



**Incorporating a gender perspective on counter-trafficking efforts in humanitarian work in response to the Syrian crisis**

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## **Abbreviations**

CT	Counter-Trafficking
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IAC	Inter-Agency Cooperation
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IMMAP	Information Management and Mine Action Programs
IO	International Organizations
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISIS/ISIL	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant/ Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
MENA	Middle East and North Africa Region
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SCP	Subcluster Child Protection Area of Responsibility
SGBV	Subcluster Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TiP	Trafficking in Persons
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN.GIFT	United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VaW	Violence against Women
VoTs	Victims of Trafficking
W&G	Women and Girls

## **1. Introduction**

International agreements have declared trafficking in human beings a crime and much work has been done on different plans to prevent and punish it as well as to assist victims, which are disproportionately females. Trafficking happens across all time periods and locations; however, it is trafficking in times of crisis which requires particular attention in the global landscape of increased conflicts. This paper looks into human trafficking with a clear focus on the situation of women and girls within the humanitarian response to the Syrian crisis. Based on recent reports on trafficking in crisis from International Organizations (IO), it will identify potential strategies to incorporate recommendations of the reports to the work of humanitarian workers in the field based on a case study of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The aim of this paper thus is to answer the following working research question: How can recent recommendations on human trafficking in crisis zones be applied by humanitarian workers with a gender perspective to the case of Trafficking in Persons (TiP) within the Syrian crisis response?

### **1.1. Methodology**

Relevant literature, as well as United Nations (UN) Resolutions, international agreements and IO Reports have been reviewed in order to count with an international framework. Recent reports from the field have been considered and four key recommendations have been selected. Specific strategies and indicators have been developed to implement these strategies (see Appendix B). Additionally, advice and information from the Counter-Trafficking Focal Point of the IOM Country Office for Austria and from other IOM offices has also been included. This particularly enriched the understanding of current and past practices in the field as well as specific articulations and possible grounds for cooperation. Primary data from other practitioners and refugees has been collected via semi-structured qualitative interviews or correspondence. In this way expert knowledge and lived experiences have been bridged to complement top-down with bottom-up approaches.

## **2. Background information**

Forced migration, which can be due to or caused by trafficking, needs to be understood not as an isolated phenomenon, but rather as being embedded in the global political economy characterized by asymmetries of power between the Global South and North.<sup>1</sup> Globalization as a “system of selective inclusion and exclusion of specific areas and groups, (...) maintains

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<sup>1</sup> However there are intermediate countries and zones of more or less inequality within them.

and exacerbates inequality”, even within zones which lead to conflicts and forced migration. Their economic and human rights motivations for mobility are interconnected, mirroring the link between migration and social transformation. The increase of TiP, intrinsically related to the demand for cheap labor and restrictive immigration policies in the North, feeds a multi billion dollar migration industry of illegal and legal operators alike<sup>2</sup>. Already marginalized groups find their deprived position reinforced, as is the case of women and girls in crisis, who are more at risk than their male counterparts due to their disadvantaged position in society.<sup>3</sup>

## 2.1. Definitions

According to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, also referred to as the Palermo Protocol, TiP is “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.”<sup>4</sup>

All Internally Displaced People (IDPs), asylum seekers, refugees, stranded or forced migrants are considered potential Victims of Trafficking (VoTs) according to the language established in international instruments. Following critical anthropological thought, this term is to be used with care, recognizing that individuals cannot be reduced to mere passive victims but should be counted as individuals with agency<sup>5</sup>, individuality and capabilities to react. The complexity of issues that transect individuals’ experiences challenge neat categories established by international instruments.

Crises are times when one or more structures are unstable, when one or more aspects of a society are compromised, including “manmade and natural disasters which cause widespread destruction of human life, livelihoods and infrastructure”.<sup>6</sup> In this paper, the term often refers

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<sup>2</sup> Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, “Revisiting the Migration-Development Nexus: From Social Networks and Remittances to Markets for Migration Control” (2012) Vol. 50 No. 3 International Migration 67-71 ; ILO, *A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour* (ILO, Geneva, 2005) 55-56

<sup>3</sup> Stephen Castles, “Toward a Sociology of Forced Migration and Social Transformation” in *Sociology* Vol. 37 pp 13-34. SAGE Publications 16,21; Beck 1997 and Castells 1996 in op cit.; Martha Walsh, ‘Aftermath: The Impact Of Conflict on Women In Bosnia and Herzegovina’ (July 2000) No. 302, Center for Development Information and Evaluation - U.S. Agency for International Development 2

<sup>4</sup> UN GA, *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime : resolution / adopted by the General Assembly*, A/RES/55/25 (GAOR, 2001)

<sup>5</sup> Agency is understood in social sciences as the ability and power people have to react as well as to shape structures.

<sup>6</sup> UNIDO, ‘Thematic Evaluation - UNIDO Post-Crisis Projects’

<[https://www.unido.org/fileadmin/user\\_media/About\\_UNIDO/Evaluation/TORs/Post-crisis.PDF](https://www.unido.org/fileadmin/user_media/About_UNIDO/Evaluation/TORs/Post-crisis.PDF)> accessed 10 September 2015

to armed conflict which results in a series of crises: political, humanitarian, social, political and even environmental. Including a gender perspective means that special consideration is directed to differences among people organized by this socially constructed principle in their status in society, their opportunities, socialization and vulnerability to becoming VoTs. This also includes the differences in their needs and appropriate ways of addressing them.<sup>7</sup>

This paper focuses on the situation of women and girls in the Syrian crisis. As much feminist work has taught us, the fate of people is not determined by gender alone, but includes the intersectionality of gender with race, class, sexual orientation, age, and (dis)ability among other social factors.<sup>8</sup> Recently the UN Women head declaration on Sustainable Development Goals and Gender Mainstreaming has put it in terms of the need of gender to be a vertical axis incorporated in all the work of International Organizations, the same holds true for humanitarian work.

## **2.2. Women, Peace and Security and Trafficking in Persons**

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women lists the rights of females and calls on States for putting an end to trafficking in women, a clear violation of women's human rights. The UN Conference on Women of 1995 recognized TiP as an act of violence against women<sup>9</sup>, while the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court straightforwardly regards it a crime against humanity. These paved the ground for later steps such as UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security which pointed out that women are disproportionately affected by armed conflicts, and set a working agenda to empower them.<sup>10</sup> Since then, six additional resolutions have been adopted to further operationalize the issue which prioritized the problem of Women and Girls (W&G) being vulnerable to any kind of sexual and physical violence in armed conflicts, urging states to prevent such incidents and protect victims.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, trafficking is not explicitly mentioned in any of them, although the fact that 70% of VoTs are women and should make the interrelation of these two crimes evident.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> This paper focuses on the case of women and girls and leaves other genders unaddressed.

<sup>8</sup> bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed, Routledge 2014)

<sup>9</sup> UN, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (UN 1995) 48-49; 50-55

<sup>10</sup> UN SC, *Security Council resolution 1325 [on women and peace and security]*, S/RES/1325 (GAOR, 2000).

<sup>11</sup> UN Peacekeeping, 'Women, peace and security' <<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/women/wps.shtml>> accessed 13 August 2015

<sup>12</sup> UNODC, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.V.10 2014)

The birth of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime's auxiliary, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children expresses the determination of states to tackle trafficking in W&G in unity.<sup>13</sup> The General Assembly resolution 64/293 covers a wide spectrum of actions, such as any form of exploitation that can be linked to trafficking, as well as explicitly condemning trafficking as a serious violation of women's human rights.<sup>14</sup> Although the intentions are clear, and despite all efforts to set up effective law enforcement, to implement educational programs or to provide medical assistance to VoTs – trafficking in women remains a dominant problem in need of attention.

