant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBI</td>
<td>National Bureau of Investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPC</td>
<td>National Privacy Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPS</td>
<td>National Prosecutions Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>National Referral Mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFW</td>
<td>Overseas Filipino Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWWA</td>
<td>Overseas Workers’ Welfare Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEMS</td>
<td>Program to End Modern Slavery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POEA</td>
<td>The Philippines Overseas Employment Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOW</td>
<td>Scope of Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard Operation Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAF</td>
<td>The Asia Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIP</td>
<td>Trafficking in Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIP Office</td>
<td>Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCMS</td>
<td>Victim Case Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VID</td>
<td>Victim Identification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A. Introduction

1. Background

The Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP Office) International Programs (IP) team funds bilateral, regional, and global programs designed to help develop and implement victim data collection systems. Victim identification (VID) data collection and data management systems provide crucial information for trafficking in persons (TIP) policy development. These systems support the efforts of local and national criminal justice agencies to combat trafficking and the efforts of social welfare agencies and organizations to support victims. Victim identification data collection and data management systems should use a victim-centered approach with the overall objective of protecting victims from further harm and exploitation. Protection of victim identities by stakeholders involved in funding, developing, and using VID data collection and data management systems is vital. Currently, the TIP Office does not have a standard process for determining the fundamental elements necessary to implement VID data collection and data management systems. The findings of this evaluation will build a deeper understanding of VID data collection, identify existing gaps, and contribute to standard guidelines on VID procedures for adoption and adaptation by The TIP Office.

2. Evaluation Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this evaluation is: 1) to assess the extent to which a sample of interventions funded by the TIP Office have contributed to the development and/or implementation of VID data collection systems; 2) to identify the current state of VID data collection tools and systems across countries; 3) to identify successes, challenges, and promising practices; 4) to identify under what conditions the most successful victim data collection systems have so far developed; and 5) to create decision-making tools to strengthen the effectiveness of VID data collection efforts and activities. To that end, the evaluation seeks to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent have IP interventions contributed to the development and/or implementation of VID data collection efforts?
2. What are some successful VID data collection systems IP interventions have contributed to? Under what conditions have these systems been successful?
3. What are some less successful VID data collection systems IP has contributed to? Under what conditions have these systems stagnated? What are the challenges?
4. Do common characteristics exist across the various interpretations of VID data collection systems? Of these commonalities, are there any promising practices? Under what contexts/conditions?
5. Considering efforts outside of IP, what promising or best practices exist in the development and implementation of VID data collection systems? What can be learned from data collection systems developed for the purpose of VID of similar crimes (e.g., gender-based violence, domestic violence)?
6. What constitutes “VID data collection”?
7. What decision-making tools would be helpful in informing decision making around human trafficking programming?
B. Evaluation Methodology

1. Approach and Design

The DevTech evaluation team (ET) utilized a mixed-methods approach to answer the seven evaluation questions. A combination of desk research, key informant interviews (KII's), and an online survey were used to gather relevant data from multiple stakeholders (data collection activities are described in more detail below). By drawing on diverse data sources and data types, the ET triangulated data across multiple sources to verify findings. Data triangulation thus increases the reliability of the findings and resulting conclusions and recommendations presented in this evaluation report.

2. Sampling Strategy

The ET identified a sample of TIP Office-funded projects supporting VID data collection systems for inclusion in the evaluation. Selecting a sub-sample of those projects allowed for a more thorough and productive evaluation of each project, since the TIP Office funded numerous VID data collection systems-related projects between the target years of 2015 – 2020. To facilitate the selection of projects for the sample, the ET assessed each project against the following criteria:

- **Stage of U.S. Government Project.** Projects must have completed enough to provide a sufficient body of data on VID data collection systems and their usage.
- **Stage of VID/data collection process/system.** Projects have a fully developed VID data collection system and data collection processes in order to evaluate their usage and impact.
- **Implementation of formal VID data collection process/system.** Projects have started to implement the VID data collection using the formal processes and the data collection systems.
- **VID data collection process/system results under review and adaptation.** Formal monitoring of VID data collection processes and systems has occurred.

The ET scored projects on a scale of 1 to 10 for each of the above four scoring criteria. A score of 1 reflected a failure to meet the scoring criteria while a score of 10 reflected fully meeting the scoring criteria. Projects could receive a maximum of 40 points. Additional characteristics, such as country, region, and implementing partner, were applied to facilitate final selections from the top scoring projects. Table 1 below contains the final sample of projects, reflecting the breadth of TIP Office VID data collection projects and operating regions while maintaining a manageable sample size (n=5) to allow thorough evaluation of each project.\(^1\)

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\(^1\) Office for Victims of Crime – Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center; Collecting Human Trafficking Data; [https://htcbc.ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh311/files/media/document/Collecting_Human_Trafficking_Data_508c.pdf](https://htcbc.ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh311/files/media/document/Collecting_Human_Trafficking_Data_508c.pdf)
Table 1. Evaluation Project Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region and Country</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Implementing Organization</th>
<th>Implementation Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South and Central Asia Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Building an Effective Trafficking-in-Persons Data and Information Collection and Reporting System in Sri Lanka</td>
<td>The Asia Foundation</td>
<td>10/1/17–3/31/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia and Pacific Timor-Leste</td>
<td>Protecting Victims of Trafficking through Enhanced Partnership, Identification and Referral</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
<td>10/1/15–9/30/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia and Pacific The Philippines</td>
<td>Anti-Slavery Project for Overseas Filipino Domestic Workers</td>
<td>GFEMS/Ople Center</td>
<td>9/17/18–6/17/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia and Pacific Vietnam</td>
<td>Safe and Sound: Ha Giang</td>
<td>GFEMS/Blue Dragon</td>
<td>9/30/18–9/30/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa Burkina Faso</td>
<td>Combating Human Trafficking in Burkina Faso by Strengthening the National Framework, Improving Data Collection, and Providing Training on VID</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
<td>12/1/16–11/30/18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Data Collection and Analysis

As part of the mixed-methods evaluation methodology, the ET conducted three types of data collection activities including a desk review, KIIs, and an online survey.

**Desk Review.** The ET drew upon three types of documents for desk review including 1) best practices for VID data collection and VID data collection systems; 2) documentation specific to the five selected projects included in the evaluation sample; and, 3) public-facing information shared by the projects’ implementing partners on their own platforms, such as blog posts and reports.

**Key Informant Interviews.** The ET conducted semi-structured KIIs to deepen the ET’s understanding of the sampled projects, how VID data collection is conducted, how the data collected is stored and used, who has access to the information, and whether the systems were developed and implemented as designed and still in use, whether human trafficking survivors were involved in designing data collection system, the successes and challenges associated with these data collection systems, promising practices, and stakeholder recommendations about how the TIP Office can best support future VID data collection efforts. The ET interviewed 31 individuals over the course of 30 interviews spanning Burkina Faso (2), the Philippines and Vietnam (1), Sri Lanka (9), and Timor-Leste (18).6 Interviewees included the following stakeholder groups:

- TIP Office program staff and implementers of the sampled projects
- Local CSOs/NGOs engaged in VID and victim case management
- Government officials, including relevant ministries, security forces, and judiciary actors
- International NGOs

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2 The evaluation team tried to locate and interview original project implementers. When this was not possible due to turnover, the ET consulted staff from the implementing organization who were most familiar with the project.
**Survey.** An online survey sought to capture information from frontline actors who are direct users of the victim data collection system. The survey was deployed to social workers, health workers, police officers, immigration officers, and others within relevant local and national government agencies, and CSOs. The ET administered the survey through Microsoft Forms and made it available in English, Sinhalese, and Tamil to maximize accessibility in the sampled countries. A total of 38 respondents from Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste completed the survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Survey Respondents by Country and Organizational Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The evaluation methodology and corresponding data collection methods and analytic approaches are described in detail in Annex A.

**4. Evaluation Limitations**

As with any research, several forms of bias can affect the reliability and validity of findings. Pertinent to this evaluation are the potential for recall bias and response bias among interviewees. Recall bias occurs when individuals do not remember details of prior events; this natural source of error can negatively affect the accuracy of their recollections. The ET mitigated recall bias by including specific probe questions in the interview protocols to actively explore the fullest details of the projects possible. Response bias occurs when a person, consciously or unconsciously, provides an incomplete or inaccurate response. They may wish to present their organization in a positive light or echo the sentiments of higher-ranked individuals. Response bias is mitigated by conducting one-on-one interviews, rather than group interviews. Additionally, the ET used probe questions to mitigate response bias.

The evaluation also encountered methodological limitations regarding data collection. When the ET proposed the evaluation of the five projects in this study, the TIP Office noted that both the Blas Ople Center and Blue Dragon, which are sub-recipients of the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery (GFEMS) project, had recently participated in an extensive TIP Office-funded evaluation of GFEMS. To avoid respondent fatigue and requiring additional time from the two organizations, the ET and TIP Office agreed to using only existing materials, which limited the team to a desk review and interview with the TIP Officer responsible for the projects’ portfolio. Additionally, Burkina Faso experienced a coup d’état by the Burkinabe military in January 2022. After monitoring the situation closely, the ET and TIP Office agreed to remove the in-country data collection and pivot to a desk review and KII with the implementing partner and the TIP Officer responsible for the project. As a result, the ET conducted the full battery of data collection only for the projects in Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste. Due to the small sample size of the data, this limits the generalizability of the evaluation’s findings.

The ET did not collect data directly from human trafficking victims. To mitigate this limitation, the ET incorporated questions in the desk review, KII, and survey to assess survivor involvement in the VID data systems developed and implemented, whether these VID systems
uphold victims’ rights, are trauma-informed and victim-centered. It is also possible that some interviewees had lived experience, but KII focused on their roles as developers or implementers of VID data collection systems and did not ask individuals to disclose this information.

C. Findings

1. What Is “TIP Victim Identification Data Collection”?

What constitutes “victim identification data collection”? (EQ6)

The collection of VID data spans a wide array of avenues and options. Organizations collect human trafficking data by measuring various elements and factors and targeting unique populations relevant to their corresponding entry points within the broader environment in which human trafficking occurs. These varying data collection methods and their respective sources, when combined, can be useful to better understand human trafficking in the complex and evolving environments in which it occurs. On one hand, shelters, hospitals, lawyers, and social workers can help identify victims, and collect deeper demographic information, such as the victim’s relationship to the perpetrator. The data collected by law enforcement investigation and prosecutors can inform demographics as well as by categorizing the contributing “push” factors and recognizing patterns of vulnerability and particular manifestations of human trafficking in a community. Service provider data can provide further insights about victims and their service needs and outcomes, even if law enforcement did not identify them. Victim self-reporting interview data can provide a survivor’s perspective to support VID and improved service delivery. Task forces and coalitions can offer coordination and support compatibility of data collection through partnerships. And national data collection can produce high-level data on trends over time.3 While the wealth of data collected and the ways in which it can be analyzed to combat human trafficking are myriad, data collection can be ad-hoc, haphazard, and unaligned between data collection sources and efforts. For example, there may be multiple service provision organizations operating within a jurisdiction that collect and report data on victims identified and served. Data collected about these victims may not be standardized, rely on various definitions of human trafficking, and are often not linked. This may lead to double counting or under identification of human trafficking which presents challenges to understanding the scope of human trafficking in a jurisdiction and effectively responding. Another example may be a task force that coordinates efforts among service providers, investigators and prosecutors but each of these entities may operate their own data collection systems that are not standardized and linked. As a result, the task force may only be able to report the number of victims identified by service providers and by law enforcement but may not be able to determine what percentage of victims identified were unique individuals. Sometimes these systems are structured to report data to funders that may provide insight into grant reporting, but may fall short with respect to capturing information on other outcomes that may be of more interest to the task force (e.g., of the victim short- and long-term outcomes after being identified and provided

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with services and/or involved in an investigation or prosecution). To maximize the relevance and use of VID data, advancing VID data collection from a linear process to a coordinated and integrated state requires development of a system.

The purpose of a VID data collection system is to guide identification of victims of human trafficking, and to store information that may be helpful to better understand the breadth and variety of victims and their needs, as well as the scope of human trafficking writ large, its patterns and trends, in order to target its vulnerabilities. Systems may be manual, paper and pen, computerized, or a combination. In order to become a “system” for data collection, some common elements generally need to be present. For example, within any defined data collection jurisdiction, there should be an agreed upon definition to guide VID, tools to triage and screen based on that definition, people who know how to use those tools and are tasked to collect the data, and a hub for centralizing and storing the data. There should also be a vetting function to ensure the integrity of the data, and guidance on how to both secure and utilize the data. Ideal VID systems also incorporate tailor-made and trauma-informed identification and screening tools for all forms of human trafficking. They are able to store and analyze identification and referral data to inform prevalence studies, facilitate prevention efforts and track victim entry into services and over time to measure outcomes.

Moving beyond the basic framework for VID data collection systems described above, there are many data sets and functionalities that can be added. Systems can include integrated pillars to collect and store victim data culled from investigations, testimony, prosecution, and the results of prosecution. Modules from one system (or pillars within a broader system), with a primary purpose (e.g., identification), and in one location (e.g., a rural area), can be integrated with other modules with a different primary purpose (e.g., referral or victim service data collection, or investigation data collection, etc.) or from a different location (e.g., national level). Systems can have many components and can crossover or intertwine on key data (especially related to victims and victim outcomes), or loop to find correlations between prevalence, identification, referral, investigation and prosecution. Ultimately, the sky is the limit on the scope and breadth of data that can be developed, collected, protected, integrated, disaggregated, analyzed, correlated, and utilized.

As evaluation findings, presented below indicate the context in which a system operates matters just as much as the design of the system itself. And lack of consideration of the context will almost certainly doom even the most technologically advanced VID data collection systems.

2. IP-Funded Victim Identification Data Collection Interventions

To what extent have TIP Office interventions contributed to the development and/or implementation of victim identification data collection efforts? (EQ1)

Victim identification data collection efforts funded by the TIP Office included but are not limited to:
- a mobile data collection tool for CSOs to identify and refer potential victims of trafficking in local communities across Burkina Faso to government authorities;
- the development of a data collection system and data collection capacity building in Timor-Leste for government and NGO officials;
- an online, integrated case management system with multiple functionalities built in by users, including survivors, in The Philippines for use by government officials and survivors; and,
- three separate data systems (two government and one NGO) in Sri Lanka.

As indicated in Table 3, three systems were developed and implemented, two were sustained at the time of the evaluation, and one is most likely to be sustained long-term.\(^4\)

**Table 3. Overview of VID System Status by Country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Implementing Organization</th>
<th>Project Period</th>
<th>VID Data Collection System (Developed)</th>
<th>VID Data Collection System (Implemented)</th>
<th>VID Data Collection System (Sustained)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>Combating human trafficking in Burkina Faso by strengthening the national framework, improving data collection, and providing training on VID</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
<td>12/1/16-11/30/18</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Philippines</td>
<td>Anti-Slavery Project for Overseas Filipino Domestic Workers</td>
<td>GFEMS/Ople Center</td>
<td>9/17/18-6/17/21</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Most Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Building an Effective Trafficking-in-Persons Data and Information Collection and Reporting System in Sri Lanka</td>
<td>The Asia Foundation</td>
<td>10/1/17-3/31/21</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Potentially, however, longer-term sustainability at high risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
<td>Protecting Victims of Trafficking through Enhanced Partnership, Identification and Referral</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
<td>10/1/15-9/30/18</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Safe and Sound: Ha Giang</td>
<td>GFEMS/Blue Dragon</td>
<td>9/30/18-9/30/20</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Potentially, though unclear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) The efforts in Burkina Faso and Timor-Leste were the oldest projects included which provided more time for the ET to assess sustainability. Given the structure of the systems developed in Sri Lanka, the ET has concerns about long-term sustainability though they were sustained at the time of the evaluation (approximately one year following project end).
As presented in more detail in the sections below, when the eventual sole “owner” of a VID data collection system was an entity with a wide reach and influence, such as a government department or well-established taskforce, and had its own motivations for developing and maintaining the system, and a plan to support it with human and financial resources, systems were more likely to be sustained.

Short synopses of each effort are described below. Further information, aligned with EQ1, regarding specific actors, roles, effectiveness, challenges, and the structure and operation of the data collection systems developed are appended in Annex C (Burkina Faso), Annex D (Sri Lanka), Annex E (The Philippines), Annex F (Timor-Leste), and Annex G (Vietnam).

