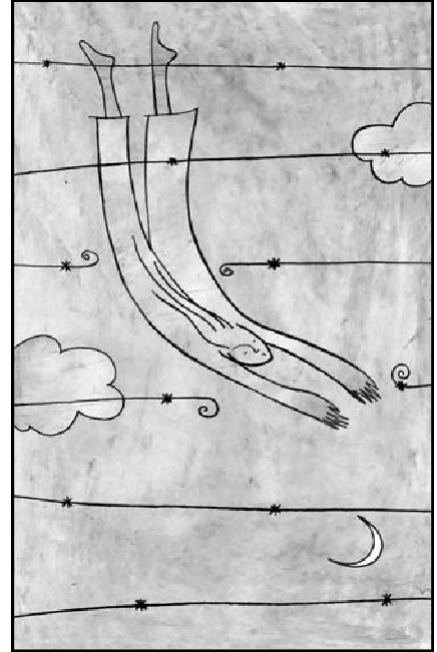


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WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE
victims of trafficking in central america
AND DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THE

COSTA RICA

-CHAPTER COSTA



**The
experience of women
victims
of trafficking in Central
America and the
Dominican Republic
and the
performance of the
institutions**



COMMCA
Consejo de
Ministras de
la Mujer de
Centroamérica



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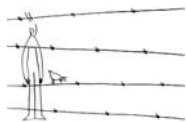
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ACRONYMS

AECIDA Spanish **Agency** for International Development Cooperation.

ASTRADOMES Association of Domestic Workers.

CEDAWCommittee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

CIDEHVMCentro de Derechos Humanos de los Migrantes.

COAVIFCentro Operativo de Atención a la Violencia Intrafamiliar.

COMMCACouncil of Women's Ministers of Central America.

CONAMAJNational **Commission** for the Improvement of the Administration of Justice.

INAMUInstituto Nacional de las Mujeres.

OIJudicial Investigation Agency.

IOMInternational **Organization** for Migration.

UNODCUnited Nations **Office** on Drugs and Crime.

WARNING

The use of language that does not discriminate or differentiate between men and women is one of the concerns of our Organization. However, there is no agreement among linguists on how to do this in our language.

In this sense, and in order to avoid the graphic overload that would result from using o/a in Spanish to mark the existence of both sexes, we have opted to use the classic generic masculine, on the understanding that all mentions in this gender always represent both men and women.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRESENTATION 7

1. INTRODUCTION 9

2. METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY 11

2.1. Regional strategy	11
2.1.1. Objectives	11
2.1.2. Expected results	11
2.1.3. Study populations	12
2.1.4. Type of study	12
2.1.5. Research techniques	13
2.2. National strategy	13

3. FRAME OF

REFERENCE 17

3.1. Trafficking in	persons	17
3.2. Constituent elements of trafficking in	persons	18
3.3. The relationship between migration and	human trafficking	19
3.4. Difference between smuggling of migrants and trafficking of	persons	20
3.5. Main manifestations of human trafficking in the	world	20
3.6. Prevalence of	human trafficking	22
3.7. Factors associated with	human trafficking	24
3.8. Stages of the	trafficking experience	29
3.9. Trafficking dynamics and	traffickers	32
3.10. Consequences of trafficking on	people's lives	33

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS 35

4.1.	Regulatoryframework	35
4.2.	Magnitude and characteristics of trafficking in women in the	country 36
4.3.	Public policies and institutional programs on trafficking in	women 44
4.4.	Women survivors of	humantrafficking 47
4.4.1.	Survivorcharacteristics	47
4.4.2.	The	traffickingexperience 47
4.4.3.	Traffickers	61
4.4.4.	Recommendations for other	women 62

4.5. Institutions providing	publicsector services	63
4.6. Privatesector service provider institutions		64
5. CONCLUSIONS		69
5.1. Conclusions related to the	methodologicalapproach	69
5.2. Conclusions on the	researchresults	69
6. RECOMMENDATIONS		73
6.1. Generalrecommendations		73
6.2. Recommendations for the Administration of	Justice	74
6.3. Recommendations for the Ministry of the Interior and	PublicSecurity	74
6.4Recommendationsto the Ministry of	Health	75
6.5.Recommendationsfor the Ministry of	ForeignAffairs	75
6.6 Recommendations for the National	Women'Institute	75
6.7 Recommendations for private institutions and	internationalorganizations	75
BIBLIOGRAPHY77		
ANNEXES 79		
Annex Characterization1. of women survivors of trafficking in persons included as informants for the	study	79
Annex Summary2. of the interviews with	publicservice providers	82
Annex Results3. of the Prevention 2007Project progress to one year and Attention to Victims of Trafficking in the Central Pacific region implemented by Rahab Foundation and	IOM	88
Annex Interview guide4. with	serviceproviders	88
Annex Interview guide5. with women survivors of trafficking in	persons	89

PRESENTATION

The FIRST CENTRAL AMERICAN ENCOUNTER ON TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN held at Costa Rica, on December 4 and 5, 2005, marked a milestone in the struggle of Central American women against this transnational crime. The meeting was organized by the Ministers for the Status of Women of Central America, grouped in the Council of Central American Women's Ministers (COMMCA) and the organizations representing the Central American Feminist Network against Violence against Women (Red Feminista Centroamericana contra la Violencia hacia las Mujeres).



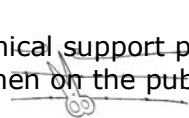

Some of the main considerations included in the Final Resolution of this regional meeting are as follows:

- That the trafficking of women for the purpose of sexual, labor or domestic exploitation and servitude is a growing problem in the Central American region and that this is one more manifestation of the gender-based violence suffered by women.
- That to this end, every year, hundreds of women of all ages from the member countries of the Central American Integration System (SICA) are deceived, kidnapped, abused and exploited by national, regional and international networks of traffickers and traffickers to supply a growing demand for the sex industry and cheap labor, both locally and in North America, Europe and other countries of the world.

As a result of this meeting, a document called *Guidelines for a Regional Plan against Trafficking in Women 2007-2009* was adopted, whose implementation and follow-up was entrusted to COMMCA. One of the axes of this regional plan establishes as a guideline the "Development of national and regional research on trafficking in women" and COMMCA requests support from SISCA to carry out two regional studies: one related to the existing national regulations in each country on trafficking in persons and women, and the other on the experiences of women victims of trafficking and the actions of the institutions. This initiative is supported by SISCA, expanding its coverage to include the Dominican Republic, a member country of the System. The project was developed in the second half of the year with 2007 resources from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), for which the technical services of the International Organization for Migration - Regional Office for Central America and Mexico were contracted. The product of this effort is seven national studies and a regional synthesis on each of the problems identified.

In the exercise of the Pro Tempore Presidency of COMMCA, I am pleased to present to the public opinion of Central America and the Dominican Republic the regional study entitled "The experience of women victims of trafficking in Central America and the Dominican Republic and the performance of the institutions. Costa Rica Chapter" as a contribution to make visible and denounce the serious violation of human rights of which an undetermined but growing number of Central American and Dominican women are victims. It is also an urgent call to all public agencies, private organizations and national communities to redouble our efforts to put an end to this crime.