In the UN system, two positions specifically related to women, violence and trafficking were established: that of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women (VaW) in 1994 and the Special Rapporteur on TiP, Especially on W&G in 2004, which further points to the fact that violence against and trafficking in W&G are still chronic concerns.<sup>15</sup> The current Special Rapporteur on TiP has an important role in advocacy and awareness raising and has publicly accentuated that TiP in crises not only as a priority in her mandate but also as a new, overlooked and quickly developing area in trafficking that should be addressed within the wider framework of the humanitarian response.<sup>16</sup>

Trafficking in W&G not only affects the personal security of victims, but is detrimental to the wider society. W&G placed at a marginalized and an economically under-privileged position further exacerbates their absence from the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.<sup>17</sup> It is generally perceived that in or after W&G need to cover basic needs first, and therefore they cannot take part in conflict prevention or resolution. While true in many cases, it would be important to incorporate local W&G into decision-making and “peace-making” as soon as

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<sup>13</sup>UNODC, 'Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto' <<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/treaties/CTOC/>> accessed 25 July 2015

<sup>14</sup> UN GA, *UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons*, A/RES/64/293 (GAOR, 2010)

<sup>15</sup>OHCHR, 'Special Rapporteur on violence against women, including its causes and consequences' <<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/SRWomen/Pages/SRWomenIndex.aspx>> accessed on 12 November 2015; OHCHR, 'Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children' <<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Trafficking/Pageshttp://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/SRWomen/Pages/SRWomenIndex.aspx/TraffickingIndex.aspx>> accessed 12 November 2015

<sup>16</sup>PHAP, 'World Humanitarian Summit: Trafficking in persons in times of crisis' (June 2015) <<https://phap.org/sites/phap.org/files/civicrm/persist/contribute/files/150618-Trafficking-in-persons-event-report.pdf>> accessed 5 November 2015

<sup>17</sup> See UN Resolution 1325 Women, Peace and Security (2000)

possible. Empowering them to become the masters of their own destinies is one of the most powerful development tools in the world.<sup>18</sup>

### **2.3 Facts and figures on trafficking of women and girls**

While the clandestine nature of trafficking makes it impossible to obtain comprehensive figures about it, some from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), IOM and other IOs are available representing only the visible part of TiP. Trafficking is a large business which generates an estimated USD 32 billion annually, representing the third largest international crime industry in the world.<sup>19</sup> IOM itself relies on UN Inter-Agency Cooperation (IAC) data on humanitarian situations, but no official channel has been set up to document TiP and VoTs yet in crisis. The IOM's 'Missing Migrants' website monitors migrants, many of whom could be potentially VoTs, but are not counted separately. Between 2010 and 2012, victims with 152 different citizenships were identified in 124 countries across the globe, as well as about 510 trafficking flows.<sup>20</sup>

Women account for 70% of VoTs, with 49% of them being adult women, and 21% girls, evidencing the fact that women are at a higher risk of trafficking and disproportionately the victims of it. Even though the share of female VoTs in the region of the Middle East was lower (61%) compared to the world, the share of adult women was higher (57%) compared to the world (49%). Trafficking for sexual exploitation is still the most frequent form of TiP (53%) but trafficking for forced labor rose steadily to 40% of all cases from 2010-12. This may be due to the adoption of legislative enhancements by many countries to recognize this kind of crime and to ensure that this type of trafficking is covered by law. A relatively small number of TiP cases account for organ trafficking.<sup>21</sup>

The main trafficking flows (31%) from 2010 – 2012 were operated domestically and within the sub-region pointing to the importance of addressing this crime at a regional level.<sup>22</sup> Although the legislative process is remarkable – 90% of the countries covered by the UNODC have already criminalized TiP – the number of prosecutions remains still significantly low. Adding to that that humanitarian accounts, anecdotal references and journalistic investigations point to the recruitment, coercion, and exploitation of people fleeing the Syrian crisis or internally displaced persons.

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<sup>18</sup> Escobar Arturo, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (PUP, 1995).

<sup>19</sup> ILO, *A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour* (n 2b) 55-56.

<sup>20</sup> UNODC, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014* (n 12) 5

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. 10, 82

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. 8, 52, 82, 84



### **3. The Syrian crisis: fertile soil for Trafficking in Persons**

Conflict has abounded in Syria over the last 50 years, but the current Syrian conflict began as a response to an excessive intervention of the Assad regime against peaceful protests, escalating into a civil war. When the Arab Spring started in March 2011, the Syrian government, as well as diverse opposition groups, committed human rights violations. An attack by ISIS/ISIL on the Free Syrian Army in 2013 marked the beginning of rebel-on-rebel fighting. Since then, various UN driven efforts to settle the conflict, including a six point peace plan by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan or the deployment of a UN Supervision Mission in Syria, have failed due to hesitation of regional and global actors, combined with a fast escalation of the conflict. The current situation is extremely complex, with multiple actors and interests at stake, and changing conditions; a political solution remains to be found. As the effects of the crisis in the region spill over national borders, more actors become involved in it, willingly or not. Moreover, the local conflict is embedded in larger global dynamics of power and dispossession.<sup>23</sup>

#### **3.1. Effects of the Syrian crisis**

Due to the armed conflict, Syria has become one of the top source countries of refugees. Approximately 12 million people (8 million IDPs and 4 million people who fled abroad) are in need of humanitarian assistance. This number has doubled since 2013 – and is still rising. In the region, significant pressure is imposed on Lebanon with the highest concentration of refugees compared to its population (>1 million), followed by Turkey (~1,7 million), Jordan (~600,000), Iraq (~250,000) and Egypt and other North African countries (~130,000).<sup>24</sup> Apart from the growing number of deaths and wounded, W&G disproportionately face distress from various manifestations of violence and make up more than 50% of refugees. Several international agreements responded to the situation, including UN Security Council Resolution 2139 that focused on increasing access to humanitarian aid and ending detention, kidnapping and torture in Syria. Two further resolutions were adopted with the purpose of easing border crossing for humanitarian convoys and trained staff, and the deployment of monitoring mechanisms.<sup>25</sup> As the situation worsens, it is expected that the number of people in need in the region will continue to rise.

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<sup>23</sup>ICRtoP, 'The Crisis in Syria' <<http://www.responsibilitytoprotect.org/index.php/crises/crisis-in-syria>> accessed 29 October 2015

<sup>24</sup> UNHCR, 'Syria Regional Refugee Response - Registered Syrian Refugees' <<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>> 29 October 2015

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.; WHO Syria, 'Donor Update 2015 (Q2)' <[http://www.who.int/hac/donorinfo/syria\\_donor\\_update\\_q2\\_2015.pdf](http://www.who.int/hac/donorinfo/syria_donor_update_q2_2015.pdf)> accessed 5 October 2015

### **3.2. Vulnerability factors**

Most Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries criminalize prostitution and only a few have laws on Counter-Trafficking (CT). Syria has numerous national instruments at its disposal to fight TiP and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and to criminalize such acts. The state has ratified most of the related international conventions and treaties, like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Palermo Protocols. Regarding institutionalized protection for VoTs, a Directorate for CT and a National Committee for CT were erected, complemented by legal capacity building to properly address the challenges of TiP.<sup>26</sup> For GBV reporting, Syria has established a National Observatory on GBV and shelters for battered women (involving female VoTs) in order to ensure the rights and basic needs of victims of violence.<sup>27</sup> However, the ongoing crisis brings even more human rights violations as such incidents are left unreported, unprosecuted and unprevented by the Syrian government.<sup>28</sup> In short: the more the Syrian crisis deteriorates, the more unstable the rule of law becomes which then enables traffickers to reap the benefits of people's vulnerability and exacerbating it. Documentation on the problems arising is ongoing and the following is only but a limited account.

