

Chapter 5



Briding the Gaps and Weaving New Realities: Responses from the Field

In this chapter we contrast the self-assessment and observations by ten non-governmental organisations in addressing human trafficking in Africa.¹⁰⁹ Our data-gathering procedures involved several steps. The first questionnaire, structured along standard guidelines¹¹⁰ for best practices, was sent to more than 200 email addresses of organisations in Western and Southern Africa to gather information on the technical and organisational aspects.¹¹¹ Several databases on BP in different contexts were reviewed to draw useful insights for comparison with the relevant literature on BP when applied to the anti-trafficking campaign in West and Central Africa. A second questionnaire was sent to those organisations which agreed to share their experiences, asking fewer but qualitative questions focussing on the organisations' understanding of the context and of possible solutions.

Some organisations did not isolate any particular practice or a particular project from the sum total of activities and strategies of the organisation as a whole. Other organisations were able to describe a particular practice or project and isolate its effects. Our discussion therefore seeks to accentuate how perspectives and practices are interwoven with an organisation's activities. The responses also show a keen awareness of the significance of evidence-based intervention, of the maintenance of a database and of a participatory approach which involves children and

109. Nine of the organisations are operating in West Africa (Bénin, Mali, Togo, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Nigeria) and one is based in South Africa.

110. Covering aims, goals, sustainability, replicability and efficiency of the organisation.

111. A link for the questionnaire was placed on the UNESCO website for wider access to other organisations. [http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php-Follow-up telephone calls sought to encourage submission of the questionnaire.URL_ID=5073&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php-Follow-up+telephone+calls+sought+to+encourage+submission+of+the+questionnaire.URL_ID=5073&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

young persons, their families and the communities. Poverty, fractured communities and hegemonic masculinity are regarded as key causes regarding the trafficking of women and children. Causative aspects on the demand side are noted and monitored but not analysed. Organisations also convey a sense of despair regarding their ability to redress poverty, and a certain degree of scepticism concerning the political will and ability of national governments so to do. In the following sections we introduce the participating organisations and their activities; then proceed to a discussion of their expressed need to bridge existing gaps of knowledge and to find common points of action.

5.1 Organisations and Their Activities

5.1.1 *Enfants Solidaires d'Afrique et du Monde (ONG-ESAM)* (Regional and national level NGO based in Benin)

ONG-ESAM operates in Benin and aims to eradicate child abuse and trans-border recruitment of children as domestic workers. Its target groups are: children in domestic work, communities at risk and/or affected by trafficking, trafficked persons and their parents. Most efforts are concentrated on advocating the adoption of a code of conduct among employers on the treatment of child domestic workers. It also involves the media and other NGOs.

The organisation provides capacity building for NGOs and conducts research on child trafficking. The organisation's activities and strategies include the withdrawal of children from abusive situations, their reintegration into school or professional training, sensitisation of households and communities, and data-collection by which to identify the best ways to redress trafficking. In addition the organisation provides alternative sources of income for those engaged in trafficking, and facilitates meetings between employers and children which focus on the promotion of a code of conduct for employers of child domestic workers.

The strengths of the practice include the use of computers to maintain a database on children in domestic work and the participation of children in the programmes. There is also strong networking with sub-regional, regional and global groups. Given that the demand for action increases, the organisation finds itself unable to fully respond owing to high communication costs and limited resources. There are blurred lines between the two categories of children: those in domestic work and those trafficked.

The potential for replicating this practice is high; sharing experiences with the various networks has taken place. A similar project has been set up at the sub-regional level. ESAM has partners at the global level (ECPAT,¹¹² Global March Against Child Labour and Anti-Slavery International) and can share information as well as experience within the network. ESAM is the coordinator of the Comité de Liaison des Organisations Sociales de Défense des Droits de L'Enfant (CLOSE), a network of 30 NGOs and professionals.

5.12 ONG-Stratégies et Développement (National NGO in Benin)

ONG-Stratégies et Développement sees trafficking as being related to the fear of HIV/AIDS and recognises that selling children is an abuse of human rights. It sees the problem as stemming from ignorance and complicity within the community. Its aim is to reduce the incidence of trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, by training youth educators¹¹³ and, through them, increasing awareness of parents and children about human rights; it is forming strategies for the psychosocial education of young persons.