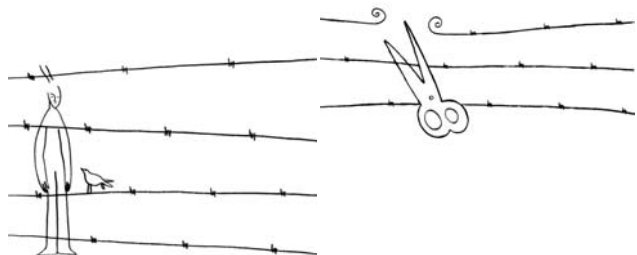
We thank SICA for its support to this initiative and, in general, to COMMCA's global actions. We are also grateful to the Government of Spain and AECID without whose support these studies could not have been carried out and to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for their support.



for Migration for the technical support provided to COMMCA in recent years to help place the issue of trafficking in women on the public and social agenda of our countries.



Zoila de Innocenti
President Pro Tempore, January-July
COMMCA2008



1 INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC: 2006), nearly 80% of the victims of human trafficking reported worldwide are women of all ages. This is yet another manifestation of the specific violence that affects women as a result of their gender status and the political, social and economic discrimination that places them in a position of extreme vulnerability to the actions of trafficking networks and traffickers.

According to this international organization, Central America and the Dominican Republic are a region of origin, transit and destination for trafficking in women. Hundreds of women are taken from the region or brought from other parts of the world to be exploited.

It should be noted that the area is one of the poorest in the hemisphere. Marginal and climatic conditions also make it vulnerable to natural disasters.

A direct consequence of these circumstances in which the majority of the population lives -which is added to the attraction factors in the countries of destination- is the existence of high migration rates whose profile has been changing in recent years, since there is a growing participation of women in the migratory processes. Indeed, the poverty and social exclusion that characterize the lives of thousands of Central American women is the cause of what has been called the "feminization of migration" which implies, fundamentally, an increase in the migration of women independently, without the company of men (partners, fathers, brothers, and others), which exposes them to greater risk.

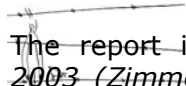
In addition to poverty, domestic violence, sexual abuse, and the dream of family reunification, they drive hundreds of people out of their homes.

women every year from their countries of origin in search of better opportunities and quality of life. It is precisely in this migratory context that traffickers take advantage of their vulnerable situation to deceive them, abuse them in multiple ways and trap them in exploitation networks.

Due to the increase in its incidence, the severity of the consequences for its survivors, the complexity with which transnational criminal networks are organized, and the new trends and variations it presents, human trafficking is becoming a central topic of debate on the public agenda in Central America.

This is one of the reasons why the Council of Women's Ministers of Central America (COMMCA), in the framework of the *First Central American Meeting on Trafficking in Women* held in San José, Costa Rica in December, agreed 2006, to strengthen institutional action to learn about, make visible and address trafficking in women in each of its countries, and to include studies to obtain reliable and specific information on the subject. This is because, despite its seriousness, only generalities are known about trafficking in women in the region.


The information gathered, although important, is limited to the testimony about the problem provided by the personnel of assistance institutions and organizations based on their relationship with the victims. However, there are no studies focused on the survivors and that give an account of the experience in their own voice. Studies of this type refer to experiences in other continents, and a particularly relevant precedent is that carried out in Europe by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, *The Risks and Consequences of HIV/AIDS in Europe*.



The report is based on *the Zimmerman 2003 (Zimmerman 2003)*, which recounts the experiences of trafficking victims in each of the phases (recruitment, transfer, and exploitation).

Research such as the one mentioned above has proven to be of particular relevance, not only because of its testimonial value on the seriousness of human rights violations, but also because it provides first-hand information on the practices, dynamics and operational characteristics of trafficking networks in a specific region. They are fundamental for the definition of specific intervention strategies, both by the state and by representatives of the civil society sector who directly assist the victims.

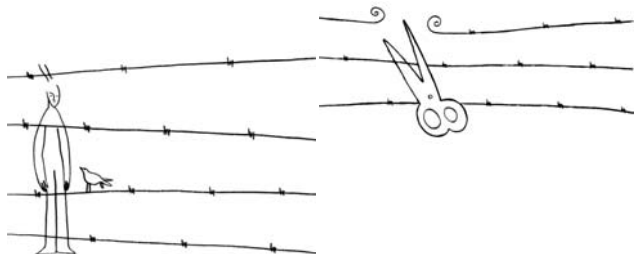
It was in this context that the Council of Women's Ministers of Central America (COMMCA), through the Central American Social Integration System (SISCA), decided to carry out the *Regional Study on Trafficking in Women in Central America and the Caribbean*.

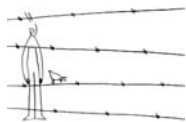


Dominican Republic: women's experience and institutional performance.

The work was carried out by the International Organization for Migration (Regional Office for Central America and Mexico) and took place between August and December 2007. It was carried out with the support of the Regional Cooperation Program with Central America (Gender Line) and funds from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID).

This activity was part of COMMCA's *Regional Plan of Action on Trafficking and Smuggling of Women* (Prevention Axis) and the *Cooperation Agreement between the General Secretariat of the Central American Integration System and the International Organization for Migration*, signed in 1999, which stipulates that the human rights of the migrant population in general, and of women and children in particular, and the trafficking of migrants are of special interest to both institutions and that they should collaborate with each other.





2

METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

2.1. Regional strategy¹

A regional research team composed of a regional researcher and researchers in each of the countries participating in the research was set up to carry out the study. The process was to produce seven national reports and one integrated regional report.

In order to provide uniformity to the study products of the different participating countries, the IOM in Costa Rica, within the framework of COMMCA/SISCA cooperation and with the financial support of AECI, developed a research protocol to be applied by all national researchers. Its main guidelines are detailed below.

2.1.1. General

Objective

- To know the experience of women in the center of the country.

The report also describes the actions of public and private institutions in relation to the care provided to survivors of human trafficking in the Americas and the Dominican Republic.

Specific objectives

- To document the experience of Central American and Dominican Republic women survivors of human trafficking, and to identify the personal and social factors of protection and vulnerability that affected their experience.

- To learn about the performance of key institutions involved in the care of trafficked women.
- To know what is the perception that women survivors of human trafficking have about the response found in the institutions that intervene in the care of this population.
- To formulate conclusions and recommendations aimed at improving the quality of the actions of public and private institutions involved in the care of women survivors of trafficking and the prevention of this crime in the region.

2.1.2. Expected results

To have a study that allows to document -in the protagonists' own words- some of the characteristics, impact and consequences of the experience on survivors of trafficking in women in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

To have an assessment of public and private care services specifically for women victims of trafficking in the different countries included in the study, according to the perception of the institutions themselves and from the point of view of the women themselves.