**Burkina Faso**

Project implementer the International Organization for Migration (IOM) completed a comprehensive stakeholder and data collection capacity mapping exercise to inform the VID data collection system to develop and implement in Burkina Faso. This exercise included a survey of stakeholders to determine whether there was a need for the system, as well as an assessment of data collection capacity. The assessment considered adding human trafficking indicators to existing data collection efforts, a seemingly innovative and cost-effective idea, however, as described in a document reviewed, according to several actors interviewed during the study and with whom the issue of the integration of human trafficking data in national collection operations was raised, the challenge is less technical than financial. The head of a national statistical production structure pointed out that the inclusion of a specific item in a questionnaire can cost several hundred million CFA francs. They also noted that given the multifaceted nature of human trafficking, it is unlikely a single indicator would be sufficient.5

Given these challenges, IOM decided to implement a customizable, off-the-shelf software program called KoboToolbox.6 IOM customized the software to include data collection fields regarding potential victims of trafficking. Following advice from the Ministry of Women, National Solidarity, Family, and Humanitarian Action (MFSNFAH), IOM trained local associations made up of trusted stakeholders in six regions throughout Burkina Faso and provided them with KoboToolbox to download on either a tablet or smartphone to collect information related to the identification of potential victims of trafficking. The six local associations then sent information on persons identified as potential victims to MFSNFAH who then provided the information to the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Police for follow-up.7

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5 From desk review BF2, p.18
6 https://www.kobotoolbox.org/
7 Given the time that had elapsed since the project was implemented and the original implementation team had left, this is all the detail that was known regarding what type of information was referred to the government. It is also unclear what type of follow-up occurred beyond the purpose of confirming whether they experienced trafficking.
During the project period, IOM stated that “87 victims of trafficking were reported and referred for protection.” Following the end of the project in 2018, however, the data collection effort was not sustained. The primary challenge stated by IOM was the lack of human, financial, and technical resources from MFSNFAH to sustain the effort. The ET also noted challenges with IOM’s project design. Section C.4 outlines these challenges and others in more detail.

**Timor-Leste**

The IOM project in Timor-Leste included human trafficking VID data collection as one part of many other efforts, including significant work to establish and strengthen the anti-trafficking legal framework. According to one KII, “The incentive behind the project ‘Protecting Victims of Trafficking through Enhanced Partnership, Identification, and Referral’ implemented between the 10th of January 2015 and 9th of November 2018 (36 months in total) was primarily driven by the results presented in the U.S. State Department 2014 Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Office), identifying Timor-Leste as an increasing destination for human trafficking, subsequently resulting in a downgrade to the Tier 2 Watch List. As such, IOM developed the project to support the Government of Timor-Leste’s efforts to combat human trafficking in the country, by strengthening national surveillance and referral capacities to ensure effective identification, protection, and response to human trafficking victims. The project was specifically designed to target capacity building related to methods for data collection, VID and referral mechanisms to ensure the provision of adequate support to potential victims of trafficking as well as enhanced knowledge and awareness.”

To achieve one of the project’s objectives “to increase the capacity of key stakeholders (MSS, NGO partners and law enforcement) in human trafficking data collection, reporting and victim referral,” IOM provided the following outcome indicator “40% increase in number of VoT identified and referred by law enforcement, NGO, and MSS staff.” To substantiate this indicator, the data sources include “Outcome data will be collected from pre- and post-training evaluations as well as police and NGO databases. Output indicator data will be sourced from training and procurement records as well as project monitoring reports.” As per the project’s 10/17–12/17 quarterly report, after 9 months of implementation, 0 cases were reported.

While a VID data collection “system” was not developed during the time period of the award, the project had other notable successes that were important first steps in laying the groundwork for future VID data collection efforts including working to pass human trafficking legislation, initiating the creation of a human trafficking commission, also called KLATU and training stakeholders in human trafficking and data collection. That said, the project also struggled due to challenges with project design and implementing organization capacity. The ET also learned an incredible amount about existing data collection challenges during the project period.

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8 From interview BF2  
9 From interview TL18  
10 Later approved in 2021 following the end of the project period and government upheaval.
The Philippines

Blas F. Ople Policy Center and Training Institute implemented the “Anti-Slavery Project for Overseas Filipino Domestic Workers” in the Philippines from September 17, 2018, through June 17, 2021. The project, which was a sub-award of the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery (GFEMS) Program to End Modern Slavery (PEMS) award, focused on assisting Filipino workers overseas (OFWs) located in the Middle East\(^1\) who are victims of human trafficking through 1) providing them with access to judicial remedies and holding their traffickers accountable; 2) sustained and effective access to support services; and 3) contribute to ethical recruitment practices of OFWs.\(^2\)

The Ople Center identified three core governance problems to address throughout the project’s implementation. First, there was a need for a dedicated government task force to address human trafficking cases involving forced labor or trafficking of Filipino OFWs. Second, two case management systems existed and were owned by separate agencies, but the systems were not linked between the agencies, and data could not be exchanged. The Philippines Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), which was responsible for regulating private recruitment agencies and banning abusive agencies and foreign employers, already had a case management system for administrative cases. The Overseas Workers’ Welfare Administration (OWWA), which is the Department of Labor and Employment’s (DOLE) welfare office, also maintained an online database to track cases related to repatriation and integration services for OFWs. Ople Center noted that the POEA system was out-of-date in comparison, and it would be helpful to link the two databases together. Finally, in the absence of improved ethical labor recruitment, OFW requests for repatriation and reintegration would continue to increase. To address these identified core governance problems, Blas Ople Center proposed to facilitate the creation of an interagency task force and an integrated case management system (ICMS).

Prior to granting this award to Blas Ople Center, GFEMS met with key government stakeholders in the Philippines, including anti-human trafficking prosecutors and the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT), to discuss the stakeholders’ needs and how GFEMS could support their efforts. These conversations built the government’s buy-in to the PEMS project and informed the request for proposals for sub-recipients, which Ople Center responded to. According to one key informant, Ople Center already had an established relationship with the Philippine government and was respected in the anti-trafficking field, as is demonstrated by the Center’s membership to IACAT. Building on the relationships between GFEMS, Ople Center, and the Philippine government, the project proposed to create and install an anti-trafficking task force to gather evidence and build cases, support the prosecution of cases, and coordinate the provision of aftercare for survivors, all of which would be facilitated by an online ICMS.

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\(^1\) The project primarily focused on OFWs in the Gulf region, though some OFWs supported during implementation were based in other countries, such as Syria.

\(^2\) Blas F. Ople Policy Center and Training Institute, “Anti-Slavery Project for Overseas Filipino Domestic Workers.”
The IACAT Secretariat agreed to house this task force and was a natural fit due to its mandate to service the needs, operation requirements, and policies for its member agencies.\footnote{IACAT is composed of the Secretaries of the Department of Justice and Social Welfare and Development as co-chairs, with the heads of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Philippine Overseas and Employment Administration, Bureau of Immigration, Philippine National Police, Philippine Commission on Women, Commission on Filipinos Overseas, Philippine Center for Transnational Crimes, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, Blas F. Ople Policy Center and Training Institute, and International Justice Mission.} A formal memorandum of understanding (MoU) formalized IACAT’s role in the project. In 2018, the IACAT OFW Task Force was established. In the same year, Ople Center supported the Department of Justice and IACAT in the successful commitment by the Philippine Senate of $200,000 to fund the Task Force. This “early investment” was described as laying “the foundation for eventual governmental adoption of the task force after the GFEMS grant ends.”\footnote{Global Fund to End Modern Slavery, “FY2019 Q1 GFEMS Quarterly Report,” p. 4.}

The Task Force was pivotal in the creation, utilization, and sustainability of the ICMS. IACAT, through the Task Force, was expected to eventually take ownership and maintain the ICMS once the project concluded. To codify the Task Force’s role and responsibilities, the project and Task Force agreed to a Terms of Reference (TOR) document. With the input of the Task Force and IACAT members involved in the referral and services process facilitated by the ICMS, Ople Center and a contracted web developer designed an online portal to facilitate verification, referral, coordination, follow-up, and reintegration services with stakeholders involved in the various phases of case management. This team designed the system so that OFWs, families of OFWs, local government actors, CSOs, attaches, and other stakeholders can report cases of abuse and exploitation of OFWs. As a result, VID may occur through multiple means, such as self-reporting or previous screening by other actors. However, it is unclear to the ET what tools and methods are used by CSOs and other local government actors to identify victims, though there is mention of victim referral guidelines developed by the Task Force and a technical working group. According to a recent evaluation of the PEMS project, the stakeholders mentioned above would notify the Ople Center with the contact information of individuals who were flagged as experiencing conditions of forced labor.\footnote{The ET notes that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ople Center received many requests for assistance through its social media pages and many of these cases were entered into the ICMS.} The Ople Center would then enter the person’s contact and status information in the ICMS and verify the case by reaching out to the individual and confirming their status and safety.\footnote{EnCompass LLC, “Program to End Modern Slavery (PEMS) Process Evaluation Final Report: Annex 6 Case Summaries,” p. 54.} Through the ICMS, the relevant government agencies and/or recruitment agencies are contacted to provide services. The project team designed the system to be transparent, allowing OFWs and their families to track their case in real time through the unique ticket assigned to their case and review the history of all services rendered. The system also sends agencies a follow-up notification if the status has not changed in a designated period.

Throughout the design phase of the ICMS, the Ople Center engaged IACAT and its member agencies to determine functionalities were required for the various stakeholders. In the initial inception of the ICMS, Ople Center and the Task Force determined the preliminary fields required for capturing necessary information. The project further iterated on the first prototype as it began to roll out trainings for participating agencies, including IACAT, the Department of
Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Commission of Filipinos Overseas (CFO), the Overseas Workers’ Welfare Administration (OWWA), the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), and the National Prosecutions Service (NPS). During these sessions, stakeholders provided feedback on whether the information collected was relevant and identified gaps and areas for improvement, such as including the analysis and report development functionality in the portal, removing fields that hinder encoding such as including date of birth for victims without personal documents, better access for service tagging of agencies, and search options for cases and victims. Though the ET was unable to look at the system directly, GFEMS’ quarterly reports note that the ICMS case analyses received from Ople Center contained OFW de-identified demographics including age, gender, country of deployment, case type, referral organization and service(s) received, as well as case management data, such as number of cases uploaded and response time between each stage.

The project team designed the ICMS with consideration for data privacy and data security, with feedback provided by GFEMS, the National Privacy Commission (NPC), and victims of trafficking on whether the system meets standards and expectations. GFEMS provided an initial review of the system before submission to the NPC, the government agency responsible for data privacy and security standards. The NPC produced several suggestions on how to improve the ICMS, including use of one-time passwords for enrollment of new users, a privacy impact assessment using NPC guidelines, and developing a work-from-home security arrangement. These suggestions were reviewed and implemented by Ople Center, IACAT, and the web developer. Finally, victims and survivors were consulted before the system was approved by Deputy Executive Directors appointed by IACAT.

The ICMS was implemented in a semi-phased approach. In the early stages of the ICMS, Ople Center was primarily responsible for the coordination of the various actors, with IACAT slowly transitioning to 50 percent ownership, with this increasing over time. Ople Center adopted a “training of trainers” approach through training representatives of the IACAT member agencies to train new ICMS users. After completing the training, the Task Force was presented with eight laptops for ICMS data entry and coordination. At the conclusion of the project, Ople Center and GFEMS stated that over 1,665 cases had been entered into the ICMS.

While the data in the ICMS was intended to be used for facilitating the case management process, Ople Center conducted baseline data collection to measure OFW deployment trends, cases of trafficking reported to relevant agencies, and government responses to cases of trafficking. IACAT member agencies also recorded lessons learned and used statistical analysis of the ICMS to inform policy planning and resource allocation in the funding cycle. In May 2021, IACAT met with the Ople Center and the web developer to discuss the management and sustainability of the ICMS after the project’s closure. During this meeting, IACAT expressed that they had secured the resources necessary to take over the system’s management, with the caveat that they needed four additional months to procure the necessary IT expertise to maintain the system. This is viewed by GFEMS as a major success for the sustainability of the project and demonstrates the effectiveness of using the ICMS data to support broader efforts outside of case

17 An issue encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic was the ICMS security protocol requirement that laptops with access to the ICMS are prohibited to be taken outside of the agencies’ offices. However, the Philippines was under lockdown for over a year and the government agencies remained in work-from-home arrangements. As a result, the data entry was extremely backlogged due to members’ inability to access the laptops.
management. Due to the nature of the limited data collection for this case study, the process of transitioning the ICMS to IACAT and its status is unclear at the time of this evaluation.

**Vietnam**

Blue Dragon Children’s Foundation implemented the “Safe and Sound: Ha Giang” project as a sub-award of the GFEMS PEMS award from September 30, 2018, through September 30, 2020. The project focuses on the reduction of sex trafficking of Vietnamese citizens in China through testing whether the Blue Dragon anti-trafficking model can be taught and upheld by government stakeholders and communities in Northern Vietnam. The three objectives of the project were to: 1) improve the rule of law through increasing the number of arrests and prosecutions as a deterrent to human trafficking; 2) ensure survivors have access to appropriate and effective services through training for the Department of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs (DoLISA), improved referral systems, and livelihoods support; and 3) build resilient communities by targeting vulnerable communities with services for vulnerable women and potential traffickers, keeping children in school, and anti-trafficking educational campaigns. Through the Safe and Sound project, Blue Dragon provided wrap-around services to trafficking victims including removals, legal representation, and livelihoods support in Ha Giang. As a result, Blue Dragon worked with a variety of stakeholders including the Ha Giang Provincial People’s Committee, DoLISA, the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), law enforcement, community groups, and the Women’s Union to provide comprehensive support to victims.

The “Safe and Sound” project did not have a component focused on the creation of VID or case management system, but Blue Dragon already established three databases housed on an internal server, two of which were built using Microsoft Access, for coordinating a variety of wrap-around services, including rescuing and repatriating victims, case management and psychosocial support, legal representation, and prevention. The first database captured information about recovered victims. Blue Dragon identified victims through a hotline which victims or families and friends of victims could call to report suspected trafficking cases. Blue Dragon would then recover victims, with most victims engaged in cross-border trafficking situations in China or Myanmar. Law enforcement also identified victims and coordinated recovery efforts with Blue Dragon. The recovered victims were then entered into the database by Blue Dragon staff. During the project, Blue Dragon analyzed this data to determine which populations are most vulnerable to human trafficking in Ha Giang and to create trafficker profiles through understanding the common tactics and characteristics of confirmed traffickers. Blue Dragon case managers used the psychosocial support database for case management and this database contains the same cases as the released database. The third database, not linked to the previous two, tracks court cases instead of individual survivors.

The ET’s understanding of the databases is limited due to the nature of the existing materials available, however, a presentation by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Blue Dragon in December 2021 provided additional information. IOM was also a sub-recipient

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18 Blue Dragon Children’s Fund, “Safe and Sound: Ha Giang.”
19 The databases for removing victims and psychosocial support used Microsoft Access, whereas the database recording court case information was built on a separate platform because Microsoft Access was not set up for the type of data tracked in this database.
under GFEMS and responsible for a project concerned with Victim Case Management Systems (VCMS). Under the VCMS project, IOM worked with other GFEMS sub-recipients, including Blue Dragon, to align their data to existing systems designed according to international standards. Prior to collaborating with IOM, Blue Dragon expressed that their system was not originally designed to align with international standards or with the VID standards outlined by Vietnam’s National Referral Mechanism (NRM). One possible explanation for this, as explained by Blue Dragon, was the language capacity of Blue Dragon’s staff, who do not have English language reading or speaking skills. As a result, staff members were unable to fully consider international standards in the system design. Through IOM and GFEMS support, Blue Dragon changed their internal definitions and defined the forms of exploitation to align with international standards. For example, Blue Dragon had originally identified baby trafficking as a category in their system, a category not included in the Palermo Protocol. Together, the IOM and Blue Dragon teams discussed and resolved how to correctly code these cases.

IOM and Blue Dragon identified several challenges with the utilization and sustainability of the data collection systems. Blue Dragon noted that the frontline teams have different data collection demands, which is why an “off-the-shelf” system was not appropriate for their needs. However, the cost for a custom-built system is quite high. Therefore, a board member built the system to avoid the high cost of hiring an external organization for their services. An additional barrier is the practicality of using Microsoft Access. It is not helpful in the long-term because the team would like to have a linked system to include all three databases. Additionally, the staff who enter the information find working with IT systems somewhat difficult. Prior to using Microsoft Access, Blue Dragon had a paper-based system, but switched to an electronic platform in 2017. Staff have limited time to enter, update, and review the data, which has implications for time dedicated to training and ensuring data quality.