ONG-Stratégies et Développement's platform is human rights education, which has been extended to cover issues of child trafficking. Such issues are integrated in its educational campaigns at the community level, using a participatory approach which includes the children. Action on trafficking converges with activities in other areas such as HIV/AIDS, delinquency and illiteracy. Information, education and communication activities include the use of radio and formation of groups of working children. The organisation cites its participatory approach and its multi-professional perspective as being effective, and mentions plans to make this approach regional. There is no direct support for trafficked persons and the organisation is not able to address economic issues or unemployment.

5.13 World Association for Orphans (WAO-Afrique) (National NGO in Togo)

WAO-Afrique has identified one root cause of trafficking as the disintegration of social and cultural institutions that support children. Using a child-centred approach, it aims to encourage the participation of trafficked children in the design for and planning of rehabilitation and reintegration activities. The organisation conducted research in 1997 on human trafficking in Togo, with

112. ECPAT is a network of organisations and individuals which in 2004 covers 64 countries.

113. In the current programme the organisation expects to train 30 youth educators.

follow-up research in 2000-2001 on deeper causes of human trafficking, school dropouts, and illiteracy based on testimonies from 500 trafficked children. These reports have provided information for more comprehensive planning of interventions by NGOs and international organisations working on human trafficking in West Africa. The organisation also produced a training manual, and organised meetings with members of Togo's National Assembly to lobby for the recognition of children as actors in legislative change and for government support to bring children back to school.

The target groups of WAO-Afrique span different levels. Activities and strategies are multiple and wide-ranging. The organisation sets up reception centres for children and conducts education programmes, gives training on human rights and offers legal assistance. The organisation has initiated income generation projects, and provides credit facilities, legal rights education and literacy classes for parents. It also assists in acquiring birth certificates for children.

At both community and national level the organisation works with associations of truck drivers, conducts sensitisation programmes, debates with and lobbies decision-makers. It works with ministries on the interpretation of legal texts and suggests alternatives. By involving the communities both in and across the borders WAO-Afrique hopes to have an impact on policy changes and new legislation.

The organisation cites its main problems as: high costs to assist children in the reception centre and in the process of reintegration; difficulties in collecting repayment for the credit from the parents; difficulties disengaging children from the houses of abuse; unclear legal instruments with which to punish offenders; children misidentifying parents; the lack of qualified magistrates and border police and of support for these. The practice benefits much from the use of a participatory approach and the sharing of experiences between young people. Other organisations in Togo are already trying to replicate the practice.

5.1.4 Association pour le Progrès et la Défense des Droits des Femmes Maliennes (APDF) (National NGO in Mali)

APDF sees the demand for prostitution as a major cause of the trafficking of women. By involving the private sector (hotels, bars, restaurants, and travel agencies) through information, awareness campaigns and advocacy, the organisation hopes to influence the private sector to cut back on hosting prostitution for economic gains. Some expected results include the creation of a network between CATW (Coalition Against the Trafficking

of Women)¹¹⁴ and the private sector, and a framework for consultation and action between national coalitions and beneficiaries.

Given that government action to redress the situation neither targets the private sector, nor addresses women's issues, APDF's reaching out to actors in the private sector (particularly those segments that might have a traditional interest in commercial sexual service) is a novelty. The organisation sees its practice as having potential for replication if the same problems are identified in another area. It recognises that different social, cultural, judicial, and political contexts will make replication difficult.

APDF's exclusionary focus on the abolition of prostitution rather than addressing human trafficking as a broader problem constitutes an important shortcoming; it also lacks the professional ability to take up issues requiring legal reforms: these are left to other networks. APDF seeks to influence policy changes through liaison with national coalitions (national meetings of the CATW) and links global networks (also *per pro* CATW).

5.15 Women's Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON) (National NGO in Nigeria)

WOCON sees trafficking as being related to the ignorance of the community and government's failure to address it. The government is held accountable for the lack of attention paid to awareness and education campaigns in the community; also the lack of measures to address poverty. The organisation acknowledges the diversity of the root causes of trafficking, shaped by a combination of socio-economic and political factors – including geographical location as well as historical processes.

WOCON aims to eliminate child labour in Nigerian society by withdrawing children from prostitution and domestic work. The overall objective is specifically related to trafficking. It conducts a 6-month sensitisation programme in a rural community through open air 'outreaches', slogans, town criers, musical bands, radio spots and radio jingles. It reaches out to children, communities, parents, the wider community, traditional rulers and chiefs, law enforcers, transport workers, government officials in ministries. In conjunction with the sensitisation campaign a consultative forum was established. This consultative forum agreed to a 'social contract' that specified the responsibilities of the community to stop the trafficking within that community. A task force committee was set up within the community to monitor the incidence of human trafficking.