Finally, it is expected that the study will provide conclusions and recommendations that will serve as input to develop and improve local, national and regional response capacity to achieve a more agile, safe and appropriate intervention for women victims of trafficking and for the prevention of the crime.

¹ For more details on the regional strategy, please consult the Research Protocol of the Regional Study on Trafficking in Women in Central America and the Dominican Republic: the experience of women and the actions of institutions, available on the IOM web page. It can be consulted at the following electronic address: <http://www.iom.or.cr/espanol/descargas/protocolo%20de%20investigaci%20n%20mujeres%20trata%20sica%20final.pdf>.

2.1.3. Study populations

The study populations in this research are as follows:

- a) Service providers in public institutions and social organizations considered key because of their institutional profile or branch of activity for the care of women victims of human trafficking.
- b) Central American, Dominican and other female survivors of human trafficking (resident in the country) whose trafficking experience occurred after the age 15 of 18.

The term "service providers" refers to those who provide direct support or other services to trafficked women. In this research, service providers from both the public and private sectors were considered.

As part of the research protocol, a minimum number of interviews was established in both sectors. In the case of the public sector, the researchers were required to conduct at least one interview with key informants from the following institutions:

- Administrative police.
- Prosecutor's Office or Public Prosecutor's Office.
- Migration Department.
- Government agency for the advancement of women.
- International Organization for Migration.

In the case of the private sector, it was mandatory to interview at least three civil society organizations that had provided some type of assistance (legal, social, psychological, shelter, etc.) to women victims of human trafficking in the last five years. Priority was to be given to those organizations with specific programs or services for women victims of trafficking and those with the widest national coverage.

The selection criteria for the participation of women survivors of human trafficking were basically five:

1. That the trafficking experience took place after the age 15 of 18.
2. That they had the opportunity to express informed consent without the condition of receiving any type of benefit or assistance from the referring entity as a condition for their participation.
3. That the women had indeed been trafficked. This caveat is made because of confusion about the differences between trafficking and smuggling.
4. The women should preferably have benefited from a specific assistance or support program or service.
5. That the selection of over-living women should take into account, as far as possible, the known characteristics of trafficking in women in the region, in order to achieve the greatest representativeness of the sample.

2.1.4. Type of study

The trafficking of women over the age of 18 and adults is poorly documented and is, in general, invisible, despite the fact that its existence is publicly recognized. Much less research exists that, with the voice of the women themselves, rescues and records the experiences that this trafficking imposes on its victims. Nor are there any studies in the region that provide information on the actions of the institutions called upon to offer services to this population, which is valued both by those who provide the service and by the victims themselves. Therefore, and in accordance with the theory of social research, this is an "exploratory" study whose purpose is *"...to study a topic or to obtain an initial familiarity with an issue"* (Babbie 2000: 72). According to Barrantes (1999: 64), exploratory research is *"...one that is carried out to obtain a first knowledge of a situation in order to later carry out a more in-depth study, which is why it is said to have a provisional character. In general, it is descriptive and can also be explanatory"*.

2.1.5. Research techniques

In congruence with the research approach adopted and the type of study to be conducted, the research techniques used in this case were the following:

- Documentary review and analysis.
- Semi-structured interview.
- In-depth interview.

The documentary review and analysis sought to identify updated key information for basic knowledge of the state of the art in the country and, in general, the level of knowledge developed on the topic under study. Among the secondary sources to be consulted were the following:

- Documents with data on the incidence and prevalence of trafficking in women in the country.
- Previous existing studies on the problem of trafficking in women in the country and journalistic records that report situations of trafficking in women. The hemerographic review was to cover the last few years⁵ (2002-2007).
- Documents from public entities and private organizations that develop actions for the care and prevention of trafficking in women in the country, as well as policies, programs and institutional actions on the subject.

In the case of the interviews and in order to unify the collection of information, interview guides were designed with the different key informants in the research. The guides served as a "road map" to direct the conversation, but not as surveys or interrogations that should be strictly followed. (See annexes).

2.2. National strategy

The exploratory study in Costa Rica was based on the regional methodological proposal. In this sense, its process sought the development of the following data collection guidelines:

a) Data from secondary information sources

Because trafficking in women is still a new issue on the agendas of public and private institutions in the country, the collection of information suffered significant limitations, mainly due to the lack of clarity about the differences between trafficking and human smuggling. There is a great deal of confusion as to their typification and specificity among officials whose work is related to the recording of these crimes and actions against them, and among the population in general. As a result, the validity and credibility of the information has been affected by factors such as:

- Underreporting of cases;
- Sources with incomplete statistical information
- Contradictory information.

The institutional documentation provided for this study is scarce. The hemerographic review, in the terms requested in the research protocol, was only partially carried out.

b) Data from primary sources

In the period between August 1 and 8 October 1, 2007, a total number of interviews¹⁷ were conducted with employees of institutions or organizations that provide services. The table below details¹ the interviews carried out.

c) Interviews with women survivors

In accordance with the "snowball" methodology proposed in the Regional Protocol, an exploratory survey was carried out in order to detect and subsequently gain access to women survivors in the country. As a result of the previous exercise, it became evident that, due to the lack of a specific state policy or specialized organizations on the subject, detection is still very limited. Therefore, the decision was made to: a) broaden the age limits of the population of women survivors of the trafficking experience, as proposed in the Protocol

Table Institutions1. and service provider organizations consulted for the study

#	Date of interviews	Code interviews	Institution
1	1 August 2007	IM1	Ministry of Public Security and Governance
2	1 August 2007	OM1	International Center for Human Rights
3	6 August 2007 16 August 2007 29 August 2007	OM2 - OM4	Rahab Foundation
4	8 August 2007	IM2	Ministry of Health
5	9 August 2007 15 August 2007 20 September 2007	IM5 - IH1 - IM8	Judicial Branch - Victim's Assistance Office
6	9 August 2007 5 September 2007	IM6 - IM7 - IM11	National Women's Institute (INAMU) -Violence Area- COAVIF
7	14 August 2007	OH1	Caritas of Costa Rica
8	16 August 2007	IM3	General Directorate of Migration and Aliens
9	22 August 2007	OM3	Association of Domestic Workers (ASTRADOMES)
10	20 September 2007	IM9	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
11	8 October 2007	OM5	IOM - National and Regional Program on Trafficking in Persons

Regional; b) incorporate written sources of testimonies previously collected by service providers.

As detailed in the table, the 2, collection of trafficking experiences from the perspective of women victims was carried out through three different sources:

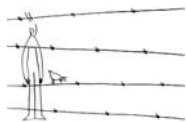
1. Direct interviews conducted by the consultant during the research period.
2. Transcripts of testimonies compiled by the Rahab Foundation (I3) and IOM (I10 and I11).
3. Transcriptions of testimonies included in judicial files to which we had access, which are constituted by narrations in the first person of each of the women informants. In this

In this line, two files were reviewed: the file with 01, the individual testimonies of the informants identified as I4 and I5; and file 02, with the individual testimonies of informants I6, I7, I8 and I9.