#### **3.2.1 Instability**

Instability and the absence of rule of law in Syria, create chaos thereby providing fertile soil for GBV against W&G, stranded migrants and other vulnerable groups. As more and more IDPs seek refuge in neighboring countries or embark on the dangerous journey to Europe, they become easy targets for traffickers. The abundance of armament from past conflicts in the region, equipment granted to Iraqi, Pakistani, Libyan and Syrian rebel forces render impossible a state controlling the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence over its territory, a key element in Weber's influential definition of a state.<sup>29</sup> Without this, the effectiveness of the Syrian government is limited, as is the case of combatting trafficking from as a state-led action<sup>30</sup>

#### **3.2.2 Labor trafficking and debt bondage**

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<sup>26</sup> UNHCR, 'Echoes From Syria Issue 6 - November 2014' <<http://www.refworld.org/docid/546ddfe54.html>> accessed 9 December 2015

<sup>27</sup> UNHCR, 'Echoes From Syria Issue 10 - March 2015' <<http://www.refworld.org/docid/5523a44c4.html>> accessed 9 December 2015

<sup>28</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2015* (A/GIS/GPS, July 2015) 324

<sup>29</sup> Max Weber, *Politics as a Vocation* (Lecture) (Munich 1919) 4

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2015* (A/GIS/GPS, July 2015) 324-326; She Is Safe, 'Syria Anti-trafficking' <<http://sheissafe.org/work/syria-anti-trafficking/>> accessed 9 August 2015

In Syria, not only the devastated economy, but also the protracted armed conflict forces people to flee in order to save their families, as well as to try to build up their existence elsewhere. The securitization of European borders, justified by appealing to the migration-security nexus, comes “at the expense of increasing insecurity encountered by border crossing migrants”.<sup>31</sup> This also results in higher demand for smugglers, who charge up to USD 10,000 for their services, thus leaving many refugees and stranded migrants in debt bondage situations.<sup>32</sup> TiP in the region represents a source of income for armed groups -- the dimensions of which remain to be determined, as well as workforce such as cooks, soldiers, suicide bombers, reproductive labor, nurses, sex workers, and trafficking for organs.<sup>33</sup> Reports from journalists and human rights activists often include anecdotal references of escapees and others. An ISIS/ISIL leaked price list for Yazidi and Christian W&G is an unambiguous evidence base for trafficking as a source of revenue for armed groups.<sup>34</sup>

The unemployment rate of 64.8% among Syrian refugees in Jordan and the fact that women earned 40% less than men in Jordan evidence the bleakness of the situation, in which many search for negative coping solutions such as accepting suspicious job offers that often result in deceit.<sup>35</sup> The situation in Lebanon is even worse: with an unemployment rate of 68% among Syrian refugee women in working age and more than 92% of refugees not covered by any form of formal contract.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the fact that every fifth household (inside and outside camps) is headed by single women situates them in a disproportionately vulnerable position to trafficking, exposing their entire family to risk of being left without protection.<sup>37</sup>

### 3.2.3 Sex trafficking, marriages and gender-based violence

Syria is a destination and transit country for trafficking in W&G, though before the

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<sup>31</sup> Sørensen (n 2a) 71

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Ahmed, Humanitarian Worker and Refugee from Syria (Vienna, Austria, 10 November 2015)

<sup>33</sup> IOM, *Addressing Human Trafficking and Exploitation in Times of Crisis: Briefing Document* (Geneva 2015)

<sup>34</sup> RT Question More, ‘ISIS introduces ‘price scheme’ for selling enslaved women and girls’ (RT, 4 November 2014) <<http://on.rt.com/ztk33r>> accessed 5 November 2015; Wikileaks Forum, ‘Document showing prices for Yazidi or Christian Women or girls (2014)’ <<http://www.wikileaks-forum.com/middle-east/350/document-showing-prices-for-yazidi-or-christian-women-or-girls-kids/32227/r>> accessed 4 October 2015

<sup>35</sup> ILO/ROAS, *The impact of the Syrian refugee crisis on the labour market in Jordan: a preliminary analysis* (Beirut 2014) 16

<sup>36</sup> ILO/ROAS, *Assessment of the impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and their employment profile* (ILO, Beirut 2014) 9

<sup>37</sup> Protection in Syria is often culturally coded as provided by a male spouse or male relative and is ingrained in a patriarchal social system. Evidently not all people ascribe to it and resist it.

crisis it was primarily a destination country for labor exploitation and prostitution<sup>38</sup>. However, the situation for migrants and the Syrian population has dramatically worsened and exposed them to a higher risk of being trafficked. Several hundred women were abducted by ISIS/ISIL and became their commodity or sex slaves, as well as used for shame, as a weapon of war. At the same time a new tendency has emerged: more and more women and under-aged girls in Syria's neighboring countries undergo matrimonies with men external to the camps.<sup>39</sup> As an example, for some Turkish men, marrying a Syrian refugee girl is an opportunity to obtain a young wife for a lower dowry compared to that for Turkish women.<sup>40</sup> These practices are not the problem per se; it has been reported that these marriages often result in sexual exploitation and/or abandonment of W&G, some of which manage to return to the camp. This kind of practice is blooming on Syria's borders. Early marriages were also practiced before the crisis to guarantee wives' security and protection in cases of vulnerability or need, but this was on a much smaller scale and very marginal. Early marriage is now practiced in camps by desperate parents or relatives (female and male) facing socio-economic hardship who see it as the only source of protection for their daughters.<sup>41</sup> Although many agree that it is an accepted, traditional Syrian practice predating the crisis and many did not perceive it as a negative issue, this practice, evidenced by accounts of thousands of Syrian refugee women and men of other nationalities, has often led to exploitation, prostitution or survival sex and could lead to TiP.<sup>42</sup> It is crucial to understand that at times women are being forced to undergo matrimony, whereas in others they are actively taking these decisions as survival strategies. It has also been reported that on the way to Europe or other countries, women travelling alone choose to marry men travelling in the same group in order to guarantee their security.<sup>43</sup> To make matters worse, many if not most of the marriages taking place are not and cannot be registered due to instability in the region or irregular documents, resulting in loss of marital

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<sup>38</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2015* (A/GIS/GPS, July 2015) 324; U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2010* (A/GIS/GPS, June 2015) 312

<sup>39</sup> Ahmed (n 32); Interview with Migrant Assistant Specialist for the MENA Region, IOM (Vienna, Austria, 14 October 2015) Interview with Ster, Syrian-Iraqi Former Humanitarian Worker focused on Women (Vienna, Austria, 21 November 2015)

<sup>40</sup> Caritas, *Trafficking in Human Beings in Conflict and Post-Conflict situations* (2015)

<sup>41</sup> UN Women, *Inter-Agency Assessment: Gender-Based Violence and Child Protection Among Syrian Refugees in Jordan, with a Focus on Early Marriage* (2013) 3, 29

<sup>42</sup> Ibid 29-30; Save the Children, *State of the World's Mothers 2014* (Westport, CT 2014) 21

<sup>43</sup> Ahmed (n 32)

rights for women and rights for children. In some countries, children born out of matrimony, or not recognized by a father, cannot be registered<sup>44</sup>.

### **3.2.4 Infants born without registration and access to education?**

Additionally, many women leave Syria pregnant and give birth to their children abroad, on their search for security and protection. These babies are rarely registered, rendering them effectively stateless. A birth certificate provides a child with “visibility” that prevents them from being abused. In Syria, nearly 2 million children were not attending school at the beginning of the new school year in September 2015. It suggests that high periods of school absence put children in already fragile states at higher risks of being recruited by traffickers.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, the existence of unregistered people paves the ground for higher vulnerability to TiP for years to come.

## **4. A case study: the International Organization for Migration**

IOM is the leading international organization for migration and has a close working relation with the UN. The Organization’s work includes addressing the growing operational challenges of migration management, advancing the understanding of migration issues and upholding the human dignity and well-being of migrants. Since 1994, IOM has been working to counter human trafficking -- both through the provision of direct assistance to victims and by assisting states to improve their CT response.

### **4.1 The Organization’s Response to Crises**

IOM has created a Migration Crisis Operational Framework to guide its humanitarian and emergency responses. Within the UN Cluster System, which coordinates the responses of international humanitarian actors, IOM heads the Camp Coordination and Camp Management cluster in natural disasters. The Organization has furthermore created the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), which tracks and monitors population displacement during crises and is being increasingly recognized by the humanitarian community as a key operational tool. Although it has no legal mandate for protection, IOM activities in coordinated humanitarian responses such as the Cluster System contribute to the protection of individuals. Specific thematic coordinating subgroups include Gender-Based Violence Area of

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<sup>44</sup> Betsy Fisher, Why Non-Marital Children in the MENA Region Face a Risk of Statelessness, Harvard Human Rights Journal (January 2015); UNHCR, Background Note on Gender Equality, Nationality Laws and Statelessness (2014), <<http://www.unhcr.org/4f5886306.html>> accessed on 4 November 2015

<sup>45</sup> UNICEF, ‘Education under fire’ <[http://www.unicef.org/mena/Education\\_Under\\_Fire.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/mena/Education_Under_Fire.pdf)> accessed 2 November; UNICEF, ‘Birth registration - right from the start’ <[http://www.childinfo.org/files/birthregistration\\_Digestenglish.pdf](http://www.childinfo.org/files/birthregistration_Digestenglish.pdf)> accessed 4 December 2015

Responsibility (SGBV) and the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (SCP) which will be referred to in this paper.