114. For more information on this organisation, see <http://www.catwinternational.org/index.php>.

WOCON recognises that the short duration of the sensitisation programme is insufficient to change awareness or behaviour. Poverty and the lack of education also aggravate trafficking. WOCON calls on the government to provide more micro-credit funds and more schools generally.

The strength of WOCON lies on the use of research findings for planning and targeting; and its use of a participatory approach where the communities themselves monitor the social contract and work with various sectors (government ministries, transport workers, police and the media). Weaknesses include the inability to provide direct support to trafficked persons. Additionally, although WOCON has identified poverty as a root cause of trafficking, it is unable to address the poverty situation. And no training could be given to the task force committee responsible for monitoring the incidence of trafficking. The practice has already been replicated in another border town in Nigeria through ECPAT International, and through the help of UNICEF in another Nigerian town where children were found in illegal quarries.

5.1.6 Girls' Power Initiative (GPI) (National NGO in Nigeria)

GPI recognises comprehensive education in sexuality for children as crucial for their empowerment and the prevention of trafficking. It aims to find out why girls are more vulnerable to trafficking than boys, and to reduce the incidence of trafficking of girls. GPI activities focus on female children and their parents with some attention to lobbying policy makers and mobilising the media. The activities and strategies include: the provision of comprehensive education in sexuality to female children and adolescents; public awareness campaigns; research, and operation of a Gender Development Institute. GPI engages in collaborative work with the Ministry of Education and other NGOs, lobbying government ministries to include such education in school curricula. Additional GPI centres in two states in the Niger Delta have been created. The girls are regarded as catalysts of change within their own community. One result of the practice is the publication of a book that documents how girls are susceptible to trafficking and contains recommendations for change. The activities of GPI have been adapted by IOM in the training of teachers in Edo State.

Some hostility towards the training and awareness that the girls receive has arisen – from some parents and those who profit from the trafficking. GPI also cites its limited reach and its inability to address the poverty situation in the community as major issues of concern.

5.17 African Women Empowerment Guild (AWEG) (National NGO in Nigeria)

AWEG accepts that trafficking occurs to 'feed' the sex trade. It believes that women are trafficked also because of their 'compassionate disposition' towards their family and their desire to fend for family members at all costs. Trafficking results from poverty, economic deprivation, and greed. The practice aims to empower women by helping them acquire skills (personally and professionally) to open up opportunities for themselves. Target groups are girls trafficked from Nigeria to Italy as well as returnees from other areas, their families and communities. AWEG has a number of activities including adult literacy projects, promotion of abstinence among adolescents and information campaigns among adolescents on the risks of being caught up in trafficking.

AWEG works along the lines of women's human rights violation, according to which the trafficking of women is considered as one among the many forms of gender discrimination.¹¹⁵ The organisation propagates this message through information campaigns, such as the publication of 'A Letter to my Daughter'¹¹⁶ aimed at raising the awareness of the general public.

As an organisation AWEG is unable to address the poverty situation of trafficked persons. AWEG has noted that the Edo State Law against Prostitution and Trafficking criminalises the prostitute along with the traffickers. The criminalisation of prostitution has had adverse effects, such as when trafficked girls feel stigmatised upon return, and do not frequent the shelters and the skills-training centres run by the organisation. Many of the returnees manage to leave again. Similar guilds have not yet been set up elsewhere.

5.18 Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (RAPCAN) (National NGO in South Africa)

RAPCAN recognises that trafficking happens because it stems from a culture of child abuse and exploitation. The organisation holds the belief that ending child abuse will help stop child trafficking. It seeks to prevent and address different patterns of child abuse. The target groups include

115. Other examples are the funeral rites a wife has to go through upon the death of her husband, fetish rituals and religious oaths.

116. Used as anti-trafficking campaign material, this is a hypothetical mother's letter to a daughter highlighting the tricks of traffickers, the risks of early pregnancy and HIV/AIDS. It aims to build self-esteem in young women and hope for the future.

children, youth, community, parents, associations of truck drivers, and government ministries.