With the objective of not affecting the reliability of the information, only those testimonies made before instances recognized for their seriousness were taken into account and, as mentioned, those that were transcribed in the first person and with the words of the victim. Due to its relevance, the information contained in a third judicial file was collected, which only consisted of data referred by the OIJ investigator; this data is presented under reference E3 (file 3).

Table Type2. of sources used as data on women survivors' experiences

# Informant	Type of source	Nationality	Type of trafficki ng	Year of experience treats
I1	Direct interview 01	Costa Rican	External	1992
I2	Direct interview 02	Costa Rican	External	1977
I3	First-person testimony compiled by Fundación Rahab	Costa Rican	External	It is not known exactly
I4	First-person testimony compiled from criminal case file 01	Nicaraguan	External	2005
I5	First-person testimony compiled from criminal case file 01	Nicaraguan	External	2005
I6	First-person testimony compiled from criminal case file 02	Dominican	External	1998
I7	First-person testimony compiled from criminal case file 02	Dominican	External	1998
I8	First-person testimony compiled from criminal case file 02	Dominican	External	1998
I9	First-person testimony compiled from criminal case file 02	Dominican	External	1998
I10	First-person testimony compiled by IOM	Costa Rican	External	2006
I11	First-person testimony compiled by IOM	Costa Rican	External	2006



3

FRAME OF REFERENCE²

The following is a summary of some of the concepts and theoretical-explanatory proposals that are considered fundamental for understanding trafficking in persons and trafficking in women specifically.

3.1. Trafficking in persons

The first references to the concept of "trafficking" come from the United Nations instruments where it was initially used to refer to what was known as "*white slave trade*" (trade of white women from Europe to Arab and Oriental countries as concubines or sex workers around 1900). In the first international convention (1904) "trafficking" was conceptualized as the movement of women associated with slavery but closely linked to "immoral" purposes (prostitution) and required the crossing of national borders. In 1910, the definition was expanded to include the "internal trade" in women. The link between trafficking in persons and prostitution was consolidated with the 1949 *Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others*.

At present, this definition is extremely limited in that it does not recognize the various manifestations of human trafficking around the world and the fact that not only women can be victimized, but also minors, regardless of their sex, and adult men.

The definition currently accepted worldwide by the states is as follows

in the so-called "Palermo Protocol" (*Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, October 2000*). This protocol entered into force on 25 December 2003. As of October 2006, 117 states are signatories and 107 have ratified it.

According to article (3) (a) of this protocol, trafficking in persons is understood as:

"the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring 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. Such exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs".

Regarding consent, the Protocol establishes in paragraph b) the following:

b) The consent given by the victim of trafficking in persons to any form of intentional exploitation described in subparagraph (a) of this article shall not be taken into account when any of the means set forth in that subparagraph have been used.

² This conceptual summary is based, among others, on the document: IOM (2006): *Guía de intervención psicosocial para la asistencia directa con personas víctima de trata*. San José, Editorial Mundo Creativo.

The following is added to paragraphs c) and d):

c) *The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if none of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article are used.*

d) *Child" shall mean any person under the age 18 of majority.*

3.2. Constituent elements of trafficking in persons

According to the definition of trafficking in persons, the following elements must be present in order to constitute the crime: action, means and ends.

a) The **action**. This consists of capturing, transporting, transferring, welcoming or receiving. These verbs denote the different stages of the action. The definition of trafficking requires some kind of physical transfer or displacement (within or across borders), i.e., the location of the victim in an unfamiliar environment, where she is physically, culturally or linguistically isolated, with a total loss of affective reference and social support network, and where she is denied legal identity or access to justice. "It is the combination of forced transportation with the final forced practice that distinguishes the crime of trafficking in persons. (...) The transportation of trafficked persons is inextricably linked to the ultimate purpose of trafficking (... and must be understood as) carried out in an attempt to subject the victim (...) to additional violations (GAATW, 2003: 42-44).

b) The use of coercive³ **means** to commit the action. These means are, at least: threat, use of force, abduction, fraud, deception⁴, abuse of power or of a situation of vulnerability or the granting of receipt of payment or

benefits to obtain the consent of a person who has authority over another. In the case of minors¹⁸, it is irrelevant whether or not coercive means are used to commit the action, since the crime of trafficking in minors is configured with the action and the purposes of exploitation. Neither can the persons who have custody of minors give consent to the trafficking of minors in their care.

It should be borne in mind that the Palermo Protocol is strictly a law enforcement tool, and therefore omits any specific considerations regarding the protection of victims. For this reason, to complement the Protocol, the Economic and Social Council issued a 2002 document entitled *"Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking"*, which offers states a series of guidelines for the effective protection of persons affected by this crime.

c) The **purposes** of exploitation. These purposes include at a minimum: the exploitation of the **prostitution of others** or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. However, the definition is not exhaustive and leaves open the possibility of including other types of practices that could eventually be considered exploitative.

It is important to point out that the approach to human trafficking will significantly determine the strategies used to combat it and, in turn, each strategy will have a different impact on the victim population, as can be seen in the table below. 3.

On this point, the United Nations has stated that *"human rights violations are both a cause and a consequence of trafficking in persons. It is therefore imperative that the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms*

³ It includes the threat or use of force, blackmail, abuse of authority (related to situations of dependency in which a person who has power over another denies rights to the dependent person). It can also be psychological. ⁴ It means that the trafficked person has been tricked or duped into a vulnerable situation.

Table Approaches3. and strategies to confront trafficking in women⁵

Approaches	Strategies and possible consequences on victims
As a moral problem : Combating trafficking is the same as combating prostitution.	Strategy: Abolish prostitution. Consequence: Stigmatize / Prosecute the person in prostitution.
As a migration problem : Combating trafficking is the same as combating migration.	Strategy: Closing borders. Consequence: Criminalizing the migrant.
As a crime problem : Combating trafficking is the same as combating organized crime.	Strategy: Changes in the Penal Code Prosecution of traffickers. Consequences: Requiring victim complaints and conditioning assistance.
As a violation of human rights : Combating trafficking is the same as combating human rights violations.	Strategy: Defend the rights of victims. Consequences: Protect victims. Indemnify / Compensate.

The human rights of trafficked persons should be at the heart of measures to prevent and end human trafficking. Measures to combat trafficking in persons should not undermine their human rights and dignity and, in particular, the rights of those who have been trafficked: migrants, internally displaced persons, refugees and asylum-seekers" (UN 2002a: p 5).

3.3. The relationship between migration and human trafficking

Migration is a practice that has always accompanied civilization. Historically, people have migrated for a wide variety of reasons. This migration may be regular or irregular, but neither one nor the other necessarily implies the experience of trafficking. Migration may have taken place irregularly but may have had

A positive outcome in the country of destination and the migrant may be happy with the work or outcome there or may have migrated regularly but become a victim of trafficking in the destination country. Migration may also be internal (within the same country) or external (to another country).

