SIREN report

STRATEGIC INFORMATION RESPONSE NETWORK
United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP): Phase III

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

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COUNTER-TRAFFICKING DATABASES IN CAMBODIA

KEYWORD	▪ **Location:** Cambodia ▪ **Topic:** Databases; Information ▪ **Analysis type:** Information Assessment
Purpose	*To identify the existing government databases containing information on human trafficking in Cambodia, and to present recommendations for the systematic provision of consistent, reliable, and targeted information on the situation of human trafficking relating to Cambodia.*
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The development of effective, sustainable information systems is essential to improving data on human trafficking. Data collected needs to be: (a) regular and reliable; (b) protected to ensure confidentiality and safety of individuals; and (c) converted into information that is useful to policy and operations decision-makers.

In Cambodia, at least nine government ministries and fifteen government departments deal with aspects of trafficking. Within these, IOM has identified seven "trafficking-relevant" information systems operating in four ministries[1], and of these, there are five that meet the criteria of handling primary data on human trafficking cases, flows, and risk factors. These are:

1. The **Law Enforcement Against Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Children (LEASETC) database**, managed by the Ministry of Interior (MoI), Department of Anti-Human Trafficking and Juvenile Protection;
2. The **database of all criminal cases** in Cambodia, including human trafficking criminal cases, managed by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ);
3. **The Coordination and Documentation Center,** housing return and reintegration data on trafficking victims managed by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSAVY);
4. The **Counter-Trafficking Information Campaign**, a database (or dataset) on individual and community vulnerability factors, managed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), but no longer collecting data; and

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[1] IOM (2007). *ASEAN and Trafficking in Persons.*

5. The **Labour Migration Information System (LMIS)**, a new database recently established for Cambodians who work abroad through the services of registered recruitment agencies, established by the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT).

Key points:

- The Royal Government of Cambodia is currently collecting (or has collected) information on nearly all of the aspects of human trafficking required for a comprehensive information system on human trafficking, including:
  - Vulnerability factors in 24 provinces
  - Migrant workers sent abroad
  - Victims identified by police
  - Perpetrators arrested
  - Prosecutions
  - Criminal sentences
  - Repatriated trafficked persons
- However, this information needs to be collated, analyzed, and disseminated regularly to responders, whose work could benefit from the information.
- Information also needs to be interpreted and cross-referenced to provide insightful recommendations for interventions and policy.
- Currently, there is no government mechanism to obtain non-sensitive data on trafficking victims from non-government shelters and other victim service providers.

Cambodian information systems on human trafficking exist, but data from victims and trafficking cases are not regularly analyzed, aggregated, or cross-referenced

The following is a summary of the key Government databases and their status as of August 2007:

1. **Law Enforcement Against Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Children (LEASETC)**
   - **Agency: Ministry of Interior (MoI), Department of Anti-Trafficking and Juvenile Protection**
   - **Data sources:** Trafficking-related cases within the Cambodian legal system, plus cases of domestic violence and rape.
   - **Data fields:** Biographic data about the suspect and the victim; charges filed; details of arrest; investigative and forensic evidence; and details of court actions.
   - **Current status:** Data is collected by provincial police then faxed to Phnom Penh, or manually collected by a consultant for compilation in Phnom Penh. Implementation of a private virtual network in five provinces might lead the way to electronic input at source, though nineteen provinces will still fax data.

2. **Criminal Case Database**
   - **Agency: Ministry of Justice (MoJ)**

- **Data sources:** All criminal cases in Cambodia, including trafficking cases.
- **Data fields:** Biographic data on the suspect and victim; court actions.
- **Current status:** This is a paper-based system where data sheets are completed by court staff and manually filed. The development of an electronic database is planned, to input new case data (but not old cases), but this has not yet been instituted.

3. **Coordination and Documentation Center**
   - **Agency: Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth rehabilitation (MoSAVY)**
   - **Data sources:** Data from trafficking victims repatriated from Vietnam and Thailand, under the relevant bi-lateral frameworks.
   - **Data fields:** Biographic and contextual data from the victims, including details about the trafficking process, and data on the perpetrators.
   - **Current status:** There are difficulties in analyzing and interpreting the data that is collected, due to lack of capacity.