Despite the outlined challenges, stakeholders believe that Blue Dragon has the most comprehensive source of data for victims of trafficking in Vietnam. There is a notable absence of a singular VID data collection system for various government actors to use. One reason for this is the complicated VID process that Vietnamese government actors must comply with, which states that only verified human trafficking victims can be counted. This process requires interagency collaboration, but the coordination between agencies is weak. Blue Dragon does not follow the formal identification process and uses the Palermo Protocol instead, which has a broader definition of trafficking. As a result, the government of Vietnam cannot use Blue Dragon’s data since it does not meet their standards, and this explains why the number of trafficking victims reported by the Vietnamese government in the annual TIP report is lower than the number recorded by Blue Dragon in their databases.

To overcome the obstacle of VID at the local level, Blue Dragon worked with the Ha Giang government and DoLISA to improve VID in the region throughout the duration of the project. Together, Blue Dragon and DoLISA established an NRM expert group to review all existing VID and referral policies of the Ha Giang government and their implementation. The expert group also determined gaps between the national policies and how they were implemented at the local level by various provincial agencies. In 2020, DoLISA reviewed the NRM and found that a standard mechanism for information exchange between government agencies did not exist. Specifically, law enforcement was not comfortable sharing victims’ information in order to protect the victims’ privacy. Prior to this finding, Blue Dragon had been working with DoLISA
and the Women’s Union on understanding victims’ need for confidentiality and the importance of training social workers before approaching survivors. GFEMS and Blue Dragon reported that Blue Dragon would continue to work with partners to develop a clear mechanism for information sharing and effective implementation of the NRM in Ha Giang.\textsuperscript{20} In October 2020, GFEMS stated that Blue Dragon had worked with DoLISA and other government partners to “develop a provincial-level mechanism for the local implementation of national referral mechanism policies, strengthen inter-agency information-sharing mechanisms, and institutionalize these within existing reporting structures,” which “proved successful at building coordination among the anti-trafficking stakeholders involved, overcoming a significant barrier to the provision of effective support to survivors.”\textsuperscript{21} This resulted in the identification and service provision to nine victims. However, how the mechanism works and whether it is still in use remains unclear at the time of the evaluation.

Sri Lanka

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) discussed the issue of human trafficking with police, immigration, customs, and the Ministry of Justice for several years. An assessment of existing data collection systems was undertaken before the system was developed to understand the gaps. The assessment found that there was inefficient identification and referral of victims of trafficking. The Ministry of Justice, as well as several other government, NGO, and CSO stakeholders, were highly involved in the design of the system.

After some initial hesitancy from stakeholders, traction for collaboration in the design and implementation of the database was gained through the National Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce. After several rounds of development and feedback from stakeholders, the protocols, categories, and fields for the database were created.

The initial objective of the project was to create one, online system shared by all involved partners, but due to technological challenges, partners were unable to develop such a system, and instead, they created three separate databases. These include the First Responder Database, Investigation Database, and Prosecution Database. The Women and Media Collective (WMC) maintained the First Responder Database which obtained data from CSOs. The CID Human Trafficking and Smuggling Investigation Bureau (HTSIB) house the Investigation and Prosecution Databases. Each database had different aims; Partners designed the investigator database for the police and the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to perform case management and assess prevalent cases, perpetrators, and repeat offenders. Partners designed the database for prosecutors to look at the appeals being made and related sentences, and the first responder database (used by CSOs) to flag potential cases and refer victims to services.

Various custom modifications were made for each user of the system, which allowed partners to influence and adjust their use of the database. The SLBFE had their own VID tool and guidelines on how officers should proceed with cases, so the database was adapted to capture data directly

\textsuperscript{20} Global Fund to End Modern Slavery, “FY2021 Q1 GFEMS Quarterly Report,” p. 17.
from their identification tools, which consisted of paper-based checklists. The Department of Immigration does not use the created database, due to technological difficulties, and instead uses Excel to collect and track data.

The three databases in Sri Lanka are accessed by one or two people at each owner agency. The database is installed on individual computers in the departments where it is used. The system itself has built-in security features. Users request access from the system administrator, who has access to data logs as well as usage history. Users have individual usernames and passwords and are only allowed to enter data in the system. The system also automatically locks itself if a user deletes or edits data, which can then be checked and tracked by the administrator.

The Asia Foundation’s final report stated the following challenges: human trafficking was not a priority issue amongst partners, member institutions lacked suitable infrastructure and human resources, hesitancy/lack of willingness to incorporate human trafficking data into internal databases, and a high degree of turnover of Ministry Secretaries (TAF collaborated with a total of 7 secretaries over the course of the X-year project). Significant challenges were also faced by the lack of technological infrastructure and expertise in partner institutions. COVID-19 lockdowns prevented the first training and capacity-building workshops to move forward, thereby delaying the initial establishment of the system. Additional complications arose when the CID TIP unit did not have a computer, however, the Asia Foundation was able to secure additional funding to provide the unit with a computer on which to store the database. Further delays within the project were caused by political instability (notably the “Easter Attacks”).

CSOs were included in trainings and capacity building workshops to identify and report victims using the checklist and the data system. As a result, 52 CSOs reported having identified 3,000 victims of trafficking (it is unclear how long after the trainings this data was obtained). While CSOs contributed to the design of the system, many respondents said that CSOs were not included enough, and that more effort should have been made to obtain the input of on-the-ground service providers.

The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Sri Lankan police in identifying and referring victims of trafficking, created by the IOM during the initial training and consultation period, provides guidance on how police can serve victims in a number of ways, including ensuring that victims are treated with dignity, are informed about next steps, and are provided with immediate needs (such as food, shelter, clothing, and medical needs). The guidance further provides information on common barriers that victims face before acting as witnesses. It lists the information that police should provide to victims, including the information they need to provide to a court, legal options for seeking compensation, court procedures, and guaranteeing personal safety. When an individual is suspected of having been a victim of trafficking, a police officer completes a pre-interview assessment using a standard screening form. When an individual is confirmed as a victim of trafficking, a trained officer completes a needs assessment form, which later results in an assistance plan. There is also a referral form for government shelters. The guidance also provides information about how victims should not be detained at police or immigration centers but should be immediately transferred to a shelter where they can be taken care of. Shelters must meet various standards, including maintaining an adequate and safe living environment, well-trained staff, and high quality of services provided. There is no mention of how shelters are regulated.
3. Lessons Learned from Successful VID Data Collection Systems

What are some successful VID data collection systems IP interventions have contributed to? Under what conditions have these systems been successful? (EQ2)

For the purposes of this report, we have categorized interventions as “successful” if they were developed, implemented, and sustained. An intervention was less successful if, for instance, it was developed and implemented in a country, but was not sustained due to financial or technological restraints, or other factors that prevented its long-term use. The interventions that qualify as “successful,” for the purpose of the evaluation, are the data collection systems implemented in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Ultimately, the categorization of interventions as either “successful” or “less successful” does not portray the complexity of how the interventions were implemented, nor how we can understand their effectiveness. The development and implementation of systems in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Vietnam, while categorized as “successful” for this report, still show challenges and imperfections in how systems were designed and utilized. The following sections explore the successes and challenges of these projects, with the aim of understanding best practices as well as factors that should be considered when funding and implementing VID data collection systems in the future.

The following sections will provide a thematic analysis of successful interventions, including common factors in implementation and a review of how systems operate and are used.

Coordination. Coordination between stakeholders in the design and implementation of data collection systems was important for all “success” countries. Multiple stakeholders in Sri Lanka were involved in developing the system, particularly through the National Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce, which was crucial in bringing together INGOs, CSOs, and government agencies.

The Ministry of Justice and the taskforce in Sri Lanka were hesitant to buy into the project initially. The Asia Foundation's final report states that challenges included that human trafficking was not a priority issue amongst partners, member institutions lacked suitable infrastructure and human resources, there was lack of willingness to incorporate trafficking data into internal databases, and a high degree of turnover of Ministry Secretaries. During the award period, there were eight different secretaries of the Ministry of Justice who chaired the taskforce.

However, government partners were eventually brought on and the Attorney General’s Department (AGD), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Department of Immigration and Emigration (DIE), Criminal Investigation Department (CID), and Sri Lanka Foreign Employment Bureau (SLBFE) were particularly crucial in utilizing the system and assisting in its design, as well as adopting the system when it was completed. Government respondents stated that one of the primary reasons they were interested in adopting the system was improving their TIP Report rating.
Stakeholders met several times for consultation in the development of the system, and many felt that their inputs were considered. The CID was also involved in developing the data inputs and categories for the investigation database. CSOs provided practical input related to how the system would be used “on the ground” influencing, for instance, the language into which checklists should be translated (Tamil). Trainings throughout the project increased the ability of CSOs to engage with TAF and other taskforce members and were particularly useful in ensuring that a common definition of human trafficking was used in identification and reporting. However, many felt there was a lack of inclusion of grassroots CSOs in the taskforce, which excluded the expertise of these organizations.

Coordination in the Philippines started prior to the project itself, as the GFEMS project began laying the foundation for the Philippines and Vietnam projects before Blas Ople Center and Blue Dragon were awarded awards. This was probably more conducive to obtaining government buy-in from the beginning, which TAF in Sri Lanka was not able to achieve. GFEMS and the Ople Center supported and created the IACAT Task Force Against Trafficking of OFWs, which was strategic in the development of the system and formation of relationships with stakeholders. GFEMS led an extensive co-creation process in which stakeholders worked together to understand the gaps and opportunities in the trafficking issue. This co-creation process is largely attributed with the sustainability and success of the project.

GFEMS was also invited to assist IACAT with finalizing the 2017–2021 Strategic Plan on TIP. GFEMS and IACAT convened two Trafficking Working Group meetings to develop the strategy’s logical framework. A transfer of senior leadership in the DOJ delayed the process, but this demonstrates the level of government buy-in and its trust in GFEMS.

A lack of coordination between agencies, as well as limitations in information sharing between law enforcement and provincial officials, presented challenges to the system’s effective implementation in Vietnam. However, staff met with criminal investigators from the division of Vietnamese police responsible for transnational crime and those responsible for coordinating policy on trafficking.

**Case Management.** GFEMS worked with the Ople team, a web developer, and IACAT member agencies to finalize data fields for the integrated case management system (ICMS) and created an online system. The system in the Philippines was created with two case management systems: POEA (administrative) and IACAT (prosecution). A new POEA online case reporting system was created and integrated into the integrated case management system (ICMS). The case management system allows for verification, referral, coordination, follow ups, and reintegration, and coordination of various actors involved in case management. Once cases are reported, the ICMS team verifies and notifies concerned agencies. The case management system shows all services provided to the victim and allows families to be informed about the status of a case, as well as follow-up three-six months after the closure of the case to ensure effective reintegration.

**Training and Capacity Building.** Training and capacity building was a large part of implementation in both the Philippines and Sri Lanka, in order to increase awareness of human trafficking and to instruct partners on the use of data systems.
Awareness and coordination were greatly facilitated by trainings for CSOs and government agencies in Sri Lanka. These trainings were conducted by the Asia Foundation in Sri Lanka, as well as the IOM, ILO, and UNODC, and were followed up with technical assistance throughout the development and implementation of the system. Trainings were highly instrumental in providing CSOs, particularly those involved in collecting data, with information about understanding trafficking, how trafficking was interconnected to other crimes like abuse, and gaps in service provision in related sectors (including child protection and domestic violence). The trainings also instructed CSOs in the use of the checklist and how to refer victims to further services and resulted in the development of standard operating procedures for the Department of Immigration. COVID-19 lockdowns prevented the first training and capacity-building workshops to move forward, however, delaying the initial establishment of the system.

Trainings were also implemented for agencies in the Philippines (including the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Foreign Affairs, IACAT Secretariat, DOLE, Department of Justice, Commission of Filipinos Overseas, and POEA), which assisted users in understanding how to use the system. Participants also provided inputs to improve the system, including encoding procedures, imaging settings, and data recovery.

**Technology.** The most common barrier and challenge cited across the surveys and interviews in Sri Lanka was the lack of technical capacity and expertise. In many government agencies, including law enforcement, records are kept in manual, paper-based storage systems and have not been converted to online systems. Many agencies do not systematically collect or analyze data. The lack of technical expertise across government agencies, including the ones involved in developing and adopting the system, limited the project from adopting a full-scale, digitized data collection system. Some government agencies and departments also did not have dedicated technological staff whose roles were specifically to maintain and improve on technological infrastructure, nor the funding to purchase and maintain technological equipment. The CID, for instance, did not have a computer, and TAF created additional funding to buy them one specifically for data entry and use of the data system. Training was provided in the use of the database itself, however partners did not provide general technological training. While digitization is pushed more frequently, there needs to be investment in training and capacity building in technology. TAF noted that once sufficient technological capacity and expertise is present, they can begin linking the databases online, but until then, such a product is not feasible.

To collect data from CSOs and first responders, the taskforce created a paper-based checklist in coordination with NGOs and CSOs through the taskforce. The checklist, alongside trainings, was based on the anti-trafficking law in Sri Lanka as well as the standard operating procedures developed by the taskforce. Use of the checklist enabled CSOs and first responders to more accurately identify and report cases of trafficking. The checklist included a series of questions based on common indicators of trafficking to assist the user in identifying a case of trafficking, and then refer a case of trafficking. One respondent noted that the checklist could use further improvement, as it may in some cases misdiagnose cases.

**Awareness of Human Trafficking.** One challenge that first-responder CSOs faced in Sri Lanka was the lack of awareness about the definition of human trafficking and how to categorize individuals as victims. These CSOs provided direct services to migrants and victims of human trafficking in Sri Lanka and were selected by TAF as users of the first responder database,
managed by the Women and Media Collective. While trainings were provided to increase awareness, one respondent noted that users and agencies continue to report trafficking differently and use their own definitions in identifying victims. This affected the rate at which CSOs reported cases. Many CSOs had worked with migrants before, but not victims of trafficking, and didn’t have expertise in human trafficking at the beginning of the project. Government employees, on many occasions, had difficulty categorizing cases as human trafficking, and was not sure whether or how to distinguish between voluntary and trafficked sex workers, for instance. Officers weren’t using a consistent definition of human trafficking, so cases were mislabeled and often misreported. One interviewee also stated that many officers did not want to accept that domestic trafficking occurs in addition to international trafficking. Six CSOs that submitted data regularly worked with sex workers who had been victims of trafficking, and as a result, had more cases to submit to the database than organizations that did not recognize or address the existence of domestic sex trafficking.

Defining human trafficking was also a challenge in Vietnam, as Blue Dragon and the Vietnamese government use different definitions. The desk review found that partners in Vietnam often equate trafficking solely with sex trafficking to China, and that victims who were not victims of trafficking have been included in the data. This contributed to a lack of service provisions for victims of trafficking who aren’t officially recognized by the government as such.

Identification. CSOs in Sri Lanka with significant experience working with migrants and victims of trafficking were selected to input data in the system. Because CSOs were embedded in their respective communities and understood how trafficking occurred well, CSOs were effective at collecting data since victims had higher trust with CSOs than with police. CSOs did not report or share all the information they collected from victims, as victims did not always want their information to be submitted to the database or elsewhere to protect themselves.

One challenge reported by respondents in Sri Lanka was that victims were often hesitant to tell CSOs personal information about their situation or case, and in some cases were threatened by their exploiter(s). First responders found that providing data confidentiality information was helpful, however there is a need for psychological support and protection to accompany data collection activities. One interviewee in Sri Lanka recommended instituting a more effective process for victim support in coordination with the data collection system, so that when cases are reported by CSOs, there is immediate public assistance to provide victims with transportation, food, and other basic needs while their cases are investigated.

Police in Sri Lanka use a different system for identifying victims. When an individual is suspected of having been a victim of trafficking, a police officer completes a pre-interview assessment using a standard screening form. When an individual is confirmed as a victim of trafficking, a trained officer completed a needs assessment form, which later results in an assistance plan. This assistance plan was then used by police, social workers, and other government direct service providers to follow-up on cases and ensure that victims of trafficking were safe. They also use a referral form for admission to government shelters.

The system in Vietnam faced challenges in identification as there no social workers were not designated to support trafficking victims. Each commune had only one social protection worker who was responsible for vulnerable individuals (in all categories) eligible for government
assistance. However, these workers were unfamiliar with the issue of trafficking, how and where it occurred, and their role in providing services to victims.

**Use and Sharing of Data.** Data from the system in the Philippines was used to assess demographics of trafficking victims, including age, gender, and referral organization. The data will be shared with GFEMS quarterly to contribute to planned end-of-project analysis related to the efficiency and efficacy of the system. While the system in the Philippines tracked how many cases were entered, it did not track whether victims were successfully connected with services. Anecdotal evidence shows that the time it took to process cases through the system shortened. Similarly, data from the system in Vietnam provided findings about the drivers of trafficking (including poverty, access to healthcare, and education).