#### **4.2 Regional Response**

IOM has developed a regional response to the Syrian crisis in 40 locations across 5 countries: Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan.<sup>46</sup> The number of people assisted rose by 14% between July and October 2015.<sup>47</sup> This fact, together with the increase of humanitarian staff, is clear evidence that IOM's presence is essential. The Organization also takes the lead on logistical aspects linked to the Syrian response such as providing bus transportation to refugees, as well as diverse services.

In 2015, IOM delivered hygiene kits, improved shelter conditions, supported capacity-building in health centers or in the sector of shelter/non-food items assistance, among other activities. Moreover, there are several projects still on the table regarding the vulnerability of women. For instance, the Livelihood Support to Affected Populations with a Focus on Female-headed Households project enables women to attend vocational courses, provides them with grants or tools for starting new businesses and links women with employment markets through employment information centers.

#### **4.3 Trafficking in Crisis Situations**

With more than 10 years of anecdotal references and the wish for a formal research on trafficking in crisis since 2012, IOM commissioned a report in 2014 and released a Briefing Document in June 2015. "Trafficking in times of crisis" highlights the interrelatedness of TiP and conflict zones, and the importance of addressing it in this way, and not as a mere side effect. Current humanitarian responses address some aspects of TiP for certain groups of people. Comprehensive CT activities should find a place in the existing Cluster System and be part of the overall protection approach implemented during crisis.<sup>48</sup> National legal frameworks, prosecution and national institutions are also needed, however this cannot be addressed within the scope of this paper. Therefore emphasis is placed on which types of assistance can be provided and which actions were taken to provide protection in the Syrian response by humanitarian actors following recent reports from the field.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>IOM, 'Regional Response to the Syria Crisis October 2015'  
<<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IOM%20Regional%20Response%20to%20Syria%20Crisis%20Sitrep%20Oct%202015.pdf>> accessed 12 October 2015; See Appendix A

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> IOM, *Briefing Document* (n 33)

<sup>49</sup> The IOM and Caritas Reports also include recommendations for state and non-state actors..

## 5. Recommendations and specific strategies

Among the key recommendations is the awareness raising among law enforcement staff about trafficking in refugee children, based on Caritas fieldwork in Turkey which found that some Syrian children are used for prostitution in parks in Istanbul.<sup>50</sup> Humanitarian efforts are designed to protect and assist people struggling to meet basic needs. Often gender equality and TiP do not come up at the top of this list. However, not considering these at the start of any crisis may allow them to be reproduced and further worsen the situation. Although awareness on gender inequality has gained ground, and a revised version of Guidelines for Integrating GBV Interventions in Humanitarian Action were presented in the fall of 2015<sup>51</sup>, humanitarian practices and agencies are often reluctant to incorporate them fully and consider them part of the initial response. Field experts trying to mainstream CT into humanitarian responses are facing the same challenges. Evidence-based recommendations from IOM and Caritas, however, show that it is precisely the instability of crisis that allows for trafficking networks, of which women are disproportionately the victims of, to establish, having consequences not only during, but also in post-crisis contexts. Following this, working on CT in the Syrian response effectively expands the protection of people by including VoTs, and diminishes the risk of powerful trafficking networks consolidating. The following four recommendations have been selected from IOM's Briefing Document because they touch on four internationally recognized pillars of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol namely: protection, prevention and promoting international cooperation and partnerships<sup>52</sup> and they address specific vulnerability factors identified in this paper, which are often interrelated.

### 5.1 Including Counter-Trafficking measures into humanitarian responses

A recent IOM Briefing Document shows that armed conflict correlated with heightened risks effectively increased numbers of VoTs. The evidence points to a gap in the protective measures: trafficked people are not provided for within current humanitarian response efforts, such as the Cluster System. The main conclusion and recommendation of the report is that "CT measures should be part of humanitarian responses, to prevent TiP and protect vulnerable and at-risk populations".<sup>53</sup> Addressing TiP should be seen as a life-saving activity. The IOM report also calls for CT efforts to be incorporated into the Cluster System, and specifically within the Protection Cluster and its areas of responsibility.

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<sup>50</sup> Caritas (n 40)

<sup>51</sup> IASC, *Guidelines for Integrating GBV Interventions in Humanitarian actions* (2015)

<sup>52</sup> UNODC, *International Framework for Action to Implement the Trafficking in Persons Protocol* (Vienna, 2009)

<sup>53</sup> IOM, *Briefing Document* (n 33) 12

As mentioned earlier, much has been done to include women into the Peace and Security agenda, and to address VaW. One way to implement this recommendation with a clear focus on gender would be to articulate the heads of SGBV with the IOM CT response to the Syrian crisis. The SGBV is a very active sub-cluster with weekly email updates and monthly calls, and in a discussion with IOM on incorporating CT into humanitarian settings was very receptive.<sup>54</sup> More precisely, the organizations could consider the a) incorporation of specialized CT (female) staff in humanitarian responses, at least one CT expert, to ensure that the issue is mainstreamed into practical measures. As an alternative to insufficient internal capacity of humanitarian organizations periodical online meetings could be arranged to consult CT experts elsewhere on how to mainstream the issue and protect victims. Although it is no guarantee that a female CT expert will necessarily be an expert on gender issues, including more female experts might enable these ventures to be more sensitive to W&G's vulnerabilities, needs, and agency, while also in line with the larger Women and Peace agenda.

A specific strategy to implement this is to b) create a CT sub-cluster and integrate it into the humanitarian response as soon as possible.<sup>55</sup> In the framework of Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) to Facilitate Protection and Assistance to Trafficked Persons, IOM and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) share responsibility and cooperate on the identification, protection and assistance of VoTs.<sup>56</sup> Although UNHCR leads the humanitarian response in many countries, it does not have the capacity to respond to trafficking.<sup>57</sup> This concern is further complicated by the fact that IOM's CT efforts are underfunded.<sup>58</sup>

Considering the existence of cooperating agreements among agencies, it is important to c) strengthen this formal cooperation, particularly between IOM and UNHCR and enforce it in existing SOP to Facilitate Protection and Assistance to Trafficked Persons. The already existing IAC fora should incorporate CT and be based on needs to allow a more coherent

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<sup>54</sup> Migrant Assistant Specialist for the MENA Region (n 39a)

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., OCHA, 'Cluster Coordination' <<http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/coordination-tools/cluster-coordination>> accessed 10 June 2015

<sup>56</sup> UNHCR, *Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration: The 10-Point Plan in Action* (3<sup>rd</sup> edn, UNHCR 2011) 168

<sup>57</sup> Migrant Assistant Specialist for the MENA Region (n 39a)

<sup>58</sup> IOM Humanitarian Compendium, 'Syria' <<http://humanitariancompendium.iom.int/syrian-arab-republic/2015>> accessed 14 October 2015



response to trafficking in women during crises with and to be further reinforced by sub-cluster level groups or task forces for an overarching approach to TiP.<sup>59</sup>

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee-led (IASC) forum coordinates the work of UN and non-UN humanitarian actors with respect to the rights and needs of vulnerable people in crises, and it also applies a gender-sensitive approach.<sup>60</sup> IACs against trafficking (United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking and the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons) aim at the best possible anti-trafficking multi-stakeholder cooperation to combat TiP and apply a rights and needs-based approach to the matter.<sup>61</sup> However, VoTs are usually identified post-hoc and within criminal and immigration processes that fail to ensure their rights and serve their basic needs.<sup>62</sup> To take this even further, GBV and trafficking is often overlooked in crisis responses.<sup>63</sup> From this aspect, GBV and CT working groups should be introduced to the cooperation mechanism.