Thus, the relationship between migration and human trafficking occurs when the migrant ends up in a trafficking situation, that is, when he/she is exploited during the migration process, either during transit or at the destination. To clarify, it should be said that trafficking can occur either when people move by legal means or when they do so illegally. Irregular migration is not a prerequisite for the configuration of the crime of trafficking.

This link also exists when the recruitment is directed towards a person who already has a plan to emigrate. In these cases, the trafficking network takes advantage of this interest to commit the crime.

⁵ Adapted from Centro de Orientación e Investigación Integral (COIN). *Ni color de rosa... ni color de hormiga... Mujeres migrantes*

3.4. Difference between smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings

According to the IOM, irregular migration is the movement (of persons) that takes place outside the *regulatory norms of the countries of origin, transit or destination* (IOM 2005:65). Consequently, the smuggling of migrants is the procedure by which the smuggler seeks to obtain, directly or indirectly, an economic or other benefit from the illegal entry of a person into a country of which that person is not a national or permanent resident (UNODC, 2006).

Table 4 summarizes and compares the most important differences between smuggling and trafficking in persons.

3.5. Main manifestations of human trafficking in the world

As mentioned above, trafficking in persons is a crime committed for the purpose of exploiting the victimized persons. The definition included in the Palermo Protocol lists some types of exploitation, however, this definition is not exclusive or exhaustive; on the contrary, it is open to include any other manifestation of this crime in which exploitative conditions prevail.

The table summarizes⁵ the main manifestations of trafficking in the world, according to the type of exploitation.

Table Trafficking4. in persons and smuggling of migrants

	Trafficking in persons	Human smuggling
Consent	Victims never give their consent to the exploitation, they only consent to the transfer, which is generally carried out by means of coercion, deception or in situations of abuse against them. Migration can be both regular and irregular.	Despite the fact that irregular migrants are exposed to a series of dangers or degrading situations due to irregular transit conditions, they give their consent to irregular migration and between them and the smuggler there is a negotiation and payment for services (in cash or in kind).
Exploitation	Trafficking uses transit for the purpose of obtaining a post-migration purpose which is exploitation.	Smuggling ends when the migrant arrives at his or her destination.
Transnationality	It can be transnational or internal. Victims may be moved from region to region within a country, or moved from one country to another, once or several times.	It is always transnational, involving the crossing of international borders.

Protected legal asset	Crime against persons: a) Life. b) General freedom, sexual freedom. c) Dignity and physical integrity.	Crime against the state: violates the sovereignty of the state.
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Table Types5. of exploitation and actions involved in human trafficking

TYPES OF OPERATION	SECTORS / ACTIONS
Sexual	Forced prostitution / commercial sexual exploitation of minors (pornography, sexual exploitation associated with tourism) / paid sex / shows with sexual content.
Military	Captive soldiers. Child soldiers.
Labor (forced labor)	Maquilas. Domestic service. Mines. Agricultural work. Fishing.
Servitude and marriage	Servile marriage. Domestic work. Begging. Surrogacy. Religious and cultural practices.
Classical slavery	The status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers associated with the right of ownership are exercised (Definition established by the Convention against Slavery, United Nations, 1926).
Theft or other forms of crime	Sale of drugs, weapons, stolen goods, etc.
Organ harvesting	Removal of an anatomical component, organ or tissue without consent or under coercion.

Trafficking for sexual exploitation

The most common patterns of trafficking of this type are recruitment through deception or fraud regarding the type of work to be performed by the recruited persons. Once the victims arrive in the destination country, they realize that they have acquired millions⁶ of dollars in debts with those who moved them and are told that they must pay them back through sexual exploitation. Those who refuse are raped and in some cases murdered. A significant percentage of what victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation earn goes to repay the debt they are supposed to have acquired for the journey. It is assumed that a percentage of what the victim is supposed to receive is for the

The victim is paid by the trafficker and another percentage is given to the trafficker. However, many of these victims never receive any payment.

Trafficking for military purposes

Recruitment for the purpose of military trafficking has been seen mainly in countries with military conflict or the presence of irregular military groups and arises from the need of illegal military groups to swell their ranks. "Minors linked to illegal armed groups face terrible risks, not only as combatants, but also as spies, messengers, servants and sex slaves" (IOM, 2006: 19). They are both women and men. Young children are recruited as "carts" to carry weapons. The

⁶ According to a DAS/INTERPOL report, the debt contracted by Colombian women can reach \$10,000 for their arrival in the destination country, in this case the Netherlands, or \$45,000 if they are taken to Japan (cited by IOM (2006). Overview of trafficking

means of intimidation are confinement, sexual threats, torture, and restriction of movement, among others. Adults are recruited by threatening their personal integrity or that of their families or by deception for payment. The most affected groups are marginalized groups such as indigenous people, peasants, Afro-Americans or socially disadvantaged groups.

Trafficking for the purpose of forced labor

Trafficking for forced labor includes both minors and adults. Many adults are exploited in factories, agriculture, hotels, mining, domestic service, restaurants, and commercial establishments under exploitative conditions, i.e., low wages, long hours, lack of contracts, vacation pay, compensation, and other labor rights, and are also subject to the other elements of trafficking, especially restriction of movement and seizure of documents. Situations of this type are very common in agricultural work performed mostly by men and in domestic services performed by women who are made to work long hours, without days off or labor rights. In the case of domestic service, there is the cultural aggravating factor that domestic work is considered "natural and generically assigned" to women, even without considering it as work subject to regulations and rights. Moreover, it is known that girls and adolescents who perform domestic work in the homes of third parties run a high risk of being victims of sexual abuse and rape in those homes.

Trafficking for the purpose of servile marriage or servitude

Reproductive servitude refers to those conditions in which women are used to have babies that are subsequently taken away from them and sold.

Servile marriages may be included under this heading if their purpose is to

involve domestic work only, although it generally includes sexual servitude as well, so it can also be considered within the category of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

Among the most widespread forms of servitude is begging for the benefit of others, which is most common among minors who are exploited in exchange for food and a place to sleep. The modality of borrowing children to accompany adults in their begging activities has also been identified. Equally important are domestic servitude and servitude for criminal purposes.

Trafficking for the purpose of organ removal

Trafficking for the purpose of organ removal consists of the removal of an anatomical component, organ or tissue from a person, without their consent or under coercion and for purposes such as sale, commercialization, transfer, etc.

3.6. Prevalence human trafficking

Measuring the magnitude of human trafficking is complex due to the clandestine nature of the phenomenon. Accurate statistics on human trafficking in general do not exist. Estimating the total number of trafficking victims is possible only on the basis of the number of victims actually rescued and repatriated. UNODC (UNODC 2006) cites the following as factors contributing to the absence of reliable statistics worldwide:

- In many countries there is a total absence of legislation relating to human trafficking.
- Even in countries where there is legislation on human trafficking, it is associated only with commercial sexual exploitation and not with other forms of exploitation.
- In many countries where specific legislation is in place, it relates to

only with the exploitation of minors and, to a lesser extent, adult women; the population of adult male victims is underestimated or not detected.