Project partners built the system in Sri Lanka with a function to generate reports, so that users might easily be able to share data; however, respondents felt that data has not been sufficiently used or shared. Respondents from government agencies noted that they share data within government, including to the SLBFE and CID, whereas CSO respondents said that they share their data with other CSOs and funders. The Women and Media Collective, which gathers and aggregates data from all partner CSOs, also sends data to the investigation department and the taskforce. One CSO reported they also share data through case study reports, in which they summarize data and review the activities they carried out.

Data that has been shared, however, helped CSOs, police, and prosecution with providing information about how victims were recruited and transported, analyzing how trafficking takes place, referring victims to services, and tracking progress in the victim’s case and welfare provided. CSOs also reported that the data has helped them provide education to victims on how to prevent exploitation and migrate safely, create awareness around the issue, and generate information used to apply for funding.

**Sustainability.** TAF started a group called Development Partners on Prevention of Trafficking, which brings together donors, INGOs and international partners working on trafficking issues to discuss and share ideas, and the system is presented and discussed at these meetings. This group is still meeting; however, it is unclear how often or whether it has resulted in any additional coordination. In the Philippines, the relationship between the government and the Ople Center was crucial in establishing the project as well as its sustainability. The Ople Center, IACAT, and the developer held a meeting to discuss the management and sustainability of the ICMS after the project. The government remained willing to continue its use after the project’s funding ended, and IACAT shared that they already have the resources to take over the management of the system. Additionally, IACAT member agencies continue to train new users of the ICMS. However, they asked for four-months to allow them to gather the required maintenance and IT expertise. By the end of the project, 1500–1600 cases were coded.

4. **Lessons Learned from Less Successful VID Systems**
What are some less successful victim identification data collection systems IP has contributed to? Under what conditions have these systems stagnated? What are the challenges? (EQ3)

Challenges are as important as successes to look towards in informing the way forward. For the purpose of this study, less successful VID data collection systems and data collection projects IP contributed to were defined as projects that were: 1) developed and implemented, but ultimately not sustained after the project period ended or 2) were not developed, implemented or sustained. This does not mean the projects or implementers themselves were not successful in achieving many of the stated project outcomes during the period of performance, as projects were wide ranging in activities with VID data collection systems being one part. And in fact, in the case of Timor-Leste, for example, IOM’s work was directly related to strengthening the legal framework which ultimately resulted in the first human trafficking law being passed.22

In the case of Burkina Faso, a data collection system was successfully developed and implemented, but not sustained following the end of the project period. In the case of Timor-Leste plans for a data collection system never materialized. Similar themes emerged across both countries. Taken together, the projects in Burkina Faso and Timor-Leste offer critical lessons learned regarding less successful VID data collection systems IP contributed to, the challenges and conditions under which these systems stagnated.

Implementing Organization: Capacity and Project Design. A strength of IOM’s Timor-Leste project design was its subcontract with a local NGO, BELUN, to develop the data collection system, thus building capacity and working with a presumably known and trusted local partner organization. However, IOM faced challenges with staffing at BELUN and within IOM. According to desk review documentation,23 BELUN’s district coordinator had a “sudden resignation” and BELUN additionally showed an “inability to ensure an adequate follow-up” and as a result IOM reported “some concerns on their reliability as partners in the collection of TIP data.” IOM also appeared to suffer from staffing issues. According to project documentation, “This project started off very strongly. The implementer was ahead on targets and completed most activities in the first half of the project. Then, personnel changes resulted in a decrease in organizational capacity. During the site visit, which went well, it was determined that certain amendments were needed. However, due to these organizational changes, staff were unable to submit a full amendment request package for 1 year, despite repeated reminders from the GOR. Although all activities were completed in an acceptable manner, the award recipient performed little work in the last year.”24 One key informant reflected about lessons learned from other projects that “I found out the hard way that if main POC is no longer there or if the position is not filled by someone who is in it stably that’s a really bad sign. It’s a sign that nothing is going to happen, and I suspect that may have happened here on this project.”25

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22 One stakeholder described IOM’s efforts, “I know IOM, Alola Foundation worked closely with Ministry of Justice since 2014/2015 to develop the concept paper for prevention and combating human trafficking in Timor Leste. By 2017, the approval to the decree law has been passed including initial discussion to establish the independent commission to provide support to the Ministry of Justice.” (From Interview TL13.)
23 From desk review TL1.
24 From desk review TL3, p.1.
25 From interview TL17.
A strength of IOM’s Burkina Faso project design was conducting a data capacity mapping exercise as a first step to identify stakeholder data collection capacity to inform the national database design, and the results of this were comprehensive. However, one document noted that the proposed project design and targets linked to the data collection objective from IOM may have been “slightly ambitious at the beginning of the project because the foundations in each ministry, whether it was with regards to the human or material resources linked to their internal mechanisms of data collection, were not sufficiently developed and advanced to host the project of a national database and to establish harmonized SOPs on this specific issue.”

However, IOM’s data capacity mapping exercise helped to illuminate some of these challenges and through it they were able to pivot from a national database to the approach using KoboToolbox, adapting it to include data fields on potential human trafficking victims and disseminating the tool to the six local associations to use and submit reports to MFSNFAH, which then sent them on to the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Police.

Two additional critical factors are embedded in the desk review text above about the ambitious project design: legal framework and institutional capacity, which are addressed below.

**Legal Framework.** Prior to the Burkina Faso project period, it was noted that as a result of human and resource shortages at the ministry level, harmonized Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) related to data collection among human trafficking stakeholders, and at a minimum the ministries involved in the project, had not been developed. SOPs outline the roles and responsibilities regarding data collection within a National Referral Mechanism (NRM). An absence of SOPs on data collection is an indicator that Burkina Faso was in a very early stage of NRM implementation (Stage 1 or 2).

Perhaps the most positive impact of IOM’s project in Timor-Leste was the influence it had on drafting and supporting the passage of the first human trafficking law, and in establishing the first commission on human trafficking. As stated by one government stakeholder, “…IOM in 2017 have been collaborated with Alola Foundation in partnership with Ministry of Justice provided support to develop and present the Human Trafficking Law to National Parliament and approved. The support also goes to establish the first commission of Human Trafficking in Timor-Leste.” However, another government stakeholder noted that after the law was approved there was “no continuation and no more funding to disseminate the law at the local level.” This stakeholder went on to explain that the funding did not go towards a VID data collection system. Another government stakeholder added “When I was as [government position] we discussed about this VID data collection system, unfortunately right after the approval of law, there is nothing develop.” Additionally, efforts to draft a National Action Plan after the law was passed also

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26 From desk review BF5, p. 20.
27 From desk review BF5, p. 20.
28 For more detail on NRM implementation phasing, please see DevTech’s NRM Evaluation and the NRM Implementation Phase Framework tool.
29 From interview TL9.
30 From interview TL4.
31 From interview TL6.
stagnated. One government stakeholder said they were “involved more on the development processes to the decree law and the National Action Plan for Human Trafficking; however, the NAP does not continue to develop until now. Hope the new commission members can actively involve and initiate the continuation of the NAP.”

Based on the information gleaned from this evaluation, both Burkina Faso and Timor-Leste appeared to be at very early stages in their legal framework development with some critical laws not passed and others recently passed. Taken together, implementing a VID data collection system when a country does not have a strong Human Trafficking legal framework is possible and might be advised in limited contexts, but is not recommended for any efforts requiring the partnership of government stakeholders.

Human Trafficking Stakeholder Capacity. Capacity can be on the individual and/or institutional level and involves, at a minimum: human trafficking knowledge and awareness, human and financial resources, decision-making authority.

Lack of human trafficking knowledge and awareness. When laws are non-existent or newly passed or amended, it follows that stakeholder and public awareness of those laws lags. Research and practice suggest that human trafficking laws can be complicated to interpret and apply, even for seasoned investigators, prosecutors, service providers and other officials. Depending on the context, the passage of a new law may not necessarily trigger training for those stakeholders in charge of implementing those laws. One government stakeholder in Timor-Leste described how their ministry is challenged by “lack of knowledge of community, government and partner’s staff working in the field about human trafficking acts and practices.” When awareness of human trafficking is low, particularly among the stakeholders in charge of identifying victims, investigating and prosecuting cases, VID data collection efforts will be stymied and any data collected and reported should be treated with caution. When asked for recommendations, one government stakeholder noted that their agency didn’t have any money for training, but they suggested “migration and other line ministries to allocate for funding for “dissemination of the

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32 It was reported by one government official that there has been some momentum recently with the Commission being established and the National Action Plan, however there is a need to pass a further law to clarify child protection and human trafficking. As such, “The National Institution for Child Protection is currently lobbying the Commission of the National Parliament to have the Law on Child Protection in Timor-Leste, that will well define human trafficking aspect in Child Protection. It understood that currently, the Commission is only waiting for the best momentum to debate the draft Law. The Law is very important to have to implement provision in the Penal Code already to be more specific in terms of definitions, roles and responsibility of government actors and partners working in child protection and relevant human trafficking.” This stakeholder also noted the challenge of “the non-existence of specific Human Trafficking Law to specifically penalize human traffickers nor facilitate an immediate judicial processes to penalize Human Traffickers.” (From interview TL3.)

33 From interview TL6.

34 As will be described in Section C.7 (and outlined in the VID Data Collection Systems Programming Flowchart), limited victim identification data collection efforts may be advised in the absence of TIP laws, but only those involving NGOs and meeting other criteria.

35 From interview TL3.

36 It is important to note that advanced TIP stakeholder awareness of TIP is required before implementing victim identification data collection efforts. If used appropriately, collected data can be helpful in illuminating awareness raising, training and TA needs among stakeholders as biases and misperceptions may be reflected in reported data.
law of combating and preventing human trafficking in Timor-Leste” to “support the capacity building internally.”

One interviewee noted that IOM is operating a current project (outside the one included in this evaluation) to address the gap in “institutionalized knowledge about the existing legal framework and the respective mandate of each government agency” and as such they are currently working to “target these aspects by developing VID and referral guidelines reflecting the national law on TIP and enhancing the knowledge and skills of law enforcement and border officials to identify, refer and conduct victim-centered investigations.”

**Human and financial resources.** The ability to accurately assess the capacity of VID data collection system partners is crucial as an initial step when deciding whether and what type of data collection system could be developed, or whether and how existing systems may be adapted. This assessment should occur prior to funding and system/project design and consider not only the ability to operate the system during the project period, but ideally long-term, and to identify any threats to sustainability, as an important goal of any VID data collection system should be sustained use by local stakeholders beyond project time periods. In the case of Burkina Faso, institutional capacity and the fact that the ministries engaged in the project were not adequately supported with human and material resources, prior to the project being funded, led to the data collection effort not being sustained after the project ended (and notably IOM did appear to take into account that the cost to sustain the system would have been relatively low compared to other types of systems). One source of data analyzed for this evaluation indicated that the tablets and smartphones needed to host KoboToolbox on needed to be purchased as part of the project, due to a lack of ministry budget, indicating it was a factor not assessed and planned for in advance.

Reflecting on current challenges facing human trafficking government stakeholders in Timor-Leste, one government official discussed how they experience a lack of reliable government funding to support the basic functioning of their ministry and the provision of services. If a ministry is chronically underfunded to provide direct victim services, data collection may be a secondary concern. As they stated, “Sometimes the works on human trafficking prevention and treatment through the Department of Gender and Human Trafficking of the MSSSI was also challenged by lack of funding support from the Ministry of Social, Solidarity and Inclusion. Payment to finance activities came late or delayed.” Another government official stated “Timor-Leste is very new to the VID system, so we do not have proper system in place including to implementation of VID. The challenges are when to start something with no resources, human resources, and funding.” And another government stakeholder noted how insufficient resources plagued past and current VID data collection efforts, “I would like to say that limited resources (human resources and funding) affected to the developing data collection system and its implementation. Lack of capacities of relevant ministries to allocate more funding for data connection system in place.” Another government stakeholder with the Police of Timor-Leste’s Vulnerable Persons Unit (PNTL-VPU) reflected a sense that other government stakeholders received some human trafficking funding, but “support and funding never come to PNTL-VPU.

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37 From interview TL8.
38 From interview TL18.
39 From interview TL2.
40 From interview TL9.
41 From interview TL4.
on human trafficking. Ministry of Justice has been getting funding from IOM and Alola Foundation in years back including now have budget allocation for Commission under Ministry of Justice portfolio.”

**Decision-making authority.** A government or CSO stakeholder’s ability to take ownership over their role in a victim identification data collection system project is impacted by whether they have decision-making authority within the agencies they are embedded within. Stakeholders may have good intentions and express dedication to a project but lacking decision-making authority can undermine progress and sustainability.

The experience of Burkina Faso highlights the need to “get under the hood” of established human trafficking agencies and stakeholder groups to truly assess their ability to deliver on proposed activities. As stated in project documentation, “Throughout the project, regular references were made to the CNVS (National Vigilance and Surveillance Committee), which is recognized by all actors as the relevant structure to manage TIP cases, however it is not operational because it is composed of officials at the highest level of authority. The TIP Working Group that was established through the project had qualified and competent members from the key ministries involved, however, they did not always have the authority to take decisions or to request access for the data and information that was only available at the decentralized level. As such, the TIP Working Group was considered as an informal mechanism linked to the project and did not have the financial or political power to execute activities directly.”

As a result, even basic efforts to collaborate at the central and decentralized levels through regular project meetings did not occur. This is a strong indication that Burkina Faso was in a very early stage of NRM partnership (stage 1 or 2 where partnership is weak and meetings are not regularly occurring) and therefore, any efforts to build a VID data collection system intended to involve multiple partners would be seriously undermined. Another indication of Burkina Faso being in early-stage partnership or suffering from weak partnership was expressed in a KII, “Collaboration and just communication between agencies has been a real delay for information gathering in general.” If collaboration and partnerships are weak to begin with, collaboration to build and sustain VID data collection systems will be weak as well.

**Political Will/Ownership.** Partner capacity (whether individual or institutional) is often, though not always, intertwined with political will. Human and financial resource constraints exist across contexts, within and across countries, ministries, and stakeholder groups. Determining the extent to which these resource constraints are primarily due to political will is critical as it provides necessary information regarding the capacity of project partners to participate in developing, implementing and sustaining VID data collection systems.

As IOM project documentation noted, “some of the project focal points have committed to advocate for an allocation of funding in their respective ministries to be able to organize regular meetings between their provincial counterparts and coordinate information. Nevertheless, this

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42 From interview TL7.
43 From desk review BF5, p. 19.
44 See DevTech’s NRM Evaluation for more information.
45 From interview BF1.
budget allocation will depend on the importance that each minister attributes to the fight against TIP.”46

A lack of political will was also expressed as a major challenge that stalled human trafficking efforts after the 2017 Human Trafficking law was passed in Timor-Leste. After that time, a government stakeholder explained “it is then somehow stuck after the project ended up including lack of commitment by the Government to pursue the Human Trafficking prevention and protection in Timor-Leste.”47 As they went on to candidly remark, “we have been stuck for many years without funding and commitment which [makes it] hard to start everything.”48,49

Another government official recommended capacity building on the importance of human trafficking among human trafficking-designated stakeholders “perhaps USA government to work again with Timor-Leste government on human trafficking issues, would be good to get support on capacity building to Commission or government entities on how importance the HT issues.”50

A lack of political will can undermine the financial and human resources allocated to the ministries anti-trafficking stakeholders operate within. As a result, a lack of political will at high levels can negatively impact anti-trafficking stakeholders’ decision-making authority and ability to take full ownership over their roles in a project.