The mandates of IOM and UNHCR in handling mixed migratory flows were first settled by the Memorandum of Understanding as they realized the emerging need for a systematic cooperation. In each case of beneficiaries (migrants, IDPs, refugees and so on), they agreed on their limitations which often means the recognition of the other's leadership.<sup>64</sup> The IOM-UNHCR joint forces and expertise should be further reinforced in the existing SOP in order to frame national efforts against TiP.

It is important to consider trainings for people potentially at risk of TiP which is why d) awareness raising for prevention among refugees and IDPs is specifically suggested. First of all, social workers in humanitarian responses, or other practitioners, should actively identify interests and needs of women, men, and children in order to find a meaningful topic to start group meetings. In combination with these, CT awareness-raising, particularly on the frequently reported presence of external people to refugees camps coming to either recruit workers or get wives, should take place.

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<sup>59</sup> IOM, *Briefing Document* (n 33) 11

<sup>60</sup> IASC, 'IASC' <<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/about-iasc>> accessed 12 October 2015; IASC, 'IASC Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action' <<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/node/2611>> accessed 30 November 2015

<sup>61</sup> UN.GIFT, 'About UN.GIFT' <http://www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/en/about/index.html> accessed 15 October 2015; UN.GIFT, 'About ICAT' <<http://www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/en/icat/about-icat2.html>> accessed 12 October 2015

<sup>62</sup> UN GA, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on TiP, Especially Women and Girls (A/70/260)* available at <[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/260](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/260)>

<sup>63</sup> Migrant Assistant Specialist for the MENA Region (n 39a)

<sup>64</sup> UNHCR, 'Memorandum of Understanding Between UNHCR and IOM' <<http://unhcr.org/4aa7a3ed9.pdf>> accessed 9 December 2015

Another specific strategy targeted refugees and IDPs is to e) empower and decrease economic vulnerability of W&G through income-generating trainings or projects such as Work for Cash<sup>65</sup>, or cash assistance (including e-vouchers) with positive discrimination for women. Several IOM CT responses include an element of economic empowerment of VoTs or of women at risk of being trafficked. Ideally, and as the humanitarian sector itself already discusses, this should be addressed in crises as well e.g. to create capacities and foster sustainable livelihoods rather than dependency on the humanitarian aid system. In this regard, CT responses for VoTs or women at risk of being trafficked might be possible to adapt to a humanitarian setting, whereas in other cases the contrary might be true. In Jordan, for example, the current proportion of refugees to locals translates into a very high unemployment rate. In this case, vocational trainings aimed at a salary job are unrealistic. Instead, small entrepreneurship, micro-credit or Work for Cash initiatives are better suited. In the last few years the World Bank itself, after seeing the success of initiatives such as the Grameen Bank, have studied and realized that people in need (the poor, or in this case refugees, stranded migrants, IDPs, VoTs) actually know what they need and can manage their money. This only partially addresses the lack of economic activities which can lead to negative coping mechanisms of women. Such self-resilience projects enable women to share within society the value added by skills gained in trainings in the camp. It also speaks to larger development and humanitarian agendas in Syria, i.e. to restore people's abilities to self-reliance. For instance, IOM Iraq has recognized the challenge of logistics for the elevated numbers of refugees, and responded with One-off (one time) cash transfers for IDPs. In an initial interview with any member of a family, independent of their gender, the basic criteria of being displaced and not having a shelter is assessed, and if qualified this member of the household receives a one-off cash equivalent to \$356 which in the area is enough to buy basic supplies for a household of four, such as mattresses and blankets.<sup>66</sup> Additionally, having cash or e-vouchers allocates people with the possibility of choosing for themselves, something very important in crowded settings of humanitarian aid where logistical needs often impose a homogenizing and de-humanizing danger.<sup>67</sup> During skills trainings or Work for Cash activities, awareness raising trainings mentioned earlier could take place.

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<sup>65</sup>This refers to recruiting beneficiaries themselves to execute specific activities within the project and get economic remuneration.

<sup>66</sup>Personal communication with IOM Iraq Office (October 2015)

<sup>67</sup>Ahmed (n 32); Katrin Zeug "Arroganz des Helfens" (May 2015), <<http://enorm-magazin.de/arroganz-des-helfens>> accessed 15 November 2015

## **5.2. Adapted Trafficking in Persons capacity-building trainings**

Humanitarian workers receive specific training, often before going into the field. In the case of emerging crises they are often quick, short and insufficient regarding trafficking.<sup>68</sup> Different humanitarian organizations make emphasis on particular areas, but in general terms there are no explicit linkages made between trafficking and the humanitarian context. This reality confronted with the findings of cases of trafficking in the field raises the question of how to better prepare humanitarian workers to identify and respond to trafficking.

IOM's Briefing Document recommends that "adapted TiP related capacity-building trainings should be delivered to multi-sector stakeholders involved in any humanitarian response and that specific attention should be paid to the training of staff positioned at key geographic and strategic points, either border guards, camp managers, peacekeepers, health professionals or other front line workers."<sup>69</sup>

In fact, IOM has already included a CT module in its Emergency Response Training in June 2015 and by October 2015, one training had already been held. The Organization is currently providing trainings and trainings of trainers on human trafficking, specifically in Jordan, and induction trainings for CT national response personnel in Iraq. IOM CT experts are also increasingly being deployed as part of the Organization's crisis response. CT trainings should be analyzed and adapted considering local cultural, social, religious, and other elements as well as the particularities of the given armed conflict. These specificities need to be understood by, for example cultural anthropologists, and reconciled, when possible, with international frameworks. This does not mean that in the face of injustices and violations of basic human rights, that cultural logic justifies them. On the contrary, a deep understanding of local sociabilities permits a better assessment of what is in fact at stake. Is it a forced marriage? Is this trafficking or could it lead to trafficking? How can GBV be identified and what is the best strategy to make interventions in this regard? In this point again, it is suggested that voices of local women be seriously considered. Doing so can substantially help in understanding not only the particularities and effects of the mentioned practices but also be key players in identifying needs and possible interventions. When grassroots organizations are non-existent, IOM CT efforts and others, should foster the establishment of women's grassroots movements and work together with them on what the best entry points might be. Some of them can include workshops with women of different generations, of same age

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<sup>68</sup>See trainings from UNHCR, Mercy Corps, Caritas, Médecins sans Frontières and other Humanitarian organizations' trainings for humanitarian workers.

<sup>69</sup>IOM, *Briefing Document* (n 33) 13

groups, as well as sensitizing workshops for men and boys on women's rights and on the crime and risks of trafficking in specific settings such as camps and on the move seeking refuge.

Specifically, IOM CT trainings already developed for government officials and healthcare practitioners can be a) adapted and incorporated into trainings for humanitarian workers. Including a CT module is a step in this direction. On the flip side, CT experts sent to the Syrian response need to undergo humanitarian trainings as well to understand the complexities and dynamics that play out. The existence of adapted training materials and number of trainings taken place can serve as indicators of steps taken in this direction.

### **5.3. Rapid assessments to assess the scope, scale, and risks factors to Trafficking in Persons**

Effective struggle against TiP requires the rapid assessment of current humanitarian mechanisms and already existing anti-trafficking measures. The IOM Briefing Document suggests "rapid assessments should be undertaken by trained staff at the onset of a crisis to assess the scope, scale and risks factors to TiP. (...) The findings should inform evidence based responses to ensure the protection and assistance of vulnerable populations caught up in crisis."<sup>70</sup> Already operating data collection mechanisms, such as the DTM and Information Management and Mine Action Programs (IMMAP) could inform the a) development of a concrete tool, such as a template, designed for gathering and sharing data concerning vulnerability to trafficking, disaggregated by gender.