- In general, in countries where legislation exists, victims of trafficking are not detected as "victims of crime" but as irregular migrants. In most cases, victims do not speak to migration authorities about the situation for fear of legal or migration consequences from the authorities.
- In many countries there is no agency or organization that centralizes and directs the collection of this type of data or there is no political awareness of the importance of carrying out this task.
- Even when statistical data on the problem exist, in many cases the information is not entirely reliable because human trafficking, smuggling and irregular migration are recorded as one and the same phenomenon.

Thus, the data available on the problem of human trafficking in the region are estimates based mainly on reports on victim care that provide indications of the characteristics and behavior of this crime in the world and on the persons victimized.

According to the most recent United Nations report (UNODC 2006), 127 countries are reported as **countries of origin** of human trafficking in the world. In Latin America, Guatemala, Mexico and the Dominican Republic are mentioned quite frequently, the latter being the most frequently mentioned.

On the other hand, there is talk of a total of 137 countries as **destination countries** where trafficked persons are exploited. Particularly mentioned are Europe

East and Southeast Asia and the United States. However, it is important to note that the Central American area has also been identified as a destination for intra-regional exploitation.

According to this UNODC report, the

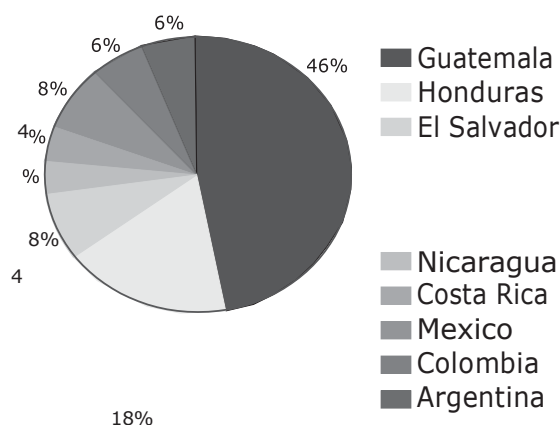
87% of the sources consulted reported sexual exploitation as the most common type of exploitation, while 87% of the

28% reported forced labor in this category. These modalities are not mutually exclusive.

On the other hand, a U.S. State Department report (2006) indicates that, in the region, sexual exploitation is the most frequently reported type of exploitation, and that in the cases that are reported, the victims are mostly adult women, mainly between the ages of 24 and 35. Trafficking of children is reported by at least one third of the sources and of these, half are girls. Although this report does not explain which sources support its claims, it is considered an important international reference point.

Data from the IOM Office in Mexico (IOM 2007) (important because Mexico is a destination and transit country for victims from all over the continent) indicate that between June 2005 and December 15, 2007, 50 cases were identified or assisted. This figure, which is not representative of the real magnitude of the problem, has nevertheless shown a steady increase, while at the same time national awareness and dissemination of the problem have increased. The vast majority of victims come from Central American countries, including Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

Figure 1. Nationality of trafficked persons assisted by IOM in Mexico (July - 2005December 2007)



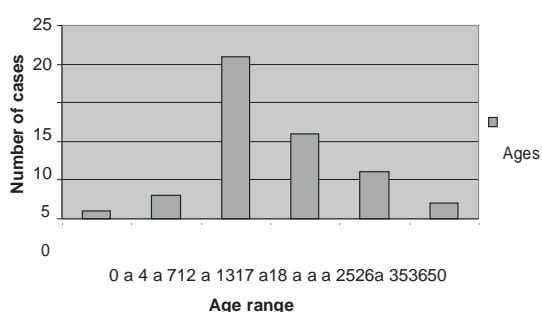
sources consulted reported sexual exploitation as the most common type of exploitation.

Source: IOM (2007): Statistics of cases assisted under the program of direct assistance to victims of trafficking (July - 2005-December 2007).
IOM Mexico
City

The experience of trafficked women in Central America and the Dominican Republic and the performance of institutions

The vast majority of the victims identified or assisted have been women (86%) between the ages of 10 and 50, with a predominance of girls and adolescents.

Graph Trafficked women2. by age assisted by IOM in Mexico (July - 2005 December 2007)



Source: IOM (2007): Case Statistics. assisted under the program of direct assistance to victims of trafficking (July -2005 December 2007) IOM Mexico City.

From the point of view of the type of trafficking identified, there is a slight predominance of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. However, there is also

trafficking for the purpose of labor exploitation is important. In both cases, women account for the largest share of victims.

From the information obtained, it is possible to deduce a clear trend in the region of Central America and the Dominican Republic, with a strong predominance of women of all ages in the population victimized by human trafficking. In other words, women constitute the main population victimized by human trafficking in this region.

3.7. Factors associated with human trafficking

Human trafficking is a multi-causal problem. A series of economic, social and political factors interact in it,

The relationship between environmental, cultural and institutional factors can make a group of migrants more vulnerable to trafficking networks. Various authors have divided these factors into push factors (e.g., socioeconomic or family conditions) and push factors (e.g., family conditions).

Table Trafficking modality6. by age and sex of victims assisted by IOM Mexico (July -2005 December 2007)

	Trafficking for sexual exploitation	Trafficking for labor exploitation	Trafficking for sexual and labor purposes	Total number of adults and minors
Under 18 years of age	13 women	15 (8 women 7 men)	3 women	31
Seniors	13 women	5 women	1 woman	19
# of cases total	26	20	4	50

Source: IOM (2007): Estadísticas de los casos asistidos dentro del programa de asistencia directa a víctimas de trata - julio - 2005diciembre OIM2007. Mexico City.

trafficking for the purpose of labor exploitation is quantitatively important. In both cases, women account for the largest share of victims.

From the point of view of the type of

trafficking identified, there is a slight predominance of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. However, it is also quantitatively

pull factors (e.g., demand for cheap labor).

Trafficking routes most often go to countries where the quality of life is apparently better. Generally, it is from developing countries (or countries in conflict or crisis) to developed countries, although it is also from developing countries to developed countries.

The experience of trafficked women in Central America and the Dominican Republic and the performance of institutions

is increasingly occurring among developing countries (GAATW, 2003).

The following are mentioned among the **expulsion factors**:

- Poverty.
- An unstable political and social landscape reflected in high unemployment or poor quality jobs, lack of educational opportunities, and limited access to health and social services.
- Family problems such as domestic violence and sexual abuse.
- Discrimination and cultural factors that devalue population groups such as women, children and adolescents, people with disabilities, indigenous people.
- Globalization and the impact of the economic crisis and trade liberalization (Global Rights p2005,. 15).

In addition and complementarily, the **attraction factors** that also stimulate migration and, therefore, the risk of being a victim of trafficking are pointed out:

- The so-called "American dream", which for many migrants means employment with the possibility of job stability and good pay, the possibility of progress and social advancement, educating their children and owning a home.
- The illusion of family reunification, since many people (especially women) migrate to join their husbands, but along the way they are raped, robbed, kidnapped and/or captured by trafficking networks for prostitution.
- Demand for cheap labor in destination countries.