**Stakeholder Turnover and Engagement.** Turnover can be due to promotion or to volatility and dissatisfaction. Turnover was viewed in one KII in Burkina Faso as having both positive and negative impacts. Human trafficking stakeholder turnover is a constant and expected factor. The causes of turnover are sometimes indicators of positive developments. As human trafficking stakeholders amass more experience and expertise, they may be recognized and promoted for their efforts. This happened with the focal points of the project in Burkina Faso. Project documentation notes: “During the lifespan of the project two of the focal points were reassigned to other tasks and responsibilities which had an impact on some of the activities and on the communication of key information. The focal point of the Ministry of Justice, who was very invested since the beginning on the project, was promoted to be the Director of Cabinet of the Minister in July 2017. This had a positive impact because he was committed to improve the information for the U.S. Department of State’s TIP report and took actions towards this, however, his new professional obligations made it difficult for him to participate and respond actively when activities were organized or if inputs had to be provided.”51

According to one KII, the turnover was more widespread than just the main focal point, but it helped because “for two years, people were moving within the department a lot and it meant lots of people were trained and sensitized on data collection.”52

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46 From desk review BF5, p. 20.
47 From interview TL9.
48 From interview TL9.
49 There are signs political will may be improving in Timor-Leste, as it was reported by multiple stakeholders that the Commission on TIP was just established in 2021 after it was proposed in 2017. This is also a latter measure of the positive impact of IOM’s project in Timor-Leste as they were involved in pushing the idea for the commission.
50 From interview TL10
51 From desk review BF5, p. 17.
52 From interview BF2.
Turnover can also be a sign of negative causes—dissatisfaction, mismanagement, political/government volatility (external to human trafficking)—and can have negative impacts on VID data collection efforts. According to desk review documentation, a person was later assigned as a new focal point but it “made it difficult to encourage this person to invest themselves at the end of the project.”\(^{53}\) Turnover was also an issue mentioned in Timor-Leste “the structures changes within the Government institution due to Government changes will affect to the capacity transferred and/or handover to the new replacement person (Directors or Head of Departments and General Director).”\(^{54}\) As reflected by that statement and as described in more detail below, turnover can also be affected by government volatility.

**External Factor: Government Volatility.** Government volatility also leads to turnover, which can have negative consequences for VID data collection system efforts—both the systems themselves and the stakeholders (individuals and agencies) responsible for operating those systems and collaborating with implementing organizations. Both Timor-Leste and Burkina Faso experienced government volatility.

According to one interviewee speaking about IOM’s project in Timor-Leste, “I noticed the data collection system was not really mentioned (in a report). […] this project ended around that time when the government of Timor-Leste went bankrupt not long after an election they held and so I think there was some degree of chaos that may have hurt the long-term sustainability of this project. I’m not sure exactly what’s happening now.”\(^{55}\) This suspicion was confirmed in an interview with a government official “The commission was not established at that time due to funding support and Government structures changes. For the data collection system at that we have nothing to do with, so it is still not in place and develop yet. The commission just established last year but I think no system develop as they just start.”\(^{56}\) Government volatility also stagnated efforts to strengthen the legal framework through the passage of the human trafficking law, as one CSO stakeholder noted: “The Law on Human Trafficking was recently adopted already as a result of [lengthy] efforts and recommendations by [CSO] and partners working in the area long time before soon after Timor-Leste becomes independence.”\(^{57}\)

Burkina Faso project documentation provides further insight into how the IOM VID data collection system project was affected by government volatility which affected turnover: “Changes in the governmental structure in January 2018, in particular the Ministry of Social Affairs, resulted in the reassignment of the project focal point who had been a driving force in the leadership of the TIP Working Group. His post remained vacant for some time and the deputy director was following up on some of the requests, but the new focal point was designated in June 2018. Although new focal points were assigned, such changes had an impact on the continuity of some activities which needed to be re-explained to the new actors in place.”\(^{58}\)

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53 From desk review BF5, p. 17.
54 From interview TL13.
55 From interview TL17.
56 From interview TL6.
57 From interview TL14.
58 From desk review BF5, p. 17.
The difficulty IOM faced with government volatility and turnover in Burkina Faso may have resulted in the sentiment expressed in one interview that, “engagement in general with in-country partners and collaboration as much work as IOM did to map the actors—I don’t think engagement was a big success on the project as well and I think it probably impacted sustainability.” Additional factors affecting sustainability are presented below.

**Goal of Victim Identification Data Collection.** A compelling theme emerged from the interviews across government and CSO stakeholders in Timor-Leste. When asked questions about human trafficking VID data collection efforts they commonly spoke in terms of data collection for the sole purpose of informing the annual U.S. DOS TIP Report. It did not appear that data collection on victims of trafficking is occurring on a regular basis across stakeholder groups for any other purpose. When asked, “What would you describe as the primary purpose/s of the VID data collection system?” Multiple government officials and one CSO official stated that the TIP Report was a top priority. They also expressed confusion about what they needed to report to the TIP Report and also asked for more capacity building to help them improve.

While it is laudable that the TIP Report has the power to galvanize often disparate stakeholder groups to action, it is concerning when stakeholders speak of the sole purpose and function of data collection to be for an outside donor, funder, or purpose. Ideally, VID data collection efforts (processes and systems) are structured to support internal data analysis, M&E, and promote data-driven decision making on any number of topics related to protection, prevention, investigation, prosecution, and partnership.

**Sustainability Planning.** According to information gleaned from KII, sustaining the use of KoboToolbox as a VID data collection system would have required longer term funding to address the challenges that ultimately led to the demise of the effort. Namely, the application on the tablet updated and it prevented the centralization of data. Once this happened, the MFNNFAH did not have the capacity and resources to travel to the locations of associations to fix the tablets. One stakeholder interviewed described KoboToolbox (and the smartphones and tablets it was hosted on) were as needing frequent software updates. Also, even though the software is described as free on its website, according to KII, there are certain features that you need to pay for, or you lose access. This KII reported that KoboToolbox is still used by the MFNNFAH for other topics (e.g., internally displaced people and migrants), but they “didn’t continue using it for TIP because of resources.”

Although lack of resources was one specific cited factor, as described above, multiple factors were also at play leading to the data collection system not being sustained beyond the project period. One KII did note that the effort had an impact in that it “helped people in associations to identify and ask good questions when they identify a victim.” That said, it is unclear how much the six local associations are involved in VID and referral without this data collection system in place.

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59 From interview BF1.
60 It should be noted that stakeholder knowledge that this evaluation was funded by J/TIP may have influenced this answer.
61 From interview BF2.
62 From interview BF2.
Project documents reviewed provide some insight and indicate “some sustainability concerns are raised regarding Objective 2 (data collection). Exit strategies on the data collection e-tool, the use and of the comprehensive questionnaire and institutional ownership should have been discussed, agreed and formalized with government institutions before a project end.”

When one stakeholder interviewed was asked whether they viewed the VID data collection system as a success, they replied:

“Yes, from my understanding it was successful in the establishment. In sustainability, I don’t think I can speak to that because we haven’t heard much about the implementation of it. My understanding is that it was just a minimal number of people trained on the data collection in general, so maybe personally to them [implementing organization] it was impactful, but I don’t think for in-country stakeholders or agencies it was impactful.”

The quote from the KII above perfectly represents the definitional distinction inherent in how this evaluation is defining success—is it enough for successful development of a VID data collection system and/or implementation during a funded project period even if that system is not sustained following? Or should the goal of VID data collection system efforts be sustainability beyond the funded project? Are these systems that are funded and developed intended to live on and be used by the in-country human trafficking stakeholders that (ideally) were involved in the effort to design and implement them?

5. Common Characteristics Across Victim Identification Data Collection Systems

Do common characteristics exist across the various interpretations of victim identification data collection systems? Of these commonalities, are there any promising practices? Under what contexts/conditions? (EQ4)

Numerous similarities and promising practices can be gleaned from case studies in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Vietnam, Timor-Leste, and Burkina Faso. This section will make use of findings from desk reviews and interviews, as well as the surveys that were completed in Timor-Leste and Sri Lanka. Thirty-eight surveys were completed from Sri Lanka (n=19) and Timor-Leste (n=19). Respondents were split almost evenly between male (n=20) and female (n=18). The most common profession of respondents was social workers (53 percent), followed by immigration officials (16 percent), government officials (8 percent), and police officers/investigators (8 percent).

Firstly, successful projects invested heavily in coordination with multiple stakeholders across government agencies, and in-country CSOs. Coordination facilitated co-creation processes whereby stakeholders and potential users could provide feedback and input on the development of the system. It also promoted engagement and ownership across multiple actors, improving

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63 From desk review BF5, p. 22.
64 From interview BF1
65 Given that Timor-Leste did not implement a data collection system, survey responses to those questions are not presented.
buy-in and long-term sustainability, as well as obtaining access to resources and trainings. The following chart displays survey respondent perspectives on stakeholder involvement in the design of data collection systems. Most respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the design process was transparent and that they felt they could provide feedback. Additionally, a majority of respondents felt that systems were designed using a multi-disciplinary and cross-sector approach and that government and NGO stakeholders were included. When asked whether government has clear ownership over the system, only 21 percent of respondents in Sri Lanka agreed and only 11 percent strongly agreed, with 21 percent of respondents disagreeing. Findings from the desk review and interviews in Sri Lanka support this finding, suggesting that government stakeholders were involved in the design of the system, but have not sufficiently utilized it once installed.

Figure 1. Perspectives on the Design of the Data Collection System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspectives on System Design</th>
<th>Agree/Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designed using a multi-disciplinary approach</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does no harm</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respects human rights</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is victim and survivor-centered</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produces data that is accurate, reliable, and valid</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respects human rights</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is trauma-informed</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is gender-sensitive</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is non-discriminatory</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is compliant with national laws on data security</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is compliant with national laws on trafficking in person</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is aligned with the Palermo Protocol</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings from the desk review and interviews in Sri Lanka support this finding, suggesting that government stakeholders were involved in the design of the system, but have not sufficiently utilized it once installed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Agree/Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is trauma-informed</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Produces data that is accurate, reliable, and valid</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is compliant with national laws on trafficking in persons</td>
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<td></td>
<td>63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is aligned with the Palermo Protocol</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>53%</td>
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</table>

The most extensive and successful form of coordination happened in the Philippines, largely because GFEMS laid so much relational groundwork with the government and with INGOs before the project started. This enabled GFEMS and the Ople Center to influence further development of anti-trafficking policy and practice in the Philippines. There is an effort from the Philippine Senate and the Office of the President to fast track the passage of a law creating a Department for Overseas Filipinos. The Ople Center has shared proposals with the Senate on how to streamline the reporting and handling of cases involving the trafficking of OFWs. They are also working with CSOs and partners to facilitate the adoption of ethical recruitment, primarily through creating an Ethical Recruitment Advisory Board.

Projects in the Philippines and Sri Lanka also gained the trust and involvement of national anti-trafficking taskforces, which enabled partners to establish relationships with each other, encourage the sustainability of the project as well as buy-in from governments, and facilitate co-creation. The co-creation processes were particularly helpful in developing usable systems that were appropriate for partners who would be entering data. One respondent from Sri Lanka noted that they felt the taskforce could have taken the project on by itself, with its reach into different stakeholders and its influence. Importantly, taskforces remain in operation throughout turnover (both in government agencies as well as INGOs), and therefore offer methods to ensure the longevity of systems, as well as opportunities for training and resources from multiple sources. Notably, the task force in the Philippines received a $200,000 government award to help support and sustain its efforts signaling tremendous buy-in and political will on behalf of the government.
Other best practices found in these case studies include the role of training and capacity building, which took place before, during, and after the systems were developed. Trainings were needed to instruct partners in using the system, including in encoding procedures, data recovery, data security, confidentiality, access, and reporting. However, trainings were also important in building awareness around the issue of trafficking, especially in places like Sri Lanka and Vietnam where many CSOs and communities understood human trafficking to be composed solely of sex trafficking.

Trainings should also be conducted continuously and for all partners. The survey found that more training and capacity building could have resulted in greater cohesion and ability to use the system. Results show that less than half (47 percent) of respondents from Sri Lanka received training. Furthermore, interview respondents from Sri Lanka and Vietnam noted that even after the system was implemented, partners were using different definitions of trafficking, so trainings that resulted in an agreed upon definition would have helped to prevent the mislabeling of data. Survey results show that Sri Lankan respondents were divided on whether the system used a definition of trafficking consistent with national laws or the Palermo Protocol (44 percent answered that the system used the Palermo Protocol definition, 37 percent answered national laws alone, and 19 percent answered national laws and the Palermo Protocol).

There were some best practices found in the design of systems themselves. Survey results regarding the types of data collected in Sri Lanka and the Philippines showed the most frequently collected data consisted of direct services provided to suspected victims of trafficking, referrals for services, and information on prevention activities.

*Figure 2. Types of Data Collected in Sri Lanka*

The system in the Philippines connected investigation and prosecution with case management and referral, and this proved particularly effective, as it provided a streamlined location where
partners from various agencies (across government departments and in some cases CSOs) could access data about the same individuals and track their progress. The system in the Philippines also purposefully built-in functionality for victims to check the status of their cases and track service referrals. The system in Sri Lanka included a built-in function to generate reports, and while respondents noted that this function was not widely used, it provided the opportunity for data to be aggregated and analyzed.

Findings from the case studies suggest several other recommendations based on the challenges that projects faced. The following chart displays how survey respondents described the needs they have related to data collection. The most common responses are data collection and analysis expertise and funding, followed by technological infrastructure in Timor-Leste. All four categories were found to be common challenges faced by countries in the desk review and interviews.

*Figure 3. Data Collection Needs in Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste*

The first and most widespread challenge was technological capacity and expertise. In several countries, partners (government departments in particular) lacked the infrastructure and training needed to implement and sustain such a database. There is a need for 1) investment into infrastructure, 2) a shift towards digitization, and 3) the development of cultures that facilitate continual adaptation and growth in information technology. Ideally, investment in infrastructure would take place not only for the purposes of collecting data on human trafficking, but multiple crimes. This would integrate rather than isolate internal processes for the collection, tracking, and analysis of data on human trafficking cases, and promote the longevity of a system’s use and uptake among partners.
The case studies also demonstrate that without environments (both political and structural) in which such systems can be sustained, their use is likely to stagnate. Survey respondents recommend that it is important to identify a single entity who agrees to “own” and fully adopt the project in coordination with the implementing partner from the beginning, and then to continue its implementation following the loss of funding. This is especially important when there is frequent turnover of leadership in taskforces and government agencies. The eventual sole “owner” of such systems should be an entity with a wide reach and influence, such as a government department or well-established taskforce, and ideally, it should have its own motivations for developing and maintaining the system that will last beyond turnover in leadership.

Challenges in Sri Lanka and Vietnam point to the importance of accompanying the implementation of data systems with adjacent human services, social work, and welfare services. The interviews show that case study countries use data in a number of ways, including most prominently understanding the issue of trafficking itself, reporting to funders, and tracking progress in the victim’s case and welfare provided. Data from the survey (shown below) demonstrates that partners used data most commonly in case management, followed by performance measurement for staff and improving internal agency processes and procedures.

*Figure 4. Data Use in Sri Lanka*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Use</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondents from Sri Lanka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case management</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance measurement for staff members (internal)</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve internal agency processes and procedures</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance measurement for grants/funding agencies (external);</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research conducted by external agencies</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research conducted by internal agency</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance measurement for grants/funding agencies (external)</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance measurement for grants/funding agencies (external)</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research conducted by external agencies</td>
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<td>Research conducted by internal agency</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<td>Performance measurement for grants/funding agencies (external)</td>
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In Sri Lanka, CSOs found it difficult to collect data from victims as victims were often threatened by their exploiter(s) and didn’t want to provide personal information. A linked social protection system would allow CSOs to provide basic services and protection while cases are processed, or even while victims’ safety is secured. Additionally, social workers should be available and should be trained in identifying and working with human trafficking victims. In Vietnam, because social workers were not trained in working with victims of human trafficking, identifying, and working with victims in conjunction with the system was difficult.

Finally, data collection systems should be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that they are being used effectively. This was a challenge in Sri Lanka, as partners were not regularly analyzing data and were only rarely sharing data with partners. The project in the Philippines made more traction with evaluation, as the Ople Center, the IACAT Secretariat, and the developer held a series of monitoring visits to implementing agencies. These meetings allowed partners to check on the utilization of the system, receive feedback from the users, and troubleshoot technical concerns.

Funding was also a challenge in many countries. Twenty-four percent (24 percent) of survey respondents said their agency did not have enough funding to contribute to the data collection system, and 21 percent of respondents mentioned that more funding needed to be secured when asked for their recommendations. One respondent from Sri Lanka recommended creating more clarity around how funding is distributed and allocated to better facilitate coordination between partners.


Considering efforts outside of IP, what promising or best practices exist in the development and implementation of victim identification data collection systems? What can be learned from data collection systems developed for the purpose of victim identification of similar crimes (e.g., gender-based violence, domestic violence)? (EQ5)

There is no perfect system, and if a system could be perfected for a moment in time, its value would likely diminish over time, as needs evolve. In examining best practices in the development and implementation of VID data collection systems, designers and implementers must consider the intended use(s) of such systems, the scope of data to be collected and analyzed, integration
and compatibility with existing policies and procedures and systems, stakeholder buy-in and
rigor of input, transparency, ownership of data, and potential collaborative uses and
communication mechanisms to utilize data outputs.