RAPCAN's key activities include training programmes, legislative changes, curriculum changes and direct support for child witnesses. Training programmes on the prevention of sexual abuse, reproductive health, and human rights are organised for adults and children. The organisation disseminates informative materials related to HIV/AIDS, lobbies and conducts advocacy campaigns among policy makers as part of its work towards changes in legislation and society's treatment of children.

A child witness programme is organised to help children who have decided to give testimony – providing counselling and support as the child goes through the court procedures. Work with the Ministry of Education seeks to influence curriculum changes to include issues of child abuse. RAPCAN runs a well-maintained resource centre with materials on child abuse and regularly produces resource materials for educational purposes.

RAPCAN's strength is its focus on legislative change, based on the recognition that such change will challenge current patterns of child abuse and will lead to societal changes. Trafficking is treated as both cause and result of child abuse.

5.1.9 Save the Children-Sweden (Regional Programme, based in Senegal)

Save the Children-Sweden has supported substantive research on child trafficking. Its action programmes have benefited from the information obtained. The organisation maintains a database of information on trafficking in the region. The data suggests that children are targets of trafficking for many reasons. Apart from socio-economic reasons such as extreme vulnerability (poverty and illiteracy) in communities, there are gender-specific reasons linked with kinship practices.¹¹⁷ State-related issues – such as the permeability of borders, the corruption of officials and the extremely high number of children who have no registration of their birth – are also seen as contributing to the incidence of trafficking. Save the Children-Sweden has also noted a marked alteration in the manual labour market arising from the pressure on planters to lower the cost of production. Employers no longer hesitate to look for cheap labour beyond their borders given the drop in prices in primary commodities in recent years.

117. Young girls of marrying age have to prepare their marriage trousseau by starting work at an early age.

The organisation builds its practices on three pillars: 1) strengthening the capacities of all sectors to address trafficking; 2) advocacy for legislation changes; 3) support for trafficked persons who return – assisting rehabilitation and reintegration. One basic objective is to attempt to mitigate the abject conditions the children are in under their trafficked status. The efforts towards this end include: advocacy; the training of personnel and trainers; apprenticeships for children; micro-credit facilities for the affected families and families at risk. The target groups of Save the Children-Sweden include individuals, the community, NGOs, networks of child-focussed NGOs.

At the grassroots level the organisation helps set up village vigilance committees, provides social workers and psychologists who offer direct assistance to individuals through reunification programmes or placement of returned children with host families. The organisation conducts training courses for stakeholders including municipal workers, law enforcers, NGO workers and social workers. It functions within a regional network of NGOs whose personnel facilitate exchanges between children across borders. Action is hindered by insufficient capacity – such as social centres to host trafficked children – and the lack of specialists in the field. The lack of knowledge of national and legal instruments among communities and weak coordination between countries also pose problems for the process of reintegration.

The strength of the practice is its clear rights-based participatory approach, its multi-pronged and multi-dimensional character. Adequate funding permits the practice to be comprehensive. But the practice is limited in its outreach: micro-credit facilities can be extended only to those directly affected by human trafficking. The political will of governments is required both for changing conditions of extreme poverty in the communities and resolving open or latent political and ethnic conflicts which aggravate the problem; as well as reforming the socio-cultural traditions which perpetuate it all.

Save the Children-Sweden is a member of a regional working group which brings together the principal actors in the region: UNICEF, ILO, UNODC, ECOWAS and others. Being part of a network, Save the Children benefits from the sharing of experiences and can support attempts to replicate the practice in other areas. The organisation works both with the NGO sector as well as with agents of the state to build professional capacity in a variety of areas – research, advocacy, social mobilisation and support to trafficked children.

5.1.10 Terre des Hommes-Germany (TDH) (Regional Coordination Office based in Burkina Faso)

TDH's target groups are primarily NGOs and local organisations already working on issues of the trafficking of children, covering three countries: Burkina Faso, Gambia and Mali. TDH-Germany conducts research on the context of trafficking, assists in the development of local communication plans, sports competitions, and mobilisation of community leaders and local organisations. The focus of TDH-Germany is to bring these organisations together into a network that can coordinate and cooperate with each other.

Technically and financially it supports activities such as awareness raising, conscientisation and advocacy, and care for trafficked children brought in by the different associations. The work of TDH-Germany is linked with the ILO. Its activities include mobilising grassroots communities, awareness campaigns, income generation, education activities, radio broadcasts, popular theatre and support for children's school expenses. There is no direct support given to trafficked persons and their families.