The most relevant factors favoring human trafficking found in the specialized literature are explained in greater detail below.

Globalization, poverty and social exclusion

Poverty has been repeatedly identified as one of the main determinants of human trafficking. However, poverty is a complex phenomenon that should not be considered as explanatory or causal by itself. It is

that is, poverty includes a number of elements of social exclusion such as low income, limited access to labor markets, property, credit, services (educational, health and other) and productive resources. Each of these elements can create the context for many people to become involved in situations that make them easy victims of trafficking, but it is the existence of trafficking networks that deliberately exploit the vulnerability created by these conditions of exclusion that makes poverty a risk factor.

From the data collected on victims of trafficking, it appears that the primary reason for taking the risk of migrating is to earn money and, thus, to find better life opportunities. Generally, this decision is precipitated by unemployment and the urgency of finding a way to subsist and support family members. It has traditionally been men who have made the decision to migrate. However, this pattern has been changing in recent years, among other reasons, because women are more affected by unemployment, directly or indirectly; on the one hand, when the men in the families lose their jobs, they are under greater pressure to migrate, and, on the other hand, among heads of household, the proportion of women has increased significantly.

According to the most recent UNFPA report (State of the World Population Report, 2006), half of the world's migrants are women, numbering approximately 95 million. Most of them work as domestic workers. Another good number work as maids in hospitals or clinics, waitresses, farm workers, industrial workers, or caretakers of the sick, the elderly, children or girls. There is talk of a process of "*feminization of migration*" referring to this growing quota of women who leave their countries unaccompanied in search of better opportunities.

One explanation for this change in the global pattern of migration relates it to changes in the supply and demand for labor at the global level. *"In the 20th century, changes in supply and demand led to the feminization of migration flows and a significant increase in the number and proportion of women and children migrants (partly because) the education and skills required are lower for women than for men. However, the main reason has been the increase in demand for female labor in areas such as domestic, care, fast food and other services as well as low-cost manufacturing" (IOM 2003:5).*

Globalization has contributed to this process by stimulating the demand for low-skilled and low-paid jobs, as well as the deregulation and "flexibilization" of labor markets. In this context, jobs of such poor quality are created that citizens of industrialized countries tend to reject them. *"These conditions are particularly conducive to human trafficking. While some of these wages may be unacceptably low for workers from industrialized countries, they are attractive to workers from developing countries where wages are even lower and where there is a high proportion of unemployment and underemployment. Second, most trafficked workers have low levels of education or are not fluent in the local language and may be unaware of the existence of minimum labor standards or the means to enforce them. They are also unaware of human rights and the means to enforce them. Third, their status as irregular workers limits their ability to demand minimum wages and working conditions. Women and children are especially vulnerable because they are likely to be illiterate or uninformed and have been conditioned by gender relations in their local cultures to passively accept whatever conditions are offered to them" (IOM 2003:8).*

Gender, ethnicity and culture

Although human trafficking is closely related to poverty and social exclusion, the fact that a very high proportion of victims are women and girls can only be explained by the gender factor. As mentioned above, these conditions, in addition to violence in all its manifestations, have a greater impact on women because of the millennia of social and cultural discrimination they have suffered.

Ideological factors contribute in the same direction. The social system has been responsible for generating discourses about how women and men should be and what they should do. In the case of girls and women, these discourses are related to "being for others" (Lagarde), so that an important pillar of women's gender identity is caring for and serving others. The female gender identity constructed in today's society makes all people, including women themselves, conceive of this servitude as "natural". This, among other reasons, helps to explain the reasons why many women are forced to migrate, even under risky conditions, motivated by the desire to meet the needs of other dependents (mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, daughters) and how this specific gender construction creates additional conditions of vulnerability for women in the face of human trafficking. It also explains the "naturalization" of many trades performed by women and the difficulties that society in general has in identifying conditions of exploitation, for example, in domestic and sexual servitude of women.

The sexual objectification of women, a fundamental characteristic of this situation of discrimination, is the structural condition that makes it possible for women to be turned into sexual commodities. For example, in developing countries, the growth of the so-called sex industry has been fueled by the influx of foreigners in search of sexual entertainment and stimulates the displacement of women from poorer areas.

from within the country or from poorer neighboring countries to meet this demand.

In addition, in societies characterized by cultural and ethnic discrimination and racism, gender combines with ethnicity to make more women and girls from historically discriminated cultural groups and migrant populations vulnerable to domestic servitude and sexual exploitation.

In the case of culture and ethnicity, the social system is particularly discriminatory and exclusionary with regard to people of different ethnicities and cultures from the predominant one. Indigenous people are among the most excluded and discriminated against, and are often perceived as vulnerable to trafficking. Therefore, situations of poverty, coupled with social stereotypes and discrimination based on gender and ethnicity, make women and girls the most vulnerable and accessible to traffickers.

Violence against women

According to the IOM, *human trafficking is a form of gender-based violence and responses to it should be developed from this frame of reference (IOM 2006:11)*. This gender-based violence has a clear directionality against women.

Article 1 of the *Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women* (Convention of Belem do Para) defines violence against women as follows:

"Violence against women shall be understood to include physical, sexual and psychological violence:

- that takes place within the family or domestic unit or in any other interpersonal relationship, whether the aggressor shares or has shared the same domicile as the woman, and that includes, among others, rape, mistreatment and sexual abuse;*
- that takes place in the community and is perpetrated by any person, and that*

includes, among other forms, rape, sexual abuse, torture, trafficking in persons, forced prostitution, kidnapping and sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as in educational institutions, health facilities or any other place; and

- that is perpetrated or condoned by the State or its agents, wherever it occurs".*

Because of its epidemic nature, the World Health Organization, within the framework of the 49th World Health Assembly (1996), defined violence against women as a public health priority. According to data from the World Report on Violence and Health (WHO/PAHO, 2002), it is estimated - based on population-based surveys⁴⁸ conducted worldwide - that between 10% and 69% of women reported having been physically assaulted by a male partner at some point in their lives. Regarding sexual violence, this report reiterates that approximately one in four women reported having been a victim of this type of violence by a male partner. Coincidentally, the United Nations Population Fund states in its World Population Report that 2000, one in three women in the world has been a victim of some type of violence at some point in her life.

Violence accompanies the lives of women throughout all stages of their lives, as can be seen in the table below. 7.

Consistent with what has been said so far, we should include human trafficking as another manifestation of violence against women that may be present at various stages of the life cycle.

Femicide is the extreme expression of violence against women. According to Carcedo and Sagot, *femicide is the murder of women for reasons associated with gender; it is the most extreme form of gender violence, understood as the violence exercised by men against women in their desire to obtain power, domination or control (CCPDH 2006:35)*.