Aside from the usual resource and technical requirement issues, VID and referral data collection
systems are also prone to both common and unique challenges. Among these are varying
definitions of human trafficking based on national laws, multiple entry points or opportunities to
identify victims, issues of how to classify suspected versus confirmed victims of trafficking, and
system confidentiality and data sharing.66 Systems get further complicated if a victim chooses
(for a myriad of possible reasons) not to cooperate.

There are identification and referral systems that stand out as best practice, if not in their entirety,
at least in some phases or elements. In fact, the scope of VID and referral is also part of a broader
process that starts with prevalence and moves through identification and referral, survivor
services and outcomes, investigation, and prosecution (to include sentencing). Each of these
phases overlaps and informs the other. See Annex H for a visual illustrating the scope of VID
pathways and data collection systems along each phase. Ideal VID and referral systems
understand the symbiotic nature of this entire process and ways in which data from each phase
can loop backwards and forwards to increase the overall knowledge and value throughout. For
example, evaluation of victim demographics and case information can inform prevalence studies.
Or investigation data can determine whether a suspected victim is in fact a victim of human
trafficking and eligible for services.

Optimizing the development of VID and referral systems requires holistic thinking, planning,
and collaboration across various roles and actors—from frontline workers to NGOs to law
enforcement to immigration to labor inspectors to communities to judicial actors to survivors
themselves. Collecting data from multiple points of intake and sources and for various types of
human trafficking requires tools for every option and coordination across agencies and sectors to
collect and integrate and consolidate data. In addition, the diverse types of trafficking may
include sexual exploitation, forced labor, domestic servitude, forced begging or street selling,
forced marriage, organ removal, child soldiers, and more, with each having both similar and
different characteristics, requiring different tools to maximize identification and data collection.
Victims may also be identified at various stages, i.e., removed directly out of the trafficking
situation, identified after being arrested for crimes resulting from trafficking (e.g., drug selling,
prostitution, etc.), identified after exit, or after transfer or repatriation. This broadens even further
the scope of possible first responders who need training and referral knowledge (teachers, health
professionals, social workers, faith leaders, consular agencies, airport staff, juvenile facility staff,
and more). In order to allow meaningful analysis, all of this assorted data—from multiple
sources, for different types of victims and various forms of trafficking, identified at different
stages—needs to be accurate and aligned. And, trafficking is a local, national, regional, and
global issue, where any case can require collaboration across multiple borders where

66 A Canadian study clearly lays out these challenges: Canadian Center for Justice Statistics; Towards the
Development of a National Data Collection Framework to Measure Trafficking in Persons; 2012;
identification and referral systems, to the extent they exist, may vary widely as to purpose or application, and where language barriers further complicate ease of access.

Given the enormity of the puzzle, and with varying degrees of both will and resources among government and other actors, identification and referral systems are typically cobbled together in pieces—for example by creating various tools (indicators, checklists, screening tools, referral guidelines, and directories), ideally governed by Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and as a part of a National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Because a single system is hard to develop, promote, and maintain, systems often evolve out of ad hoc efforts by CSOs or specific government agencies. But the existence of a unifying body (National Anti-Trafficking Committee, consortiums of CSOs, or the like) can yield more promising results by facilitating core involvement in design and subsequent alignment in data collection, at least to the borders of jurisdiction and authority of the participating entities.

To examine elements of promising identification and referral data collection systems for human trafficking, it may be useful to cluster them by stage (e.g., screening tools and forms, guides and comprehensive manuals, etc.), while also examining intended target victim demographics (e.g., age, gender, foreign national versus domestic victims, etc.).

**Identification and referral tools:** A typical starting place for many VID and data collection systems is development of indicators of trafficking and screening tools for interviewing potential victims. Best practice systems tailor tools to address target victim demographics, such as children versus adults, male or female or LGBTQ, foreign national versus domestic victims, or to accommodate various disabilities and language preferences. Tools are also more effective when adapted to distinguish between various forms of human trafficking (e.g., sexual exploitation, forced labor, forced begging or selling, domestic servitude, forced marriage, child soldiering, organ removal, etc.). Best practice systems include a portfolio of targeted tools, wherein each tool is trauma-informed, holistically vetted, then standardized and shared, often with online capability, where feasible. For example, as early as 2009, the Vera Institute produced a screening tool, which was evaluated in 2014 to be roughly 80 percent effective in identifying human trafficking.\(^{67}\) In California, the Judicial Council and others produced a Toolkit for Judicial Officers\(^ {68}\) that includes a matrix of specialized screening tools for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC), as well as model interagency protocols for CSEC. NGOs often collect hotline triage questionnaire data and intake data. The United States federal Health and Human Services publishes an Adult Human Trafficking Screening Tool with a basic two-page tool and 19 sample screening tools to address human trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault, and HIV.\(^ {69}\) And, the Department of Justice produces a report on data collection activities each year.\(^ {70}\) Yet, while United States identification tools are myriad, and specialized, there is no

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\(^{67}\) Vera Institute of Justice; *Improving Human Trafficking Victim Identification—Validation and Dissemination of a Screening Tool*; 2014; [https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/246712.pdf](https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/246712.pdf).

\(^{68}\) Center for Families, Children & the Courts; *Human Trafficking in California Toolkit for Judicial Officers*; 2017; pages 78-103; (includes laws, trauma-informed practices, service providers, and judicial bench cards); [https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/human-trafficking-toolkit-cfcc.pdf](https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/human-trafficking-toolkit-cfcc.pdf).

\(^{69}\) Administration for Children & Families, Office on Trafficking in Persons; *Adult Human Trafficking Screening Tool and Guide*; 2018.

single federally mandated set of tools, and each state also has varying regulations around mandatory reporting for both children and adults.

Around the globe, there are many ad hoc identification and screening tools to collect data. Several have been set up to meet various aspects in the reporting requirements of international donors. A 2020 NEXUS/Winrock study looked at 183 identification tools and resources, which they narrowed to 54 materials in different countries in Asia. A deeper examination of those materials found that most identification tools linked to referral, but often did not offer sufficient operational information to connect victims to service providers, or any advice on how to handle individuals who did not screen positive as victims of trafficking. It was not always clear who was supposed to use the tools, and there was limited tailoring of tools (especially for males), while some tools and resources further entrenched gender norms and stereotypes while missing appropriate cultural considerations.  

Identification and referral guides and manuals: Often the next stage in developing a VID and referral data collection system involves further development of decision matrixes (flow charts for identification and referral), stipulation of agencies and partners at each step in the process (offering directories, ideally of vetted partners and service providers), and providing written SOPs on what to collect and where to send data. Identification tools and reporting mechanisms may also move online, as feasible, to allow for easier consolidation and sharing. In Ghana, the DoS Child Protection Compact (CPC), implemented by IOM, developed a 370-page step-by-step manual that includes chapters on identification and screening, direct assistance, law review, investigation, prosecution, referral and case monitoring. In another example, in 2019, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) developed a set of guidelines and instructions specific to victims of trafficking coming through migrant and refugee reception, which, though specific and informative, lacks forms or screening tools. A good example of an online system can be found in the United Kingdom, where the government has compiled both instructional guides on the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and online forms for reporting suspected victims of trafficking (with differentiated NRMs and forms for Scotland and Wales). In fact, national data collection systems and consolidation of data may be best supported by the existence of a NRM, coupled with a virtual task force model of collaboration.  

Another more comprehensive regional online system—the SADC Regional Anti-Trafficking in Persons Data Collection System—was developed in 2014 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the South African Development Community (SADC) and deployed in 2019. It features a user manual and an online system for collecting data to profile victims and traffickers, monitor trafficking routes and methods, identify various forms of trafficking, assess services provided to victims, and monitor investigation and prosecution of cases. The data collected at national levels feeds into the regional system, which is managed by regional administrators.

**Survivor services and outcomes:** Another element of VID and referral data collection systems catalogues the victims served (demographic information and services) and also measures the results of referral, which is the type and number of services provided, by whom, and the progress and outcomes experienced by survivors. Most data collection systems provide referral information (though of varying utility). For example, the National Human Trafficking Hotline and Online Referral Directory offers an online search function by zip code or city to identify services by gender, nationality, age, and type of trafficking. The Health and Human Services online Shepherd Case Management System collects data and facilitates access to services and benefits for foreign national minors (for T-Visa, etc.). Globally, many SOPs and NRM names responsible government agencies. Better systems include directories of government and NGO service partners (with contact numbers), sometimes tagging those entities that have passed various eligibility training or certification to serve victims of trafficking.

What few data collection systems have been able to do is align victim service provision (number and type of victims and services provided) across NGOs and between NGOs and government. Fewer still are able to collect data to validate survivor outcomes, or better yet, to correlate victim profiles and services rendered with survivor outcomes. Research Triangle Institute (RTI) International developed an Outcomes Tool for Human Trafficking Survivors based on an assessment tool developed by the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST). The tool uses a Likert scale to rank survivor progress in 14 categories and over time. The original tool developed by CAST included a strengths-based forward planning tool and was tied to a custom database that also catalogued hundreds of service options (by codes), in 15-minute intervals, performed in-house or by up to 90 partner providers, and to include partner satisfaction rankings from referred survivors. The baseline and quarterly survivor assessment data could then link within a system that detailed survivor demographics (age, gender, country of origin, etc.), methods of service entry (direct intake through self-identification, mandate from law enforcement, etc.), level and type of services provided (in-house and through referral to specialized partners), and provider rankings, to correlate these factors to assessment outcomes.

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77 National Human Trafficking Hotline; Referral Directory; https://humantraffickinghotline.org/training-resources/referral-directory?loc=94542&x=18&y=18.
78 Administration for Children & Families, Office on Trafficking in Persons; Shepherd Case Management System; https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/victim-assistance/shepherd and https://shspfm.gss.acf.hhs.gov/eaas(identityserver/Identity/Account/Login/LoginSelection/.
This enabled case managers to examine patterns across the 350 survivors served annually with the goal of optimizing combinations to improve outcomes.

More recently, various technology solutions have come on the market to provide secure cloud-based case management with customized roll-up dashboards. These can be adapted to various client profiles, including for victims of trafficking. Looking at systems that have been developed for other types of victim portfolios (e.g., victims of domestic violence, conflict-related gender-based violence, torture, genocide and atrocity crimes, and other forms of criminal harm) can also be instructive in designing VID and referral data collection systems. For example, domestic violence protocols include informed consent forms, data transfer protocols, and platforms to share data (and costs) between participating members.

**Investigation data:** Some investigation data is collected in virtually any country, principally by police and police investigators (sometimes specialized anti-trafficking police), and by investigating prosecutors. Border control and immigration officers, labor inspectors, and NGOs and INGOs (such as International Justice Mission) may also investigate cases and collect data on both criminal cases and civil violations. In many jurisdictions, judges can also order additional investigation. Systems used to collect and consolidate data may be manual or electronic, and either form may produce gaps due to lack of knowledge, or be prone to errors or inconsistencies in data collection, especially at the local level where training and awareness may be scarce and where data collection may be a paper and pen process. While investigation data focuses on the elements of a crime, there is an opportunity to collect key information about trafficking routes and “hotspot” locations, methods, and victim demographics. This is sometimes a lost opportunity. For example, the Standard Functional Specifications for Law Enforcement Records Management Systems (RMSs) developed by the Law Enforcement Information Technology Standards Council (LEITSC) neglects information on VID and data collection. The investigation phase is also where cross-border patterns and organized criminal activity are often identified.

Best practice in data collection would include training to collect and preserve sufficient data to determine whether or not a potential victim is in fact a victim of trafficking, to preserve primary interviews and evidence for prosecution, and to document and allow analysis of trends and patterns over time. In working with victims and witnesses during investigative interviews, best practice would include use of trauma-informed and victim-centered techniques and ample provision of victim/witness safety and security protocols. By example, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, U.S. Department of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime jointly created a Data Collection Protocol Checklist and a Development and Operations Roadmap for multi-disciplinary anti-human trafficking task forces. These tools together provide a framework for collecting both investigation and prosecution data and evaluating the stage (1 to 5) of progress in task force approaches to doing so. Included is an evaluation grid to measure the

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Law enforcement award recipients within these task forces are required to report only aggregate level case information on number of investigations and prosecutions, so many details, including on practices used to generate cases and information on suspects and victims is not reported. Law enforcement agencies and task forces also rely on their own systems to report information and track case data and these systems are often ad hoc and not integrated across task force members. Outside of task force investigation data, the UCR/NIBRS program added human trafficking (both for labor and sex trafficking) as new crimes enabling nationwide reporting on human trafficking incidents.\footnote{FBI’s National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), which captures crime data based on six data segments: administrative, offense, property, victim, offender, and arrestee. It not only supports mandatory data collection and recognition of crime patterns across jurisdictions, but also supports migration from traditional electronic publications to dynamic data presentations through the Crime Data Explorer (CDE) to produce interactive maps and other visuals.} However, numbers should be interpreted with caution as they are often reflective of investigative priorities and strategies versus prevalence. Notable for this evaluation is the training the FBI rolled out with the changes made to the system to train law enforcement on the definition of human trafficking and proper data reporting.

**Prosecution data:** Prosecution data is also typically collected in most countries and includes data on prosecution (charging, court process), conviction, and sentencing. System accuracy depends on both correct charging of the crime, and procedural excellence in reporting from local courtrooms and consolidating data at the national level. Many systems lack differentiation on trafficking cases (type of trafficking, demographics, or current status of survivors, etc.). Missing links back to survivors can mean aggravated charges are not brought for survivors whose condition worsens, or that compensation awards never follow the survivor to their current residence (perhaps in another country). It also means that cases get clumped together and significant trafficking patterns and trends can be overlooked. One best practice example can be found in the Combat Human Trafficking Act of 2015 (CHTA) (34 U.S.C. § 20709(e)), which requires the director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) to prepare an annual report on human trafficking. The report must include information on the following: arrests for human trafficking offenses by state law enforcement officers, prosecutions of individuals in state courts for human trafficking offenses, convictions of individuals in state courts for human-trafficking offenses, and sentences imposed on individuals convicted in state courts for human-trafficking offenses. In response to this act, the 2018 Survey of State Attorneys General Offices, Human Trafficking (SSAGO-HT) asked state attorneys general to provide information on charging practices for sex- and labor-trafficking cases, characteristics of offenders and victims of human trafficking, how cases are referred to state attorneys general for review and possible prosecution,
and case outcomes for cases prosecuted by state attorneys general. Results are supported by the Federal Justice Statistics Program (FJSP), which compiles data.\textsuperscript{83}

**Data consolidation:** One of the more sophisticated elements of a data collection system is the ability to consolidate data (and ideally to use data in decision-making). Currently, in the United States there is no single centralized data collection system to house data on VID and referral (outside of federal law enforcement data and the TIMS system for portions of victim services funded under federal awards). Because global definitions, data fields, collection methods and participation differ, it is seldom practical to consolidate data across platforms, agencies and providers, or broad geographic regions. Few systems can consistently accumulate national data from multiple sources and collected for different purposes. However, when the systems are planned and negotiated in advance among all stakeholders, such as the SADC tool (above) that aims to consolidate data across the 16 SADC member countries, it is possible to achieve alignment. In another example, the Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC), launched in 2017 as an initiative of IOM, claims to be the first global data hub featuring harmonized data from counter-trafficking organizations.\textsuperscript{84}

**Data sharing and confidentiality:** Systems having data that is shared between partners or is available to members or the general public have the additional burden of enhanced security. In the United States, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) contain strong confidentiality provisions that limit the sharing of victims' personally identifying information. The Department of Justice has implemented supporting regulations on victim confidentiality for VAWA award recipients at 28 CFR 90.4, and for Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) award recipients at 28 CFR 94.115.\textsuperscript{85} Privacy and data protection considerations are included in the UNODC (2008, Tool 9.15) toolkit on Use of Standardized Data Collection Instruments, or the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking’s (2008) Guide to Ethics and Human Rights in Counter Trafficking.\textsuperscript{86} And the CTDC global hub (mentioned above) collects data from stakeholders who have previously redacted the data to eliminate personally identifiable information. It then also anonymizes data to a higher level through a mathematical approach called k-anonymization, through which it is not possible to query a dataset and return fewer than a pre-determined (k=10) number of results, regardless of the query.