TDH works with state services such as social action and security services. In cases of interception and rescue of trafficked children the organisation involves the communities concerned. Communities choose among themselves who will be members of the vigilance committees. TDH's partners include also the media that uses local languages – such as the women's radio created and operated by women in Banfora in Burkina Faso. TDH-Germany publishes an information bulletin (about the anti-trafficking campaign) distributed to associations and partners. TDH considers one of its shortcomings to be the difficulty of working synergistically within a network; and the absence of funds specifically for repatriating trafficked children is another shortfall. TDH recognises the difficulty of addressing economic reintegration of trafficked children and their families as well as the difficulty of addressing the overall poverty situation in the regions from which the children originate.

5.2 Bridging Gaps and Finding Common Points

The responses from the organisations reveal a profound understanding of the context and processes of human trafficking in Africa.¹¹⁸ Occasional discrepancies are found between the understanding shared by these

118. Direct quotes in boxes are responses to the distributed questionnaires.

organisations as members of an epistemic community and the way this understanding finds its way into practice at different levels of intervention. A reverse formulation of this statement appears also true: what is being done in practice to resolve a particular dimension of the problem is not always reflected in the explanatory discussions on root causes and policy choices.

5.2.1 Trafficking in Women and Children: a By-product of Social Inequality

Previous research tended to focus on the processes of trafficking and the conditions in which the women and children find themselves rather than the causes at deeper levels (structural, institutional, culture and agency). In recent years a deeper understanding has been developed regarding the conditions in the community and the different supply and demand factors influencing the occurrence of human trafficking. In many instances research has found that community members, parents, women or children still engage in trafficking *in spite of* understanding the risks involved. Often the vulnerability of children to trafficking is an outcome of broader societal neglect.

RAPCAN: ‘The context (South African) which renders children vulnerable to trafficking also renders them vulnerable to abuse and neglect more broadly. In fact, in South Africa, I will argue that, in many instances, children are trafficked as part of a broader vulnerability to abuse and neglect.’ [RAPCAN response to questionnaire.]

Nevertheless explanations for the continuity and agency of women, children and families of trafficked persons remain inadequate. The tendency is to place the onus on the trafficked persons. ILO-IPEC (2002:19) notes,

‘Women and girls may themselves take the initiative to migrate in the hope of earning a decent income, escaping a miserable life, or supporting a family back home. In such cases, they are sometimes aware that they are going to work in commercial sex, considering this to be an acceptable short-term remedy to a desperate need to earn a living. They very rarely, however, are aware of the nature of the demands that will be made upon them, the conditions in which they are likely to be held, or the possible long-term repercussions of the activity (including reproductive illnesses and social exclusion).’

ONG-Stratégies et Développement: 'Generally, boy victims of trafficking are used in coffee and cocoa plantations and in the gravel quarries. The girls, by contrast, are used in domestic work, peddling in the markets or they are victims of commercial sexual exploitation. All of these situations show the degree of disrespect for human rights in general and the rights of children in particular.' (ONG-Stratégies et Développement response to questionnaire.)

RAPCAN: '... there is limited recognition of even women, and still less of children, as human beings with rights in their own right.' (RAPCAN response to questionnaire.)

WOCON: '... the community attributes the incidence of child trafficking and child labour to the lack of primary and secondary schools.' (WOCON response to questionnaire.)

GPI: 'teaching the girl child that she has a voice, to use the voice both for herself and others in a society where girls are not meant to be heard.' (GPI response to questionnaire.)

Concerning global inequality, most of the analysis of human trafficking tends to be one-sided, concentrating on the supply side only. A number of organisations (ILO-IPEC, UNIFEM, UNICEF, and Save the Children) have acknowledged that both the supply and demand sides perpetuate trafficking. Trafficking will continue to happen as long as there is a demand for cheap labour, domestic workers, undocumented workers, and undocumented commercial sex workers. Simultaneous intervention to address supply and demand appears imperative.¹¹⁹

SC-Sweden: 'There is a combination of causes. The most common are: ignorance (parents and children ignore the risks of trafficking), they are illiterate for the most part and live in conditions of extreme poverty. In addition, most people in West Africa have a long tradition of migration. **Since the drop in prices in primary commodities, there is a very strong demand** in the manual labour market to lower the cost of production for planters and other employers of children who constitute this manual labour that is exploitable and obedient and the employers no longer hesitate to look for them beyond their own borders.' (Emphasis in original) (SC-Sweden response to questionnaire)

119. A good study on the demand side of the problem was done by Save the Children-Sweden published in 2004, entitled 'Trafficking - a demand-led problem?'. See References for complete citation.