4. **Counter-Trafficking Information Campaign**
   - **Agency: Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA)**
   - **Data sources:** Survey of stakeholders' knowledge and attitudes on trafficking, routes, causes, and perceived vulnerability factors.
   - **Data fields:** Biographic and other data on the respondents; information on people who have migrated from the village; and understanding of trafficking.
   - **Current status:** Data was collected, compiled, interpreted, and reported in 2004. Impact assessments were conducted following the implementation of targeted interventions. Data collection is not ongoing.
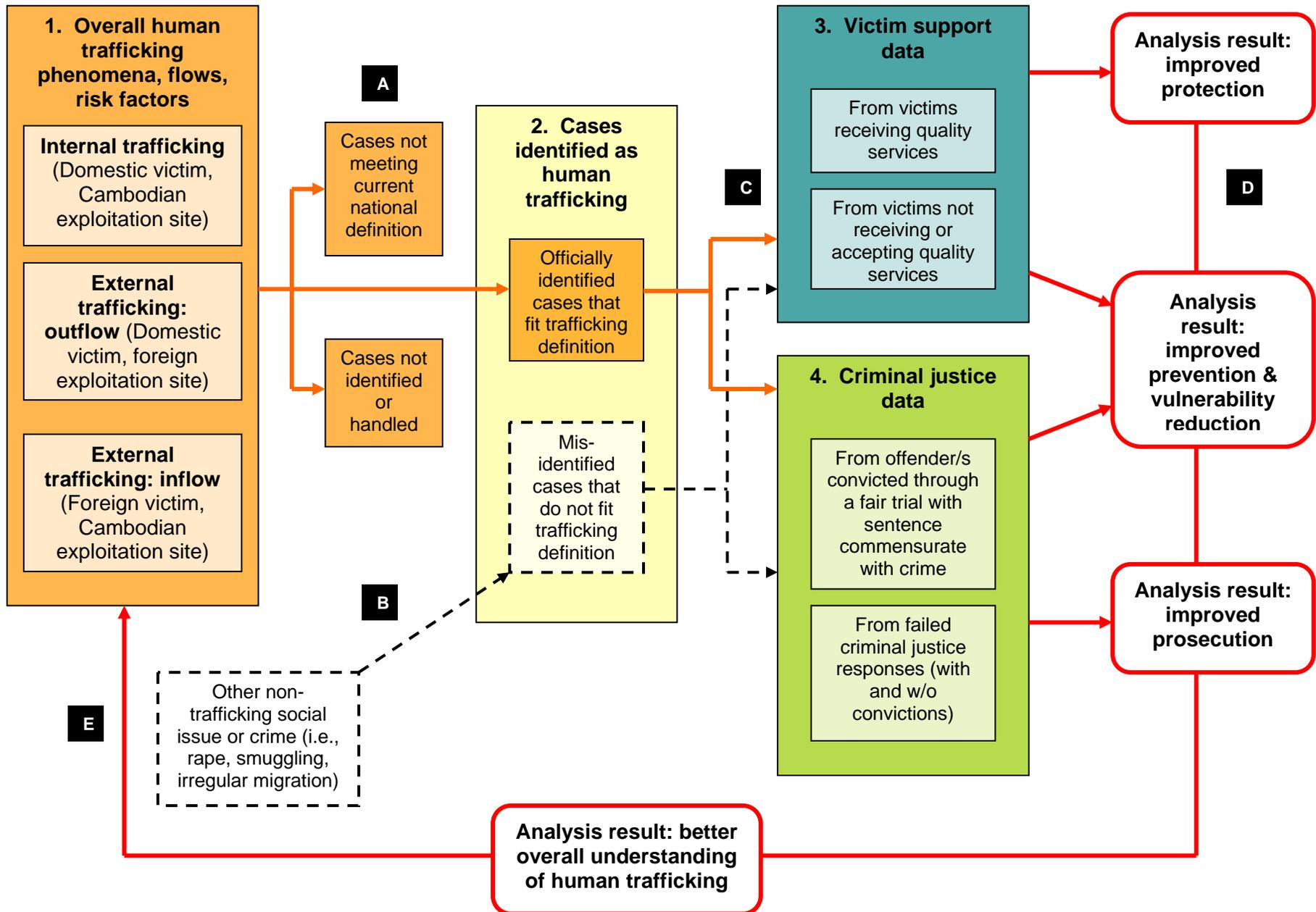
5. **Labour Migration Information System (LMIS)**
   - **Agency: Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT)**
   - **Data sources:** Information provided by the 13 licensed recruitment agencies through forms developed by the LMIS staff on legal Cambodian migrant workers.
   - **Data fields:** Biographic and other data on the respondents; information on the employer, the contract and the job details.
   - **Current status:** The LMIS was launched on 22 August 2007, and beginning from this date LMIS staff have begun to enter all key information from recruitment agencies of all current and future migrant workers abroad.

> **Cambodia is close to having one of the most comprehensive human trafficking information systems in the Greater Mekong Sub-region**

The human trafficking databases in Cambodia have the potential, in the near future, to provide a more nuanced picture of human trafficking and the effectiveness of the counter-trafficking response. The recommendations that follow outline actions that could be taken to reach this potential. The diagram below illustrates an ideal human trafficking information system, including four key information objectives that describe the scope and magnitude of the human trafficking situation and cases that are identified (Boxes 1 and 2), as well as the counter-trafficking response (Boxes 3 and 4). Within each information objective, a set of more specific information targets are suggested. Analysis outcomes are suggested in red boxes.