Lessons from other disciplines include Interpol’s robust set of rules for data security,\textsuperscript{87} or the Commission for International Justice and Accountability’s protocols for cataloguing and securing victim and witness testimonies, including through VPN security, redacting and

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\textsuperscript{83} Technology Safety; Confidentiality: VAWA, FVPSA, and VOCA; 2022; https://www.techsafety.org/confidentiality-in-vawa
\textsuperscript{84} Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative; https://www.ctdatacollaborative.org/about-us.
\textsuperscript{85} Technology Safety; Confidentiality: VAWA, FVPSA, and VOCA; 2022; https://www.techsafety.org/confidentiality-in-vawa
\textsuperscript{87} Interpol; Rules on the Processing of Data; 2019; https://www.interpol.int/en/Who-we-are/Legal-framework/Data-protection.
scrubbing of data, and stealth storage locations. Online platforms like Tech Safety also offer security applications and toolkits on best practice in securing victim data.\textsuperscript{88}

**Data integration and use:** There are a myriad of ways in which data elements on victims can be integrated into other data systems and to facilitate research. For example, in the United States in 2020, the Office on TIP supported integration of human trafficking data elements into existing HHS databases, including the Runaway and Homeless Youth – Homeless Management Information System (RHY-HMIS), National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), and the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10). It also identified possibilities for interoperability between and across social service providers at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels, and supported efforts to estimate prevalence of human trafficking in the United States.\textsuperscript{89}

**System ownership and transparency:** There are various forms of ownership—with examples of NGO networks owning the data (e.g., survivor service data), government owning the data (especially investigation and prosecution data), and joint ownership of data (CTDC and others). Each model has pros and cons. While government ownership might be more institutionalized (and therefore sustainable), its upkeep might also be more prone to the whims of newly elected governments. While NGO networks might have more direct access to service data when they are the service providers, they might also refocus data collection criteria to satisfy donor requirements. While joint ownership can solve some of these issues and perhaps promote transparency and more holistic buy-in, it becomes harder to govern accuracy or confidentiality. There is no single best practice, except to note that shared data allows the widest use of data, which is optimal, so long as the parameters of sharing and use are regulated.

**Training tools:** Each system, to be used properly, requires training for first responders and others who collect data and for anyone who inputs or uses data. In the United States, the Office of Justice Programs Training and Technical Assistance (OVCTTAC) offers online training modules, including for task forces aiming to construct data capture systems.\textsuperscript{90} In 2020, IOM developed a basic 80-page TIP: VID and Assistance Training Guide focused on Nigeria and looking at indicators and screening interviews and the need for a referral directory.\textsuperscript{91} IOM, UNODC, ABA ROLI, Warnath Group, Lawyers without Borders and others have also assisted NGOs and governments to develop training manuals and conduct training on VID and referral in many countries, from Bangladesh to Tanzania.

Converting training modules and sessions into functional systems and actions is a huge step. In designing an identification and referral data collection system, preparation, inclusion and staging are key, along with a need to balance thoroughness against complexity and to prioritize data needs, while also being cognizant of practical realities. And, as with any data collection system, poor data input creates inaccurate data output, so it is crucial to think through and build in a monitoring function at the design stage.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{88} Technology Safety: Confidentiality Toolkit; 2022; https://www.techsafety.org/confidentiality.
\item \textsuperscript{89} Administration for Children & Families; Office on Trafficking in Persons Research & Data Fact Sheet; https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/otip/otip_research_and_data_fact_sheet.pdf.
\item \textsuperscript{90} OVC TTAC: Human Trafficking Task Force e-Guide; https://www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide/eguide/.
\item \textsuperscript{91} https://publications.iom.int/books/trafficking-persons-victim-identification-and-assistance-training-guide.
\end{itemize}
7. What Tools Would Be Helpful in Informing Decision Making around TIP Programming?

How ripe do victim identification efforts need to be in order for IP assistance to be meaningful? (EQ7a)

In order for TIP Office funding of victim identification data collection systems to be meaningful and have the best chance of sustainability, a few factors are critical: the government should not be at high risk for volatility, a strong legal framework with human trafficking laws that are aligned with the TVPA or Palermo Protocol should be in place (ideally for a period of time), and there needs to be a locally articulated interest in amending existing data collection systems or establishing new systems to address challenges in data collection and reporting. When systems are designed to meet local needs, they are more likely to be sustained. Additional important factors include a high level of political will on behalf of the intended users of the system, especially the intended owner or owners of the system. Political will needs to be backed up with a plan for sustaining the system through legal or policy amendments, if necessary, human and financial resources and the technical infrastructure to host the system, ongoing training and technical assistance. If a system is intended to involve multiple users, it is more likely to be successful when partnerships are formalized (e.g., through a task force), and when roles and responsibilities are clear, and trust is high.

The Victim Identification Data Collection System Programming Flowchart in Annex I incorporates the elements above and is intended to help guide decision making on: 1) where to target programming of VID data collection system efforts, 2) when and what to program, and 3) how to construct funding mechanisms depending on who the intended users are. The flowchart guides decision making around funding VID data collection systems for use in the areas of investigation, prosecution, identification and protection. It enables assessment of a country’s data collection capacity needs in each of those areas by comparing a government’s reported data for the TIP Report against Department of State’s articulated indicia of a government making “serious and sustained efforts” towards the TVPA minimum standards. It also presents suggested additional measures that the TIP Office may want to consider as important measures of a country’s progress in these areas. Suggested additional performance measures are presented in

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92 While supporting locally-driven data collection efforts, the TIP Office can also ensure funded data collection systems are built or amended to be in alignment with the Palermo Protocol, TVPA and corresponding international standards and data collection efforts, such as the TIP Report, ICSIS (in the case of investigative data), or CTDC (for NGO data).

93 This would be similar to at least a minimum of a Stage 3 in Partnership on the NRM Implementation Phase Framework, see DevTech’s NRM Evaluation, though it isn’t necessary for a formal NRM to be in place.

94 Ideally any VID data collection system would be embedded in an environment where the prevalence of human trafficking is known though in reality this may not be possible. This would allow human trafficking stakeholders to more fully understand whether efforts to identify victims and investigate and prosecute traffickers are making an appreciable impact. It is worth considering whether reporting on the number of victims identified, cases prosecuted and convicted (under anti-trafficking laws) represents the tip of an iceberg and whether data systems invested in moving forward could be structured to shed more light on additional key performance metrics of interest to help
Victim Identification Data Collection System Programming Flowchart. These are by no means comprehensive or final, but a suggested starting place of possible measures that could be amended based on the type of system to be funded. These measures are helpful not just in evaluating the effectiveness of the system itself but in providing critical insights for users of each system to make data-driven decisions and to better target requests for funding.95

Depending on the answers to the questions in the flowchart, a number of different suggestions for programming are presented and aligned with stages of a country’s progress and specific to whether VID data collection needs are related to investigation, prosecution, identification or protection. Needs can be assessed separately (for example if a government has strong needs to improve protection data collection systems over investigation or vice versa). They can also be assessed together for systems intended to integrate across topic areas. The steps below walk through each stage of the flowchart and present decision-making steps as they apply in general across categories of identification, protection, investigation and prosecution. The flow chart presents more detail regarding various programming options for each of those topics depending on multiple “if-then” scenarios.

**Deciding Where to Fund**

- It may be less fruitful to invest in VID data collection systems in countries with a high risk of government volatility and low levels of political will to combat human trafficking.
- Prioritize funding to countries with human trafficking laws aligned with TVPA/Palermo Protocol96
  - We advise against funding any government-owned/led or government partner systems (e.g., an integrated data system) in countries where human trafficking laws don’t exist or are not aligned with the TVPA/Palermo Protocol.
  - In limited cases, if there is an NGO operating in country that: 1) adheres to the TVPA/Palermo Protocol; 2) is sustainable; and 3) has identified a significant number of victims of trafficking and is in need of a project to either strengthen an existing system or construct a new system, consider investing.

**Deciding What to Fund**

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95 The data elements necessary to meet the TVPA minimum standards and show “serious and sustained” efforts along investigation, prosecution, protection and identification are included, alongside suggested additional performance measures, by clicking on the yellow circle in the flowchart next to each topic area.

96 This has important implications for definitions underlying any system, as described below.
• Assess a government’s VID data system needs according to the areas of: 1) identification, 2) protection, 3) investigation, and 4) prosecution.

• For each of these areas, assess whether data submitted by the government is sufficient to inform the TVPA minimum standards and indicia of “serious and sustained efforts” outlined in the TIP Report and/or whether data collection recommendations have been made in the TIP Report.

• Consider locally identified data system needs in each of the four areas (identification, protection, investigation, and prosecution), as an indication of potential political will and advanced understanding of data collection challenges.

• VID data system projects that are not locally initiated are less likely to be sustainable.

• If locally initiated need for strengthening or creating a new VID data collection system is not expressed, but DOS assesses the government needs to improve the quality of data submitted for the TIP Report in any of the four areas, then:
  - Fund training and capacity building on data collection and reporting.
  - Data capacity mapping project to:
    ▪ Understand needs and challenges with existing systems, including definitions of human trafficking that are not aligned with the Palermo Protocol or inability of systems to contribute to international data collection efforts such as the TIP Report, ICCS, or CTDC.
    ▪ Assess human trafficking stakeholder training and awareness needs for 1) human trafficking laws and victim-centered, trauma-informed practices; and 2) data collection and reporting.
    ▪ Propose strategies to address VID data collection system needs, assessing whether existing systems might feasibly be amended or if there is a need to create a new system.
    ▪ Create VID data system sustainability plan (see below).
    ▪ Identify partners and assess human, financial and technological capacity to sustain recommended VID data system projects (see below).
  - Other projects to consider funding prior to investing in funding a data collection system project, in addition to the above, but specific to the four categories (investigation, prosecution, identification and protection) are embedded in the VID Data Collection System Programming Flowchart.

Deciding Who to Fund

• Funded efforts given priority should be those that seek to contribute to improving a country’s data collection infrastructure on human trafficking in the long term, after

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97 If a protection and assistance case management systems (and NGO owned), consider also aligning with IOM’s Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative.

98 If investigation system, consider also aligning with UNODC’s International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) efforts to standardize criminal justice reporting on TIP so systems can contribute these aggregate data as well. These efforts are broader than just TIP but do include categories for TIP reporting and are aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals.

funding ceases, versus project specific data collection efforts without utility beyond the project period. Projects should support key stakeholders working on the frontlines of human trafficking identification, investigation, prosecution, and protection in each country.

- Where possible support for developing or strengthening incident-level data collection systems that can be rolled up into providing aggregate level data that is confidential is preferred because it allows granularity in tracking case, victim, and suspect outcomes. Systems that integrate across multiple agencies (government and CSOs) allow tracking along a continuum of identification, referral, service provision, investigation, and prosecution (if relevant).

- Implementing organizations should work alongside local partners to provide technical and subject matter expertise, but local partners should drive and own the system.
- Local stakeholders, including survivors,100 direct service providers, investigators, prosecutors, and others should be involved early and often throughout project ideation, piloting and implementation working in partnership with implementing organizations and the TIP Office to provide expertise, build capacity and provide initial funding.
- Local partners should demonstrate basic knowledge of human trafficking, consistent with the Palermo Protocol or TVPA-aligned laws, though may still have misperceptions, and interest in improving VID data collection and reporting.
- Local partners should describe the goals of a project to strengthen VID data collection and reporting as: 1) at a minimum including compliance with human trafficking reporting requirements, however, ideally 2) enabling local partner(s) to strengthen their ability to conduct internal M&E, in line with performance metrics, to contribute to data-driven decision making on investigations, prosecutions, immigration screening procedures, identification or protection (some systems may combine some of these categories (e.g., identification and protection or investigation and prosecution) and others may be standalone (e.g., prosecution only)).
- Data systems should be locally owned:
  - If a system will be developed/owned by the implementing organization then a plan must be in place to transfer ownership, this may need to be supported by legal or policy changes ahead of time.
  - Proposed in-country data system leads should be authorized under law to operate data systems/collect human trafficking data (*if the system involves multiple stakeholders, this must be assessed for each).
  - Proposed in-country data system leads should have the human, financial, and technological capacity to sustain recommended VID data system projects (*if the system involves multiple stakeholders, this must be assessed for each).
- Prioritize funding projects that incorporate relevant steps or phases in line with Principles of Digital Development but specific to human trafficking VID data collection systems.

**Deciding How to Fund**

100 Survivor perspectives can be incorporated in myriad ways and do not require technical expertise in data systems. However, organizations like Annie Cannons provide software engineering expertise by individuals with lived experience.
• Once the steps above are followed, consider structuring VID data collection system projects in the following ways, based on who the lead partner is, and the type of system proposed:
  - Government lead or government partner, new system (stand alone or integrated)\(^{101}\) — advise funding similar to Child Protection Compacts—to include government-buy in to dedicate human, financial, technical resources and ongoing training and TA to sustain the system after the project period has ended, to ensure system ownership and plan to mitigate against turnover.
  - Government lead or government partner, amend existing system:
    ▪ **Significant amendments** – advise funding similar to Child Protection Compacts—to include government buy-in to dedicate human, financial, technical resources and ongoing training and TA to sustain the system after the project period has ended, to ensure system ownership and plan to mitigate against turnover.
    ▪ **Minimal amendments** – advise MOUs ahead of time with implementing organization to outline roles and responsibilities of all partners and include sustainability plan demonstrating the lead has the ability to support any amendments made with human, financial, technological, training and TA after the project period has ended, if relevant.\(^{102}\)
  - NGO led, new system (stand-alone or integrated with other NGO data)\(^{103}\) or amendments to existing systems\(^{104}\) — advise MOUs ahead of time with implementing organization to outline roles and responsibilities of all partners and include sustainability plan demonstrating the lead has the ability to support any amendments made with human, financial, technological, training and TA after the project period has ended, if relevant.\(^{105}\)

• There will always be challenges with lack of public and human trafficking stakeholder awareness — this should not be a reason to decide against investing in data collection systems, in fact data systems can help improve stakeholder awareness by illuminating training and TA needs by analyzing trends in identified cases.
  - Use findings from the data capacity mapping project to build training and TA on human trafficking and on data collection systems and processes during project implementation.
  - Ensure through funding mechanisms above, that access to ongoing training and TA on human trafficking and the specific data collection system is available after the funded project period.

8. **Principles for Digital Development**

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\(^{101}\) This may include integrated systems that also include NGO data but have the government as a lead or contributing partner—e.g., data systems built for multi-disciplinary teams or task forces.

\(^{102}\) Depending on the type of amendments needed to existing systems, resource needs may vary from minimal to more extensive. Generally, this category refers to amendments that would require minimal added resources from government leads. The more resources required, the more a Compact funding mechanism is recommended.

\(^{103}\) These are NGO systems that do not involve any integration with government partner data.

\(^{104}\) This could include projects to align NGO data systems with international best practices, similar to IOM’s work with Blue Dragon.

\(^{105}\) Depending on the type of amendments needed to existing systems, resource needs may vary from minimal to more extensive. Generally, this category refers to amendments that would require minimal added resources from government leads. The more resources required, the more a Compact funding mechanism is recommended.
Are there distinct steps/phases that are, or should be, universal to building a victim identification system or database? (EQ7b)

The following Principles for Digital Development are promising practices international development organizations can reference when programming digital tools. The principles represent lessons learned from “predictable and preventable” reasons digital programs failed across contexts. According to the developers, these principles are broad and intended to be adapted across contexts and updated.

We have outlined how the findings of our evaluation, specific to developing human trafficking VID data collection systems comport with and add to these core principles—these are in no way exhaustive, and the original Principles should be referenced in addition to the findings below, especially regarding how to apply these principles across four phases of digital design: 1) analyze and plan; 2) design and develop; 3) deploy and implement; 4) monitoring and evaluation. The principles can apply in any order, though we have reordered them to apply in the context we found useful in the sites studied in our evaluation (and imagining future programming). These principles are intended both for the TIP Office to reference alongside the VID Data Collection System Programming Flowchart and represent principles that could be considered when developing and assessing proposals for VID data collection system projects.

Understand the Existing Ecosystem

- Conduct TIP data capacity mapping to map data capacity needs of local human trafficking stakeholders across government and CSOs, assess gaps, challenges, stakeholder capacity (human and financial), and political will.
- Review accompanying adjacent human services, social work, and welfare services to ensure availability during implementation.

Reuse and Improve

- Through a data capacity mapping exercise, examine costs and benefits of adapting existing systems used for investigation, prosecution, immigration, identification, and protection to resolve identified challenges.
  - Prioritize projects to adapt existing systems that may be easier lift, have lower cost and have the potential for wide impact in resolving data challenges.

Design with the User

- Begin coordination and relationship-building far in advance of system development.