5.2.2 Choices of Intervention Measures

Intervention measures are dependent on many factors other than an understanding of the situation. A UNICEF report (2002:15) notes:

'[t]here is a need for prevention approaches that go beyond awareness-raising to focus on development. There are, for example, no poverty reduction schemes to combat child trafficking in the sub-region other than micro credit schemes in Cameroon and Togo. The costs of awareness-raising activities may be lower than the costs of programmes for poverty reduction. They may be easier to manage and have an immediate impact, while poverty reduction schemes need long-term commitment and maintenance. However, the absence of systematic poverty eradication strategies and the lack of sustained efforts within prevention activities undermine the impact of the entire prevention arsenal.'

Although poverty is consistently cited as a root cause at the level of policy rhetoric, it is not consistently addressed at the grassroots levels, where income generation activities (IGA) and micro-credit is not always available. In some cases IGAs are made available to trafficked persons and their families but only after trafficking has occurred and in the context of economic reintegration with the community.

AWEG: 'While increased campaigns and alternative wealth creation awareness are sought for vulnerable members of the community, the general high level of poverty in the population continues to predispose young women in poor families to trafficking. Government must intensify efforts to alleviate poverty in population while raising the value of the Nigerian currency (Naria) against foreign currency.' (AWEG response to questionnaire)

RAPCAN: 'A major contributing factor is poverty. In South Africa, around 14 million children live in deep poverty with inadequate access to basic requirements for survival. Under these circumstances, children are vulnerable to being "sold" and trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation, or domestic and agricultural labour. Their parents are also frequently "conned" into thinking that they are sending their child off to a better life with more opportunities.' (RAPCAN response to questionnaire)

AWEG: '[the root causes of trafficking are] poverty, greed, unstable economy, unemployment, success stories as told by the trafficked, lack of awareness on the part of those to be trafficked.' (AWEG response to the questionnaire.)

Many organisations have stated that their inability to address the poverty situation in the community is a direct outcome of their institutional weakness, lack of resources, lack of capacity or mandate. Addressing the demand side appears to be similarly out of the reach of many organisations.

Clearer links between poverty reduction mechanisms and other human trafficking prevention strategies must be established. A common policy platform for all actors engaged in counter-trafficking efforts at the community level needs to be fostered so as to combine poverty-reduction goals with other goals that will ensure socially meaningful options for returnees and their families.

WOCON: 'The lack of capacity to provide alternative means of livelihood such as strengthening the existing cooperative ventures and providing micro-credit for the communities to alleviate acute poverty is also a weakness.' (WOCON response to the questionnaire)

WOCON: 'If the economic conditions of the people are enhanced then they will be less vulnerable to traffickers. Opportunities for income generating ventures for the populace especially through developing available business or cooperative ventures in the community will aid sustainability.' (WOCON response to the questionnaire)

ESAM: 'Social efficiency or the capacity to adapt to a social context of this project now depends on the initiatives taken by the communities themselves to decrease the traffic of children in their context but it is under constraints because of the various small budgets of the project. The increasing demand that cannot be covered might become a risk of demobilisation.' (ESAM response to the questionnaire)

Awareness programmes without providing alternatives for the community members are unlikely to help bring about change. A number of assumptions behind sensitisation and awareness-raising programmes need to be brought into the open and subject to further inquiry. Mere awareness programmes can indeed contribute to gender discrimination by demonising the image of the migrating woman and controlling women's mobility more generally. Communities may be aware of the risks of unauthorised migration but may simply continue to engage in the activity with greater awareness of the risks. Dottridge (2004:11) suggests:

'The most effective campaigns to prevent children from being trafficked are based on a thorough understanding of the factors which children and their parents (or others) take into account when considering whether (and when) to leave home. Top down prevention campaigns, which simply impose a message that migration is dangerous because of the risk of falling into the hands of traffickers' seems much less likely to be effective.'

