



ICAT The Inter-Agency Coordination Group
against Trafficking in Persons

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PLAN OF ACTION

Endorsed at the Principal Level Meeting

15 December 2020



The *Interagency Coordination Group Against Trafficking in Persons* (ICAT) is the UN's lead policy forum mandated by the UN General Assembly resolution 61/180 to improve coordination among UN agencies and other relevant international organizations to facilitate a holistic and comprehensive approach to preventing and combating trafficking in persons, including protection and support for victims of trafficking.

In line with its mandate, and since its [first meeting of Principals in 2018](#), ICAT has stepped-up its efforts to **set standards and priorities for the anti-trafficking community**, including by facilitating stronger system-wide inputs to intergovernmental and other processes, produce joint policy analysis on persistent or emerging trafficking-related issues, improve the **exchange of information, expertise and good practices**, and **facilitate joint programming** by building synergies among its diverse and comprehensive membership.

In 2020, ICAT undertook a joint exercise for the elaboration of an [Analytical Review](#) on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol. While this report acknowledges the complexity of the challenges the global community faces in the fight against trafficking in persons, there are key response areas where considerable impact can be generated. Notably, the Analytical Review identifies **six priority areas**, which ICAT recommends as foundational pillars to improve global anti-trafficking efforts.

The below *Plan of Action*, to be read in conjunction with the ICAT Analytical Review, was endorsed by [Principals at the ICAT Principals Meeting, held on 15 December 2020](#) and will guide ICAT multi-year work-plans.



1 | Building the evidence base

A shift from awareness towards impact.

ICAT will strengthen its **role as ‘one-stop shop’ source of accessible, reliable and easily digestible information** on trafficking in persons. This will entail completing a mapping of anti-trafficking functions by region, globally, and the development of new information products as well as strengthening means, platforms and formats of dissemination, to ensure that information reaches all relevant stakeholders at different levels.

Leveraging off its comprehensive membership across the UN family and beyond, ICAT will strive for data gathering initiatives which are both **gender and age disaggregated** as well as harmonized in their indicators, analysis, and methodologies.

Furthermore, in strengthening programming and evaluation of activities of anti-trafficking efforts, including at field level, the ICAT Toolkit on Designing and Evaluating Counter-Trafficking Programmes will be applied to develop the evidence base and the **understanding of ‘what works’** in responding to both persistent and emerging human trafficking trends.

ICAT will continue to conduct **analysis on emerging trends on trafficking in persons**, including on the links between trafficking in women and girls in conflict and humanitarian settings, political instability, and terrorism.

2 | Addressing the core drivers

A shift towards vulnerability reduction.

ICAT will look at the **factors which make particular groups vulnerable** to trafficking in persons. In the medium-term, ICAT will, in particular, look to develop comprehensive policy guidance to support Member States in addressing the **short-term and long-term impact of crises** on the crime of trafficking in persons and its victims and survivors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as develop further guidance on the **impact of development, security and migration policies** on human trafficking.

Gender discrimination, gender-based violence and inequality impacting women and girls will also be a particular focus as core drivers of trafficking in persons. In doing so, ICAT will seek to **strengthen its engagement with relevant mechanisms**, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Human Rights Council.

ICAT will also reinforce its **partnership with the UN Network on Migration (UNMN)** with a view to strengthen its work related to trafficking in persons in the context of international migration.



3 | Ensuring a rights-based approach

A shift towards protection mechanisms tailored to the victims' needs.

ICAT will continue to mainstream **human-rights, gender-transformative, child-sensitive and victim- and survivor-centred approaches**, while strengthening its engagement with relevant UN human rights mechanisms. ICAT will strengthen the engagement with **survivors' councils and associations**, also with a view to develop guidance to effectively include survivors' perspectives and voices of survivors in the design of anti-trafficking protection measures.

Attention will be paid to the development of policy guidance in the area of **trafficking in persons and technology**, including by engaging with civil society and the private sector for the design of technology-based solutions to prevention efforts, the identification and protection of victims.

ICAT will also systematically engage with **workers and employers organizations** in the development of ICAT's policy setting and recommendations on trafficking in persons for the purpose of labour exploitation.

Moreover, ICAT will promote the effective implementation of the **non-punishment principle**, including by supporting states in championing promising practices and in adopting relevant policy and legislative action.

4 | Implementing existing measures and holding traffickers accountable

Ending the culture of impunity of traffickers.

ICAT will facilitate international cooperation through expert exchange of information and best practices, and advocate for practical measures to ensure **access to justice for victims**, in particular in times of crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

ICAT will advocate for **victim-less prosecutions**, including through the use of technology tools to aid in the identification of traffickers and gathering of digital evidence, as well as through financial investigations by providing guidance and facilitating action-oriented expert discussions.

The Group will continue advocating for a **gender sensitive approach in justice services and judicial processes** and compensation measures for survivors of trafficking through State-based schemes, as well as promoting **child-friendly and gender-sensitive justice systems**, so that child victims and survivors, witnesses as well as alleged offenders receive a justice response that protects their rights and is in line with their best interests. In doing so, ICAT will **engage with networks of practitioners**, also with a view to promote the systematic integration and use of the ICAT tools, including for internal training and induction courses.



5 | Discouraging demand

From recognition to systemic responses.

ICAT will strengthen **sustainable procurement**, including by developing or contributing to develop policy guidance to address trafficking in persons in supply chains and promoting existing standards and promising practices in this regard.

ICAT will continue to produce policy guidance on addressing the **demand that fosters all forms of exploitation that leads to trafficking**, and advocate for long-term prevention measures through joint advocacy campaigns and outreach. This will include **addressing the root causes of sexual exploitation** – the most prevailing form of trafficking in persons that disproportionately impacts women and girls worldwide, in order to eradicate trafficking in women and girls in the long term.

6 | Systematizing cooperation and multi-stakeholder partnerships

Inter-agency efforts as the gold standard of anti-trafficking action.

ICAT will strengthen **partnership with non-governmental actors**, including civil society, survivors, the private sector and trade unions to advance comprehensive and targeted action against trafficking in persons, and reinforce existing cooperation with relevant inter-agency mechanisms such as Alliance 8.7, the OSCE-led Alliance Expert Coordination Team, the UN Migration Network, the UN Global Protection Cluster.

Moreover, ICAT will foster **closer coordination at the field level** in the delivery of comprehensive anti-trafficking programmes, including by utilizing ICAT's tools and joint policy analysis.