The DTM was developed by IOM in order to map locations of IDPs. Currently it is only applied in Iraq in the MENA region.<sup>71</sup> The support of the Iraqi Ministry of Migration and Displacement, documented in the Iraq Strategic Response Plan, proves the positive effects of cooperation between the DTM and governmental actors in such mapping activities.<sup>72</sup> One of the categories within the current the DTM classification is gender<sup>73</sup>, a stepping stone for subsequent developments. It is suggested to incorporate indicators relating to TiP into the DTM that could help monitoring potential VoTs. Indicators, such as number of single headed households, financial dependency or number of women settled in unsafe shelters can enable a more specific focus on women in need. Implementing and adapting the DTM mechanism to the situation in the region can serve as an initial step towards this concrete strategy.

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<sup>70</sup> IOM, *Briefing Document* (n 33) 12

<sup>71</sup> IOM, 'Iraq Mission - What is the DTM' <<http://iomiraq.net/dtm-page>> accessed 11 December 2015

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> IOM, 'Iraq Mission - Maps' <<http://iomiraq.net/dtm-page>> accessed 11 December 2015

Cooperation between IOM and IMMAP is based on the Standby Partnership Program arranged among UN agencies, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, IOM, NGOs and other civil partners which support the humanitarian response actors.<sup>74</sup> The assistance of IMMAP is not limited to analyzing and verifying data, creating and operating databases but includes providing humanitarian staff with mobile applications and multi-sectoral needs assessment in northern Syria and Turkey.<sup>75</sup>

IOM's extensive expertise in managing the DTM in Iraq together with the experience gained through the cooperation with IMMAP are very promising pillars on which the new rapid assessments could be based on. Including indicators such as number of early and forced marriages, number of women marginalized (due to social norms, household duties or GBV survival) or high financial dependency is a possibility to map women vulnerable to trafficking. Implementing an early warning mechanism by observing an increase in the above mentioned indicators could help humanitarian work to provide specialized services in the right places, and therefore benefit the TiP prevention process. The GBV Information Management System provides important criteria to build on, since GBV is strongly linked to TiP. The adequate and right use of data produced by this tool should be ensured by publishing clear and brief guidelines for using and presenting such confidential information.

Rapid assessments might also be necessary in other locations, as is the case now. Refugees fleeing the Syrian crisis are often confronted with exploitation and TiP on their journey towards Europe, and there is suspicion that this industry might flourish in Europe which is why IOM has conducted two rapid assessments in the Balkan route in late 2015.<sup>76</sup>

While some actors advocate for caution not to be intrusive with exhaustive questioning with people suffering traumatic experiences too early<sup>77</sup>, others find it urgent to identify VoTs in contact with humanitarian workers as early as possible and suggest that asylum interviews are an excellent setting.<sup>78</sup> Clearly more qualitative research is called for to answer the questions of when, where and how to respectfully gather information on trafficking from people seeking protection in crisis settings.

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<sup>74</sup> IMMAP, 'News and Resources- iMMAP Supports Improved Needs Assessments in Syria and Turkey' <<http://immap.org/?p=1664>> accessed 11 December 2015

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> IOM, 'European Migration Crisis - Western Balkans - Situation Report - 11 September 2015' <[https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/situation\\_reports/file/European-Migration-Crisis-Western-Balkans-Situation-Report-11Sep2015.pdf](https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/situation_reports/file/European-Migration-Crisis-Western-Balkans-Situation-Report-11Sep2015.pdf)> accessed 11 December 2015

<sup>77</sup> Inter-Agency Standing Committee (n 51) 52.

<sup>78</sup> Ahmed (n 32)

#### **5.4. Safe places for Victims of Trafficking should be identified and secured**

The Briefing Document recommends that “safe places for VoTs should be identified and secured throughout the crisis, and when relevant other solutions should be looked at...”.<sup>79</sup> The strategies developed for this recommendation specifically target women and girls. Organizations working with victims, survivors or other vulnerable populations have pointed to the importance of providing safe spaces for these populations. By doing so, said organizations contribute to the prevention of female victims’ secondary victimization if they take care of traumatized women and girls with dignity and sensitivity.<sup>80</sup> Some refugee reception centers have special spaces for W&G already, an important actor to mention in this field is the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and this fact is a strength to be built upon and worked on in cooperation with organizational units such as the SGBV. These people with possible additional needs, as W&G, should be informed about the possibility of complementary assistance, for example through leaflets within the food or medical package received after the basic registration.<sup>81</sup>

Specifically, this can be done by identifying existing places, incorporating CT efforts and a) creating new ones if necessary. Safe shelters, should provide immediate security and support to survivors or refugees ought to be designed to provide W&G with a necessary level of privacy.<sup>82</sup> These should, however, be optional, as isolating and labeling often has counterproductive effects -- like stigmatization.<sup>83</sup> The overarching idea of safe spaces includes shelters but is not limited to them. Social work with women in refugee centers indicates the importance of having spaces for women to meet, talk, network, learn and support each other. These spaces need not necessarily be a closed room or a classroom environment, they must be created with close eye-level social work which identifies W&G’s interests or needs and facilitates their initiatives<sup>84</sup>. These could range from self-defense, language courses, storytelling, meet-ups for women and so on. In face of hardship, investing time and energy in other topics, such as talking about the future, education, or arts can help people cope with their

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<sup>79</sup> IOM, *Briefing Document* (n 33) 13

<sup>80</sup> Corene Rathgeber, ‘The Victimization of Women through Human Trafficking – An aftermath of War?’ (2002) Vol. 10 Issue 2-3 EJC, Criminal Law and Criminal Justice 160

<sup>81</sup> UNFPA ‘Women & Girls Safe Spaces: A guidance note based on lessons learned from the Syrian crisis (2015)<<http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA%20UNFPA%20Women%20and%20Girls%20Safe%20Spaces%20Guidance%20%5B1%5D.pdf>> accessed 12 October 2015

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ster (n 39b); Ahmed (n 32)

<sup>84</sup> Ster (n 39b)

realities as well as motivate them. Mazoun Al Meliha, now called the Syrian Malala, is a 16-year-old girl advocating for education who inspires other girls in the Azraq refugee camp to go to school or study wherever they can.<sup>85</sup> Humanitarian practitioners have pointed to the need of diverse staff that can better respond to diverse styles of people and inspire the necessary trust to share their stories and help other potential victims. These spaces should also serve as referral centers for specialized agencies or organizations, and where they are not present should try to supplement as in the concrete case of registering newborns.

To identify and address the needs of women it is important to b) include local women in decision-making process to address the assistance and protection they need. Involving W&G (VoTs and survivors of GBV) into management groups or employing them as staff in general could bring the necessary insight of such vulnerable groups into the process of designing shelters, possible safe spaces and activities there, plus it recognizes the abilities of women and can result in empowerment and economic independence. W&G should have the option to choose in which activities they want to take part, therefore the safe spaces should offer multi-sectoral assistance. A complementary approach is to hold workshops or focus groups, ideally led by grassroot women's organizations, on different topics. Alternatively, and depending on resources, these ventures could support displaced women or female refugees to establish grass root women's organizations of their own building trust among women. Survivors of GBV or TiP could be invited to workshops as inspiration for other women.

Cooperation with women and girls affected by local crises can increase the awareness of humanitarian workers, yet it is also necessary to c) promote awareness-raising among female refugees and IDPs. Some efforts have already been made in this direction. In a refugee camp in Jordan, for example, IOM gathered refugees and camp staff with a common task: to clean-up the surroundings of the camp, and as they were together doing this meaningful goal-oriented action the camp staff spoke about TiP.<sup>86</sup> Another option is targeting staff involved in education or health practitioners or placing safe spaces in facilities like schools or medical centers, where trainings, courses or other skill developing activities can take place. It has been proven successful to link CT agendas with issues that are meaningful to the people in the camps, in this case to women and girls.