INFORMATION OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS IN AN IDEAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING INFORMATION SYSTEM

1. Overall human trafficking phenomena, flows, risk factors

Internal trafficking (Domestic victim, Cambodian exploitation site)

External trafficking: outflow (Domestic victim, foreign exploitation site)

External trafficking: inflow (Foreign victim, Cambodian exploitation site)

A

Cases not meeting current national definition

Cases not identified or handled

2. Cases identified as human trafficking

Officially identified cases that fit trafficking definition

Mis-identified cases that do not fit trafficking definition

B

Other non-trafficking social issue or crime (i.e., rape, smuggling, irregular migration)

E

3. Victim support data

From victims receiving quality services

From victims not receiving or accepting quality services

C

4. Criminal justice data

From offender/s convicted through a fair trial with sentence commensurate with crime

From failed criminal justice responses (with and w/o convictions)

Analysis result: improved protection

D

Analysis result: improved prevention & vulnerability reduction

Analysis result: improved prosecution

Analysis result: better overall understanding of human trafficking

KEY TO DIAGRAM

Information Objective 1 – the overall human trafficking situation – is broken down into three categories of cases, according to the origin of the trafficked person and the location of the exploitation: internal, external outflow, and external inflow.

Of those cases (all incidents of human trafficking), only a portion are officially identified correctly as human trafficking cases; others are either not recognized as trafficking according to national laws, or simply not identified [see label A]. With continued improvements to the counter-trafficking response, the proportion of correctly identified trafficking cases should increase over time. To understand the efficacy of victim identification, it is also important to improve understanding of the wider situation of human trafficking, and therefore develop accurate estimates of the scale of the problem.

Of all cases that are identified as human trafficking cases, some are mis-identified cases of smuggling, irregular migration, etc. that are labelled as trafficking [see label B]. Thus, **Information Objective 2** – identified trafficking cases – typically contains a combination of correctly and incorrectly identified trafficking cases, with the proportion of incorrectly identified trafficking cases hopefully decreasing over time.

This combination of cases then feeds into the victim support and/or criminal justice systems, and associated databases [label C]. Ultimately, the data collected from all of these databases, as **Information Objectives 3 and 4**, should be analyzed and contribute to concrete results to inform policy and interventions [label D].

Relating the existing Cambodian databases into this ideal system, it can be seen that:

- The MoI LEASETC database contributes to Boxes 2 and 4;
- The MoJ Criminal Case database, if launched electronically, could contribute to Boxes 2 and 4;
- The MoSAVY database contributes to Boxes 1 and 2;
- The MoWA vulnerability / prevention dataset contributes to Box 1;
- The Labor Migration Information System will begin contributing to Boxes 1 and 2; and,
- The numerous shelter databases in Cambodia would contribute to Box 3.

Some preliminary conclusions that can be made from this analysis include:

- When multiple databases contribute to the same "box," or information objective, the data should be collated and harmonized for a more complete analysis. After this occurs, it will be possible to validate whether the complete set of data as it is currently being collected is providing reliable information for each information

target. Analyses, key findings, and recommendations should be shared publicly to inform and improve policy and interventions (government and non-government).

- Without integration of victim support information from shelters and other victim support providers, we will not be able to attain a clear, complete picture of domestic and cross-border human trafficking, and the effectiveness of counter-trafficking, in Cambodia.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Criminal justice data requires inputting into electronic format, allowing for cross-referencing between police and court data, and analysis on a regular basis.
2. Implementation of a standardized, national case numbering system for trafficked persons should be initiated by the first front-line responder, with core information (such as date of birth and province) also used to identify the case, while maintaining confidentiality. All subsequent database systems should include the same numbering, alongside any other existing case numbering systems.
3. Case management files should be confidential yet easily cross-referenced between different service providers and ministries, through a standardized case numbering system.
4. Data from real cases of trafficked persons should inform understanding of vulnerability factors, along with other available information on human trafficking patterns and trends from stakeholders, practitioners, and other non-case sources.
5. Data needs to be collected and used for the purpose of decision-making and intervention/service improvement. Extensive and/or repetitive collection of data can be a burden to trafficked victims, communities, and data collectors alike, so there should be a clear purpose to each question asked.

NOTES ON METHODS

- *Review of IOM's ASEAN and Trafficking in Persons country report for Cambodia.*
- *Further fact-finding with government and non-government partners in Cambodia and at the regional level, to update status of databases.*

IOM International Organization for Migration

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