The UNICEF report (2002:13) on trafficking in West and Central Africa notes that:

'there are wide variations between the awareness-raising campaigns promoted ... and their overall impact in the region is limited by the lack of comprehensive national strategies on trafficking. They often target government officials or public opinion leaders, and rarely penetrate into rural areas or the marginalized communities at risk. Information remains sporadic, mainly journalistic and does little to educate families and children.'

In many cases the primary target group of beneficiaries consists exclusively of either children or women. Men, women and children are rarely addressed at the same time. Simultaneously addressing the trafficking of women, children and men can be a complex intervention, as particular needs and contexts must be accounted for. However, exclusionary practices in the definition of target groups such as children only or women only, can obliterate the suffering of those others – including boys and men.

The causes and processes of trafficking of women and children are intertwined with wider practices within a community. Involving the whole community to foster an understanding on human trafficking in general and how it may have different consequences based on gender, age and ethnicity may build a common will to fight it. The delimitation of the 'girl child' as a target group based on the legal definition (under 18 years of age) is not always helpful as it does not always correspond to the sociological definitions of childhood in many communities.

GPI: 'Every activity revolves around the girl child and they are the group leaders and class monitors in all GPI groups and school outreaches'. [GPI response to the questionnaire]

Research focussed on 'best practices' as a search for effective solutions should not deflect (or sidetrack) attention from the issues which cause the problem, or from locating the key reasons why children and women migrate, why families and parents allow their children to be sent to far off places to work; why women, in spite of understanding the risks of working in commercial sex, still engage in it; why women and girls, in spite of 'awareness programmes', still knowingly go with a middleman into another country/area.

RAPCAN: 'A second important root cause, related also to the context which makes children vulnerable to abuse and neglect more generally is the deeply patriarchal ethos which pervades South African society. Rigid social constructions of masculinity and femininity and a profoundly conservative ethos relegates women and children to positions of being 'owned' (and therefore disposable at the whim of the 'owner') and there is limited recognition of even women, and still less of children, as human beings with rights in their own right. There is a sense of entitlement around sex and sexual activity - almost as though that's what women and children are there for, and they shouldn't complain about it.' (RAPCAN response to the questionnaire)

RAPCAN: '.... the disempowerment already experienced by the majority of our population through that history is exacerbated by poverty which denies opportunities to assume the socially prescribed roles of bread-winner and head of the household.' (RAPCAN response to the questionnaire)

5.2.3 Networking

The experiences of WAO-Afrique, Save the Children-Sweden and TDH-Germany show that it is possible to have intervention at different levels: international, regional, national and grassroots, by cooperating through networks, even if the diversity of actors involved presents its own challenges. Networking seems to be generally good in West Africa but not immediately observable in South Africa.

SC-Sweden: 'SC is a member of the regional working group for the combat against trafficking which includes agencies from UN as well as international NGOs without forgetting the presence of the main group which is the children and young workers' movement.... but because of the diversity of actors, the coordination of activities is sometimes difficult.' (SC-Sweden response to questionnaire)

APDF: 'Creation of a framework for partnership and collaboration between those mentioned and national coalitions.' (APDF response to questionnaire)

SC-Sweden: seeing BP in the context of information sharing between practitioners 'this project insists on the exchange and capitalisation of experience.... a project that promotes best practices and takes into account good and bad experiences of other practices.' (SC-Sweden response to questionnaire)

Many of the practices are dependent on funding from external sources. Sometimes sustained funding is not available until the practice becomes self-sustaining, which can place innovative action

in jeopardy. More sensitivity among funding agencies on the multi-causal nature of the problem and more awareness in communities about the priorities of different funding agencies would be useful in planning for action in ways which creates synergy within a given area.

ESAM: 'There is an increasing demand for action by the community. A deeper sensitization has made clear to the communities that only priority actions can be financed by the project, and that other actions of equal importance or usefulness to combat trafficking will be supported by other projects with matching funds.' (ESAM response to questionnaire)

Many of the practices recognise the use of a participatory approach as an asset. But the learning to be gained from those affected by human trafficking, and the encouragement of their participation at decision-making levels, are not always being reflected in the common policy agenda of the epistemic communities operating at the global level.