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<sup>85</sup>UNHCR, 'Teenage Syrian Refugee Champions Girls' Education' (2015) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tV2DlCoNlxA>> accessed 1 December 2015

<sup>86</sup>Migrant Assistant Specialist for the MENA Region (n 39a)

The more entry points VoTs have, the more possibilities they have to receive assistance which is why it is important to implement a strategy that d) establishes entry points for VoTs such as hotlines, flyers in communal areas and distributed packages, stickers in communal areas and toilets, and anonymous forms. Moreover, female victims of GBV or VoTs are very often traumatized and socially excluded, or they are isolated due to domestic responsibilities. That is why outreach activities e.g. home visits and mobile safe spaces play important roles. Many people in overcrowded camps are glad that someone wants to listen to them, and take their ideas seriously. For instance UNHCR created the Inter-Agency Q&A on Humanitarian Assistance and Services in Lebanon, which could address questions by persons who are searching for help for themselves or for another person in her/his neighborhood.<sup>87</sup>

Given the fact that every fifth household (inside and outside camps) is single headed by women e) special protection for single female-headed households, such as specific shelters, social services and provision of dignity kits can reduce their risk to TiP, among other vulnerabilities. Crisis situations when women were forced to leave their homes unprepared create difficulties for most of them to ensure their basic hygiene needs. Providing dignity kits, which usually contain hygiene supplies such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, soap, sanitary pads and underclothes can also link vulnerable women and girls with humanitarian workers, who can provide them with information or additional assistance.<sup>88</sup> That is the reason why IOM should continue with dignity kits distribution and other activities supporting single headed households.<sup>89</sup>

Possible indicators measuring the progress in providing safe spaces and awareness rising activities could be the number of W&G participating in activities in safe spaces and the number of W&G being aware of risks concerning TiP.

## **6. Conclusions**

The materials reviewed provide evidence that the risks of TiP, and actual TiP severely increases in conflict zones. Consequently, addressing TiP in crises is not a tangential issue, rather it should be considered as a life-saving activity. Additionally, as shown by research in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the peace-keeping missions themselves might be factors that

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<sup>87</sup>UNHCR, 'Inter Agency Q&A On Humanitarian Assistance and Services in Lebanon' <<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=8733>> accessed 25 October 2015

<sup>88</sup>UNFPA, 'Dignity kits meet hygiene needs of displaced women and girls in Iraq' <<http://www.unfpa.org/news/dignity-kits-meet-hygiene-needs-displaced-women-and-girls-ira>> accessed 11 December 2015

<sup>89</sup>IOM, 'IOM Helps Displaced Families Fleeing Idlib in Syria's Northwest' <<https://www.iom.int/news/iom-helps-displaced-families-fleeing-idlib-syrias-northwest>> accessed 11 December 2015



increase risk of TiP and exploitation. TiP feeds a growing industry of criminal activities, including armed groups, although in the case of the Syrian crisis the dimensions remained to be determined. The material suggests that addressing the issue of TiP needs to be seriously considered by humanitarian actors in their work as early as possible. Within the humanitarian sector, there are plenty of existing instances, materials, and mechanisms that with adaptations or in the case of SOPs, a strengthening of their use, could provide protection to female VoTs and work for preventing TiP in general. Moreover, departing from forced migration as linked with global social and economic transformations and the fact that TiP often functions across borders, we are directed to think of solutions with a transnational, rather than national, perspective. This becomes particularly relevant for the situations taking place in Europe and at its borders. This paper has only hinted at the geo-political dimensions of the crisis, but it is clear that a regional solution to the conflict is needed. State and non-state actors need to step up to guarantee the security of millions of lives now at risk.

For the humanitarian sector, CT needs to be included in responses as early as possible in order to provide protection to VoTs and reduce the risks of TiP. Capacity building trainings are key into crystallizing the incorporation of CT and count with existing frameworks of cooperation among agencies. Moreover, although recent reports reveal evidence-base for TiP in crisis, Rapid Assessments, to determine the risk, scale and scope of TiP in specific crisis are of the utmost importance in order to be able to plan adequate responses. Finally given the fact that women and girls disproportionately suffer several forms of discrimination and vulnerability, including trafficking, it is clear that this population's special needs need to be addressed in a manner that includes them as agents of their own destinies, or role models for other (potential) VoTs.

Additionally, the existing sub-clusters SGBV and SCP might address tangentially, or in the future directly, the issue of trafficking, and if an integrated CT response would be implemented through them, an important protection gap which IOM has pointed out: adult men. Although women and girls systematically suffer discrimination under structural VaW, it is interesting to point out the protection gap for adult men within the Global Protection Cluster. Attention should also be paid to this group of the population. A critical point, however, is the general underfunding of responses to crisis as large as the current one in the region. Although a considerable obstacle, it is of the utmost importance to start including CT strategies and dealing with TiP in conflict and crisis situations, not only as a life-saving action

within a protection framework, but also looking into the future as a measure to prevent the establishment of ideal conditions for networks of TiP.

Measures such as those discussed in this paper need to be taken in order to protect VoTs and to prevent their re-trafficking or that of others, an interesting platform for that could be the World Humanitarian Summit 2016, as in the preparations it has already included discussions on trafficking in crisis and there is interest in including it.<sup>90</sup> But to address the disproportionate risks that women face in armed conflicts, particularly to the crime of trafficking, it is not only the Women, Peace and Security agenda that needs to transform into accountable principles, but the basic inequality between men and women in society at large that needs to be addressed. Women and girls are disproportionately VoTs not only because the crisis exacerbates risk factors, but rather because even well before the crisis in the region, women and girls did not have the same access to rights, respect and life as their fellow men and boys did. We need not only lay our gaze on the region, it is also the demand for cheap labor or organs in poor and rich countries alike which fuels this industry, in which women's roles as reproductive workers continue to be replicated with its accompanying lack of material recognition. Finally, what is happening in Syria, spilling over its borders, and reaching Europe is intrinsically tied to the global dynamics of capital and power, its uneven distribution and what Sørensen has called the "migration industry". In the end, this is not only a humanitarian sector problem, a Syrian or even a regional problem, the crisis is embedded in global dynamics and requires attention in all these fronts. However, women and girls need special attention and they deserve it. They are not passive victims, but social actors with skills, will, and agency.

"Dear decision makers of the world,  
...we are the biggest force of positive change you will ever meet. Not just for ourselves, not just for our families, but for our entire communities.  
All we ask is that you do all you can to empower and keep us safe, in spaces where we can grow and reach our full potentials.  
All we ask is that you consult us, involve us in your planning: we know what we need, we know what's best for us.  
All we ask is that you do your best to protect our right to education : we will pass it on and create the biggest ripple effect you can ever imagine.  
Dear world decision-makers, give us a chance: you won't regret it.  
— Girls of this world"<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>PHAP, 'World Humanitarian Summit: Trafficking in persons in times of crisis' (June 2015) <<https://phap.org/sites/phap.org/files/civicism/persist/contribute/files/150618-Trafficking-in-persons-event-report.pdf>> accessed 5 November 2015

<sup>91</sup>OCHA, 'We are girls trapped in crisis, fighting for tomorrow' (2015) <<https://medium.com/@UNOCHA/we-are-girls-trapped-in-crises-fighting-for-tomorrow-6eac8cdc3394#.cezunt9u>> accessed December 11 2015

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### Annex 1 Graphs, figures and maps

	Syria	Jordan	Lebanon	Iraq	Turkey
percentage of people assisted (October 2015)	71%	98%	29%	14%	55%
increase of people assisted (July - October 2015)	15%	34%	7%	0%	25%
key sector of assistance	common transport services	health assistance	health assistance	shelter and NFI distribution	NFI distribution
other activities (IOM)	51 professionals on CT, Capacity building (311 participants of various trainings)	humanitarian border management trainings, capacity building (members of the Public Security Directorate and Ministry of Interior)	winter assistance activities	transportation of students from camp to school in cities	computer courses, coordination of psychological support activities with community centre, transportation for resettlement interviews

**Map 1 The International Organization for Migration's response to the Syrian crisis**

**TURKEY:**

PEOPLE ASSISTED (10, 2015) 55%

INCREASE OF PEOPLE ASSISTED (7 - 10, 2015) 25%

KEY SECTOR OF ASSISTANCE: NFI DISTRIBUTION

OTHER IOM ACTIVITIES: COMPUTER COURSES  
COORDINATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES WITH COMMUNITY CENTRE  
TRANSPORTATION FOR RESETTLEMENT INTERVIEWS