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106 Understanding that not all tools are digital, many of these principles apply to paper-based systems as well.
107 This step is also informed in the TIP Office’s use of the VID Data Collection System Programming Flowchart to narrow down context to specific countries and topics to focus data collection efforts (e.g., investigation, prosecution, immigration systems, identification, protection).
- Engage users in the design and testing of the system.
- Use a co-creation process with human trafficking stakeholders, including system users, co-creating the system alongside technical experts, the implementing organization and funder.
- Create different functionalities and access levels for different users, understand and design systems to respond to user needs.
- Create built-in features to generate reports as an added functionality to help users in their own internal M&E processes and/or to help with external reporting requirements.
- Partner or subcontract with local tech groups that have trust and support of local actors.
- Develop a codebook to include definitions for each term in the data collection system. A user’s manual outlining all steps required for data entry for every term should be developed and made available electronically and via hardcopy if on-call TA is not available or not available long-term.
- Build systems to track whether appropriate linkages are made to social and human services to ensure victim protection and services are provided once they are initially identified through the system.
- Multiple crimes (e.g., sexual assault or intimate partner violence) often intersect with human trafficking. All types of systems should be built to allow the collection of data on multiple crimes, not just human trafficking.
- Test and validate screening and identification tools.

Be Collaborative

- Fundamental step: Assess stakeholder awareness of the definition of human trafficking. Ensure system is designed to comport with the TVPA/Palermo Protocol. Even if the country has laws aligned with the Palermo Protocol, VID data collection systems may not be aligned, and users may also have varying perceptions and operational definitions that can lead to data collection challenges.
- Conduct continuous and ongoing training on the definition of trafficking to be used amongst stakeholders so that data isn’t collected or interpreted differently, and to avoid mislabeling of data.
- Training and capacity building before, during, and after to increase awareness and train users in the system (encoding procedures, data recovery, data security, confidentiality, access, reporting).
- Local human trafficking stakeholders who are the intended system end users should collaborate with the implementing organization and funders. Implementing organizations and funders can lend resources, and capacity building in human trafficking and data system development or adaptation. Where possible, partner with local, trusted technology companies to assist in product development.
- Engage survivors as stakeholders.
- Define roles and responsibilities of each partner in an MOU or Compact mechanism agreed to prior to the project.
- Ensure transparency in the design and development process among partners.
Build for Sustainability

- Decide on data system ownership and, if needed, how it will be transferred after the project ends.
- Ensure intended data system owner has authority to host system and collect data. Laws and policies may need to be amended and should be planned for ahead of time.
- Map sustainability planning for proposed data system to include clarifying ownership, the human and financial resources needed to sustain the data system, as well as provisions for ongoing system M&E, needed upgrades, and ongoing access for system users to training and TA. These plans can be included in MOUs for NGO systems or Compact Mechanisms for any systems involving government partners.
- Ensure data is stored and accessed online.

Address Privacy and Security

- All systems must be designed to be compliant with international best practices in data confidentiality^{108} and privacy. Where relevant, systems should be in accordance with local privacy laws and project planning should incorporate the length of time for review with national privacy commissions into project design.
- Develop sufficient long-term and secure data storage.
- If the system allows for communication between agencies, ensure it does so while retaining data confidentiality.

Be Data Driven

- M&E processes should be built into systems to enable continual testing, evaluation and adaptation of systems for maximum use (beyond project funding periods). Processes should provide insight on system utilization, incorporate feedback from users, and troubleshoot technical concerns.
- Systems are more likely to be sustainable when they are built to enable users to generate reports for a number of purposes, including to facilitate data-driven decision making.

Use Open Standards, Open Data, Open Source, and Open Innovation

- This principle is optional and may not apply, depending on the system to be developed or amended, though it should be considered^{109}.

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^{108} For further discussion, see p. 84 “The Duty of Confidentiality” in OSCE’s NRM Handbook (2022).

^{109} Examples of open-source systems examined through the evaluation included: 1) IOM’s project to amend Blue Dragon’s existing data collection systems to be aligned with international best practices (and presumably allow reporting into the CTDC), 2) KoboToolbox adapted and used in Burkina Faso, but available open-source across multiple humanitarian contexts.
Design for Scale

- This principle is optional and may not apply, depending on the system to be developed or amended, though it should be considered.

What definitions/terminologies are absolutely essential to define, no matter what the data collection context? (EQ7c)

Stakeholders interviewed during our evaluation stated that the most important term to define is human trafficking. Even in countries with human trafficking laws that are aligned with the TVPA/Palermo Protocol, stakeholders may have misperceptions or use different operational definitions. It is crucial for a project to first assess the extent of misperceptions and to develop ongoing training to build awareness for all partners on the definition of trafficking. Systems, when built correctly and aligned with the TVPA/Palermo Protocol definition, can help illuminate trends in characteristics of identified victims that may reflect misperceptions and further inform training and TA needs.

Victim identification data collection system can take myriad forms and involve multiple fields. A codebook or data dictionary should be developed in partnership with system users and made available electronically and in hard copy. The codebook should be constructed through collaboration with data system users to define each element included in the system and to clarify understanding of any existing elements for systems being amended.

Diagnostic tool to evaluate an existing victim identification system (EQ7d)

Determining if a VID data collection system is effective can be measured by whether it: 1) measures what it intends to measure and does so accurately and reliably; 2) is functional; 3) is sustainable; 4) is secure and adheres to the strictest standards for confidentiality and data privacy; and 5) is useful for and used consistently by intended users to provide data-driven insights into the topics addressed by the system. A promising practice in developing data collection systems is to build them to include diagnostic tools to check for effectiveness and enable ongoing troubleshooting and adaptation. Structuring a VID data collection system project to include an M&E process can provide further insights into the effectiveness of systems once created, as well as challenges and lessons learned in the process of development and implementation.

Separate from, or as part of, the M&E process above, the TIP Office may consider using or adapting the survey attached in Annex B to survey frontline users of any VID data collection system funded in the future, or for system implementers to use to survey users. The survey is designed to be an online and self-administered questionnaire that takes less than 15 minutes to complete. Survey items include measures of promising practices in human trafficking VID data collection systems, perspectives on transparency in the design, development and use of the system, trust in the data system and collaborating stakeholders, usability of the system, the legal and ethical framework governing the data collection system, impact, sustainability and funding, and a limited set of demographic characteristics. The response format is a five-point Likert-type
scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, or don’t know). Simple instructions, repetitive forced-choice response formats, and clear navigational prompts are basic elements of the online survey’s user-friendly design. The survey can be administered in Microsoft Forms and adapted for use in any language. Respondents can log on to the survey using a unique “username” and private password; online instructions will remind respondents that participation is voluntary and completely confidential.

D. Conclusions

Collecting, sharing, and storing information on human trafficking, let alone victims of this crime, is a daunting task. To create comprehensive and usable data collection systems, implementing partners need to consider the range of pathways of identification of both potential and confirmed victims of trafficking and various tools and systems along each phase (Annex H). Some of these systems may exist and need to be amended to enable data collection on human trafficking, others may need to be created.

In addition, data collection systems should allow for the consolidation, analysis, and secure sharing of data. As we have seen from the case studies conducted in Burkina Faso, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Timor-Leste, the implementation of data collection systems presents both opportunities and challenges in gathering accurate statistics, linking victims with services, promoting coordination between in-country partners, and reporting and evaluating data.

Successful data collection systems were formed through extensive periods of coordination and co-creation between multiple stakeholders, including governments, INGOs, and CSOs. Training and capacity building were also essential features of successful implementation, often involving multiple partners and taking place before, during, and after systems were implemented. The case studies also demonstrated, however, challenges from which other countries and systems can learn. These challenges included most prominently the need for technological infrastructure and expertise, ongoing capacity building, in-country entities that engage with and take ownership over systems, awareness of human trafficking, a consistent and clear definition of human trafficking, and feasible plans for sustainability.

Importantly, the case studies illuminate that data collection systems are implemented in complex environments relying on stakeholders who possess competing priorities as well as varying infrastructure, expertise, and capacity. Data collection systems are not isolated tools, they are used within existing and often circuitous government and civil society processes, relationships, and methods. As such, they should be designed in a way that is easily accessible and adaptable by key partners, and in conjunction with investigation, prosecution, and social protection services. The case studies show us that even if data is collected by police and prosecution officials (for instance), this needs to be accompanied by appropriate services to victims, including the provision of basic needs and safety.

110 Microsoft Forms was used successfully in Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste for this evaluation. Other software programs could be used. Additionally, in Timor-Leste, some surveys were printed out in hard copy, completed and then uploaded into Microsoft Forms by hand.
What we’ve learned is that some environments are more conducive, and others are less conducive, to implementing usable and sustainable data collection systems. A conducive environment is one in which there are multiple and diverse stakeholders with strong relationships, clear owners and implementers are in place, there is minimal turnover and volatility in government, and government and civil society institutions are committed to improving data collection and services to victims of trafficking. Without stable leadership and coordination between stakeholders, a system may not be fully adopted or maintained over time, nor would it ever be substantially embraced by partners involved in collecting and analyzing data.

Furthermore, partners should have plans for installing and maintaining technological infrastructure and expertise (or they should be willing to invest in technological advancement long-term). In some cases, insufficient or challenging human trafficking data collection on VID was not specific or unique to human trafficking, but a symptom of larger country challenges with data collection on all types of crime and forms of victimization. Moreover, if technological systems are implemented only for the collection and tracking of data on human trafficking, these systems would become isolated from those used for other crimes, and there is more chance that the system would become unused, under-maintained, or unsustainable.

Finally, a country should have national laws and definitions on human trafficking that are used by all stakeholders. A data system by itself cannot overcome challenges with human trafficking awareness among the general public, stakeholders in charge of identifying and responding to human trafficking, and stakeholders working in adjacent fields who encounter human trafficking (for instance, domestic violence, GBV, humanitarian assistance, health officials), especially when it lacks screening procedures and validated screening protocols. These underlying challenges should not necessarily prevent data collection systems from being designed and tested. Rather, data collection can help stakeholders identify gaps in knowledge and identification of human trafficking and develop more accurate and effective training and awareness resources. Nevertheless, data collection systems must be accompanied by sufficient awareness of human trafficking amongst stakeholders to be used accurately.

E. Recommendations

Recommendations for the TIP Office, based on the evaluation findings, are listed below:

1. Prioritize VID data collection system projects that are initiated by local stakeholders and contribute to improving a country’s data collection infrastructure on human trafficking in the long-term versus project specific data collection efforts without utility beyond the project period. Projects should support key stakeholders working on the frontlines of human trafficking identification, investigation, prosecution, and protection in each country and respond to locally articulated needs.
   - Where possible support for developing or strengthening incident-level data collection systems that data system owners can roll up into providing confidential aggregate level data should be prioritized by the TIP Office because it allows granularity in tracking case, victim, and suspect outcomes, as well as maximum utility for a user, a factor in sustainability. The TIP Office can build
these requirements into future funding solicitations and processes to rate proposals. Future funding solicitations can ask bidders to describe and provide evidence regarding how proposed data collection system projects are locally initiated and address human trafficking data collection challenges and will strengthen a country’s data collection infrastructure on human trafficking beyond the project period. Bidders should delineate whether proposed data collection systems are incident-based and if not, why not.

2. At a minimum, future TIP Office funding solicitations for VID data collection systems—for government or NGOs—should ask bidders to describe how the proposed data collection system will be aligned with the Palermo Protocol definition of human trafficking and enable the system owner to collect and report data that will show progress in identification, investigation, prosecution, and protection. Depending on the type of system proposed, bidders should be required to explain how the proposed system will be aligned with international aggregate data reporting standards.\(^{111}\)
   - This is a minimum and shouldn’t be the whole intent of a VID data collection system and will likely be unsustainable if it is.

3. The TIP Office, along with international stakeholders, could consider developing/expanding core minimum performance measures for identification, investigation, prosecution, and protection. For example, increasing victim-centered and trauma-informed service provision, investigations, and prosecutions; increasing proactive, data-driven investigations; improving survivor outcomes (short-term and long-term) and reducing risk of trafficking; increasing evidence-based prosecutions aligned with international promising practices, to name a few. For future funding solicitations, the TIP Office could ask bidders to describe how proposed victim identification data collection systems will contribute to these measures. If it is not possible to develop international agreed-upon minimum performance measures, then bidders could be asked to outline their own measures in accordance with the 4 P framework and describe how their proposed data collection systems will contribute to those measures.\(^{112}\)

4. When soliciting bids for TIP Office funding for VID data collection systems, the TIP Office can ask bidders to outline how their proposals align with the nine Principles for Digital Development presented in C.7. Please see C.7 for a full list. The TIP Office can then monitor funded projects for inclusion of these principles. A few examples of principles that proposals should include are:

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\(^{111}\) If investigation system, consider also aligning with UNODC’s International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) efforts to standardize criminal justice reporting on TIP so systems can contribute these aggregate data as well. These efforts are broader than just TIP but do include categories for TIP reporting and are aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals. If a protection and assistance case management systems (and NGO owned), consider also aligning with IOM’s Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative.

\(^{112}\) The NRM Implementation Phase Framework can also be a useful reference for developing performance measures for each of the 4 Ps.
a) Local stakeholders, including survivors, should be involved early and often throughout project ideation, piloting and implementation working in partnership with implementing organizations and the TIP Office to provide expertise, build capacity and provide initial funding.
b) Developers must design all systems to be compliant with international best practices in data confidentiality and privacy, and local privacy laws (where relevant).
c) Developers must design all systems to support reporting and M&E function and sustainability by data system owners. The TIP Office should also fund contemporaneous M&E, for example, a process evaluation, of future projects to design and implement VID data collection systems by objective, external evaluators.

5. The TIP Office should not fund VID data collection system efforts in countries with high risk of government volatility and low political will. The TIP Office, in partnership with local embassy personnel, can use the RAMP assessment to make these determinations.

6. After the TIP Office makes political volatility assessments, they can use the *VID Data Collection System Programming Flowchart* (C.7) to develop future funding solicitations and assess proposals for VID data collection system projects. Using this tool, the TIP Office can take the following steps:

   a) Assess a government’s VID data system needs according to the areas of: 1) investigation, 2) prosecution, 3) identification, 4) protection.
   b) Prioritize funding systems in countries with TIP Office-assessed need to improve data collection as well as the political will to improve data collection systems.
   c) Conduct VID data system capacity mapping exercises prior to funding VID data collection system efforts. The TIP Office or a pre-solicitation consultant could be funding by the TIP Office to conduct this data capacity mapping exercise prior to funding a data collection system. Data collection system developers could use results from the mapping exercise to inform their future proposals to the TIP Office.
   d) Select projects where local partner/s will lead and own the VID data collection system after the funding period and have 1) legal authorization to do so, 2) the required technical infrastructure (or willingness and ability to invest in) relevant to the system design, 3) the human and financial resources to sustain the system and mitigate turnover.
   e) For any VID data collection systems involving government stakeholders as lead or project partners, structure projects similar to Child Protection Compacts to clearly outline roles and responsibility, human and financial resource allocation expectations and sustainability planning. The TIP Office may need to structure these compacts as larger multi-year grants, up to five years.
f) For any VID data collection systems not involving government stakeholders, structure projects to include MOUs to agree upon in advance of funding that outline similar commitments outlined in a Child Protection Compact.

7. There is a fundamental need for 1) investment into infrastructure, 2) a shift towards digitization, and 3) the development of cultures that facilitate continual adaptation and growth in information technology. Ideally, investment in infrastructure would take place not only for the purposes of collecting data on human trafficking, but multiple crimes. This would integrate rather than isolate internal processes for the collection, tracking, and analysis of data on human trafficking cases, and promote the longevity of a system’s use and uptake among partners. This need is more expansive and difficult to remedy. In addition to the practices the ET outlined in C.3, if the TIP Office is knowledgeable of international efforts to improve the data collection infrastructure for investigators, prosecutors and service providers (on any number of crime or victimization types), the ET recommends the TIP Office coordinate future funding of human trafficking victim identification data collection systems with these efforts, where possible. For example, the TIP Office, in collaboration with other international donors could pool resources and coordinate efforts to fund a CPC-style mechanism to improve prosecution data collection systems within a country. A project such as this would not only improve reporting on human trafficking, but also other crime and victimization types. The TIP Office could also consider funding data system experts from different fields to serve in a professional capacity building exchange programs on improving data collection system capacity in various organizations. For example, a law enforcement data analyst or data system developer could be funded through a six-to-twelve-month program to help build capacity within an investigative agency or a prosecutor’s office.