WOCON: 'The strength of the project is in the active involvement of the community dwellers in identifying the causes and finding solutions to the prevention of trafficking following the sensitization campaigns.' (WOCON response to the questionnaire)

GPI: 'GPI girls are themselves catalysts and continue to act in the wider society to stem spread of trafficking and other vices'. (GPI response to the questionnaire)

SC-Sweden: 'The participatory approach is at the core of the project, the victims and the communities are involved in all phases of the project. This allows for an ownership of the project by the beneficiaries. This is a project to encourage work in synergy with all the actors which avoids the duplication of action and useless competition.' (SC-Sweden response to the questionnaire)

ESAM: 'one of the strong points ... the participation of children in the implementation process and in the work of the project.' (ESAM response to the questionnaire)

APDF: 'Diversifying and expanding the base of actors in the struggle, beyond traditional actors which could provide an opportunity to do something about demand and a means to dismantle networks of trafficking and sexual exploitation.' (APDF response to the questionnaire)

ONG Stratégies et Développement: 'Strengths of the project: the youth are motivated to involve themselves in the struggle against trafficking.' (ONG Stratégies et Développement response to the questionnaire)

The need for intervention to address prevention, protection and prosecution simultaneously is articulated at the level of debates. It is

not always possible to meet this need owing to a shortfall in resources, institutional capacities and networking in some areas.

RAPCAN: 'On the highest levels, we need a statutory framework which protects and promotes the rights of vulnerable groups. We need policies which implement these laws which are inter-sectoral, rights-based and properly resourced. South Africa is currently developing specific legislation dealing with trafficking in persons, and the issue is also raised in the Sexual Offences and Children's Bills that are currently in "tabled" in this country.... Then we need massive training and awareness raising to sensitise officials and other role-players about the issues, about children's vulnerability, about the rights of children and people in general so that those who encounter children through various "systems" (e.g. criminal justice, social services, health, education, etc.) are appropriately trained and equipped to deal with trafficking. For example, currently, foreign children suspected of being trafficked have no legislative protection, and are commonly repatriated to just across the border of their countries of origin - where they are picked up by the traffickers and brought straight back in!' (RAPCAN response to the questionnaire)

SC-Sweden: 'Most of the states in the region have no capacity and means to face the phenomenon although they might have the good will to do so. Their actions are limited to the repression and even efficiency is not high because the borders are not controlled one hundred percent, the services are not well-equipped, all the procedures are too long and there is corruption.' (SC-Sweden response to the questionnaire)

Some practices have already been replicated. It is not always clear how the particular context where the practice was replicated has been studied, or how the practice has been adapted to suit the new context, but several organisations are clear about what factors are important for successful replication of a practice.

APDF: 'The necessary conditions for a transfer of successful practices are: taking into account the socio-cultural realities of the host country, the political conditions, the level of conscientisation of the population related to the project/problem to be transferred, and also engagement of the political and administrative authorities and the disposition of the partners to press the issue.' (APDF response to the questionnaire)

ESAM: 'The practices of this project can be applied in other regions of the world if one meets the social realities of the regions; moreover, the will for change has to be present at the level of the communities.... The involvement and the participation of the population, a good identification of the problem that is real for the community as it is lived, for which the transfer is meant.' (ESAM response to the questionnaire)

SC-Sweden: [What is needed for replication] are 'Flexibility and using the lessons learned about what was successful as well as what was not successful. After all a participatory approach allows to rectify the course once a problem emerges.' [SC-Sweden response to the questionnaire]

WOCON: 'being insufficiently familiar with the people in the community, and the failure of an organisation intending to execute a project to gain cultural acceptance, may pose obstacles to the replication of the practice in the community.' [WOCON response to the questionnaire]

SC-Sweden: [Replication would fail] 'if one doesn't take into account the local context and especially if the transfer is made with rigidity and without flexibility' [SC-Sweden response to the questionnaire]

5.3 Concluding Remarks

Searching for 'best practices' to address trafficking of women and children in Africa has led to the following observations. The arenas of action are both social and political. Anti-trafficking organisations and the practices they adopt are bearers of beliefs derived from their moral and cognitive visions. From the institutional standpoint – even if an organisation recognises that the problem of trafficking has multiple roots, makes sure that the planned interventions are 'multi-pronged' and 'multi-level', and employs participatory measures – it cannot address the occurrence of human trafficking at all levels. Practical responses need to be scrutinised regarding the discrepancy between field analysis and choice of intervention. Responses from the field suggest that more can be done to learn from NGOs' experiences in order to improve interpretations of human trafficking at the policy level. And policy agendas of funding agencies could benefit from more openness rather than closure to negotiations with organisations active *in situ*.