**SYRIA:**

PEOPLE ASSISTED (10, 2015) 71%

INCREASE OF PEOPLE ASSISTED (7 - 10, 2015) 15%

KEY SECTOR OF ASSISTANCE: COMMON TRANSPORT SERVICES

OTHER IOM ACTIVITIES: 51 PROFESSIONALS ON CT, CAPACITY BUILDING (311 PARTICIPANTS OF VARIOUS TRAININGS)

**IRAQ:**

PEOPLE ASSISTED (10, 2015) 14%

INCREASE OF PEOPLE ASSISTED (7 - 10, 2015) 10%

KEY SECTOR OF ASSISTANCE: SHELTER AND NFI DISTRIBUTION

OTHER IOM ACTIVITIES: TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS FROM CAMP TO SCHOOL IN CITIES

**LEBANON:**

PEOPLE ASSISTED (10, 2015) 29%

INCREASE OF PEOPLE ASSISTED (7- 10, 2015) -7%

KEY SECTOR OF ASSISTANCE: HEALTH ASSISTANCE

OTHER IOM ACTIVITIES: WINTER ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

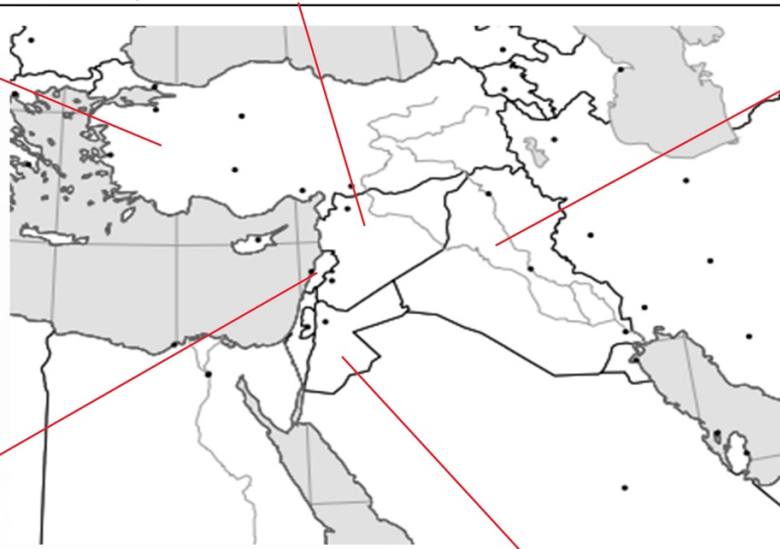
**JORDAN:**

PEOPLE ASSISTED (10, 2015) 98%

INCREASE OF PEOPLE ASSISTED (7- 10, 2015) 34%

KEY SECTOR OF ASSISTANCE: HEALTH ASSISTANCE

OTHER IOM ACTIVITIES: HUMANITARIAN BORDER MANAGEMENT TRAININGS, CAPACITY BUILDING (MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC SECURITY DIRECTORATE AND MINISTRY OF INTERIOR)



Source: International Organization for Migration, 'Regional Response to the Syria Crisis October 2015'

<<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IOM%20Regional%20Response%20to%20Syria%20Crisis%20Sitrep%20Oct%202015.pdf>> accessed 12 October 2015

## **Appendix B Recommendations and strategies**

	<b>IOM Recommendation</b>	<b>Strategies developed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<b>1</b>	Include CT measures into humanitarian response to prevent TiP and protect vulnerable population; advocacy should be undertaken through the Cluster System, and specifically the Protection Cluster and its Areas of Responsibility.	Include CT (female) experts in humanitarian response staff or have consultations with them. Humanitarian teams on the ground should have at least one CT expert in order to ensure that the issue is mainstreamed into practical measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of CT (female) experts staffed in humanitarian response</li> <li>• Geographical distribution of CT (female) experts</li> </ul>
		Formally integrate counter-trafficking as a sub-cluster or organizational unit into the cluster system as soon as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence of sub-cluster or organizational unit on CT</li> </ul>
		Strengthen existing IAC and SOPs among agencies, particularly between IOM and UNHCR, to facilitate Protection and Assistance to Trafficked Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update of SOPs</li> <li>• Local IOM /UNHCR staff are aware of SOPs</li> </ul>
		Awareness raising among refugees and IDPs of trafficking, and common practices of recruitment, or risky behaviors which might lead to TiP in the region/setting. For men and women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of awareness raising activities</li> <li>• Refugees and IDPs are aware of the risks and common practices</li> </ul>
		Empower and decrease economic vulnerability of women and girls by income generating trainings or projects such as Work for Cash, or cash aid: positive discrimination for women. Include CT awareness-raising in training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of women benefited in proportion to men</li> <li>• Negative coping mechanisms are less frequent</li> </ul>

2.	Adapted TiP-related capacity-building trainings should be delivered to multi-sector stakeholders involved in any humanitarian response. Specific attention should be paid to the training of staff positioned at key geographic and strategic points, either border guards, camp managers, peacekeepers, health professionals or other front line workers.	Incorporate a CT module into existing humanitarian trainings considering gender, cultural, religious and regional specificities, including forms of TiP and particularly vulnerable groups such as female refugees and displaced persons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training materials adapted</li> <li>• Number of trainings with incorporated CT module taken place</li> <li>• Number and type of staff trained (field, management, etc.)</li> </ul>
3.	Rapid assessments should be undertaken by trained staff at the onset of a crisis to assess the scope, scale and risk factors to TiP. Draft of specific assessment indicators could be developed, which should inform evidence based responses to ensure the protection and assistance of vulnerable populations caught up in crisis.	<p>Create a concrete tool such as a template with clear instructions for identifying risks to TiP, data gathering and data sharing during rapid assessments. (Key aspects: reports of missing people, accounts by survivors, number of under-aged marriages)</p> <p>Establish data sharing guidelines and platform making use of existing DTM, IMMAP and other humanitarian tools for monitoring.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of rapid assessments undertaken</li> <li>• Distribution of rapid assessments undertaken</li> <li>• Different agencies make use of the guidelines and platformS</li> </ul>

4.	Safe places for women VoTs should be identified and secured throughout the crisis and when relevant, additional solutions should be looked at, including international protection in cooperation with UNHCR.	Create safe spaces for W&G with multisectoral assistance and sensitive approach and ensure privacy for women. Involve W&G in the designing process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of safe spaces for W&amp;G</li> <li>• Number of W&amp;G participating in activities in safe spaces</li> <li>• Consultations with W&amp;G on risk factors concerning shelters</li> </ul>
		Awareness-raising: among female refugees (including outreach activities).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants are aware of the risks of being trafficked and of referral mechanisms</li> <li>• Number of outreach activities</li> </ul>
		Establishment of more entry points for VoTs: hotlines, mobile safe spaces, home visits, community work and flyers Focus on avoiding victimizing and supporting reintegration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of calls</li> <li>• Number of trained and specialized assistants</li> <li>• Number of mobile safe spaces</li> <li>• Number of VoTs cases revealed and assisted through hotlines/mobile safe spaces</li> </ul>
		Local women should be included in decision-making process to address the assistance and protection they need. Workshops or Focus Groups in Refugee camps, led by grass root women's organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of workshops done</li> <li>• Successful tracking of women's organizations' recommendations into IOM's humanitarian response</li> </ul>
		Special protection for single female-headed households, such as specific shelters, social services and provision of dignity kits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of special shelters for women</li> <li>• Specialized social services provided</li> </ul>

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## **Interview partners**

Interview with Sarah Craggs, Migrant Assistant Specialist for the MENA Region, IOM (Vienna, Austria, 14 October 2015)

Interview with Teemar Kidane, Surge Team Consultant, UNHCR (17 November 2015)

Interview with Agnes Tillinac, Consultant for IOM, Michela Macchiavello Assistance to Vulnerable Migrants Specialist for IOM, and Yoko Kimura, Protection Team Leader for IOM Earthquake Response Team, IOM (November 5, 2015)

Interview with Ahmed\* Humanitarian Worker and refugee from Syria (Vienna, Austria, 10 November 2015)

Interview with Ster\*, Syrian-Iraqi Former Humanitarian Worker focused on Women (Vienna, Austria, 21 November 2015)

Personal communication with IOM Iraq Office (October 2015)

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\*Names of interview partners have been changed on their request for confidentiality reasons.