Both violence against women and its ultimate expression, femicide,

Table Gender-based 7.violence in a woman's lifetime

Stage	Types of violence
Prenatal	Abortion to select fetus; abuse during pregnancy; forced pregnancy (rape).
Early childhood	Female infanticide; physical, psychological and sexual aggression.
Childhood	Genital mutilation; incest; sexual abuse; sexual exploitation.
Adolescence	Dating violence; coerced sex; sexual harassment and abuse at work; rape; CSEC.
Procreation stage	Intimate partner violence; marital rape; femicides; sexual harassment at work; rape.
Senior Citizens	Neglect; physical, emotional, sexual and property abuse.

World Bank: IESE, L. (1994): Violence against women: the hidden health burden.
World Bank discussion paper. Washington D. C.

are highly prevalent in the Central American region and in the Dominican Republic. Although there are no studies that clearly document the relationship between femicide and trafficking in women, it cannot be ruled out that the context of exploitation and violence that trafficking implies is one that also favors the murder of women.

The existence of organized networks

The existence of organized human trafficking networks is one of the fundamental conditions that facilitate the occurrence of this crime. These networks are made up of people who recruit victims in their communities of origin, throughout the migration process or in the countries of destination. The lack of institutional capacities and resources of local authorities and corruption work in favor of these networks, which often have more resources than the authorities themselves. Often people acquire debts with traffickers and in order to pay these debts they fall into the traffickers' networks. It is also important to note that these trafficking networks are related to international networks linked to other types of crime such as drug trafficking.

Impunity

There is an important element of impunity that is reflected in the fact that there is little prosecution and criminalization of traffickers. In many countries, the crime of trafficking is not criminalized and there is still a lack of knowledge of the issue and confusion between the terms trafficking and smuggling. On the other hand, there are insufficient resources to increase the possibilities of investigating cases and criminalizing traffickers, and there is little capacity of justice operators to impose sanctions and little compliance with them.

A veil of silence covers and hides human trafficking. Together, supply, demand and impunity create the conditions in which trafficking can flourish. Traffickers' success is based on their ability to keep their activities hidden from law enforcement agencies. The consumers or exploiters also try to remain invisible because they know they are involved in illicit activities, and the very circumstances of exploitation lead to the invisibility of the activity. Moreover, many victims are held in forced captivity and others are silenced for fear of the police, migration authorities or revenge.

of traffickers (PAHO: 3). The above, which is fundamentally true for trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, is essentially true for other forms of human trafficking as well.

In the Americas, impunity is a constant practice when it comes to acts of violence against women. According to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the OAS, most cases of violence against women are not formally investigated, tried and punished by the systems of administration of justice in the hemisphere... and this context of impunity perpetuates violence against women as an accepted fact in American societies to the detriment of their human rights (IACHR 2007: ix).

The lack of a social and institutional response

The scope of the lack of social and institutional responses is broad, given that it is influenced by factors associated with the economic and social policies of states, regulations and social tolerance of the problem. The absence of wealth distribution policies that guarantee all people opportunities for development, quality employment and access to social services encourages and induces human trafficking. There are few comprehensive programs aimed at prevention, protection and restitution of the rights of victims and punishment of those who commit it.

On the normative side, laws, policies, guidelines and regulations on human trafficking are relatively recent. As a result of the promulgation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its two supplementary protocols (*Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air and Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*), countries have begun the process of establishing standards and procedures to address the problem. However, these efforts have not succeeded in

The scope and specificities of trafficking in persons have yet to be covered.

Repressive migration laws and policies

Increasingly repressive migration laws and policies in no way achieve the objective of curbing the migration process and, instead, increase the likelihood that people, driven by the dynamics of supply and demand in the labor market, will use illegal channels to move from one country to another. As we have seen, one of the consequences of globalization, which promotes a free economy, the movement of goods around the world, the expansion of profits and privatization, has been the growth of the imbalance between labor supply and demand and between rich and poor countries. And while migration does not necessarily involve human trafficking, it is true that irregular migration can make people vulnerable to being trapped by trafficking networks.

3.8. Stages of the trafficking experience

The trafficking experience of trafficked persons is complex. Based on the experience of the victims, it has been divided into stages to facilitate the recognition of the specific problems faced by people in each of them and the design of strategies to address them (IOM, 2006). Five main stages are recognized: 1) the recruitment stage, 2) the travel and transit stage, 3) the destination and exploitation stage, 4) the detention, rescue or escape stage, and 5) the return and reintegration stage.

Recruitment stage

This stage refers to the conditions and life history of individuals that make them particularly vulnerable to trafficking networks (internal and external), and which are important to know and take into account in the development of prevention actions and in the intervention process with victims. Some of these conditions are extreme poverty, violence, violence against women and children.

social instability and the lack of job and training opportunities.

Several means of recruitment have been identified, including: identification and direct approach of people in vulnerable situations, advertisements and agencies offering opportunities to work or study, and bogus marriage agencies.

In the Dominican Republic, it has been possible to identify the following structure operating in the recruitment process, which presumably is repeated in other national contexts.

Individuals: persons - generally foreigners - who arrive in search of a young woman to establish an affective relationship, invite them to travel and then use them for servile marriages or prostitution. Pedophiles act in a similar way, for purposes of sexual exploitation. They could be defined as "clients" since they work alone, but it is believed that they may be connected to each other through the Internet.

Local networks: these are composed of nationals who recruit in rural areas for domestic trade and then transport the victims to tourist locations. In some cases they are brothel or resort owners.

Regional networks: they act in the transnational transit that covers the demand of the countries in the region.

Family networks: the recruiter is a family member or close acquaintance who is in charge of offering work abroad. He or she is known as working alone, but is more commonly a link in the chain with links to international networks.

Structured networks: these are very varied networks that operate as companies, moving large numbers of people. They are generally composed of nationals and foreigners (IOM:2004).

Travel and transit stage

This stage begins when the victim agrees or is forced to leave with the trafficker from her place of origin. It ends when she arrives at the destination and may include multiple trips from one workplace to another, several points of transit and various times

transaction in which the person may be sold from one operator to another.

This is the stage where illicit activity generally begins and is therefore very dangerous. It may include crossing borders illegally, hiding people from security agents, dealing and coexisting with unknown persons, etc. For many victims, it is the initial trauma stage as they may suffer violations of their rights and various forms of violence. The vast majority of victims report violence and sexual abuse during this stage.

When the journey begins, it is usually the moment when people realize the deception they have been victims of. As the journey progresses, they realize that they are in the custody of their traffickers and that remaining there is the only way to stay safe. At this stage, escape becomes a secondary need to survival.

Conventional methods of transportation are usually used, but sometimes travel is done under dangerous and traumatic circumstances. Most traffickers ensure that victims arrive at their destination and prevent them from traveling alone. They often use trained individuals to implement strategies of any kind to prevent them from fleeing or being returned.

Many of the financial transactions occur at this stage, victims are informed of their debts and obligations and that they can pay them themselves by agreeing to exploitative terms, or, as is often the case, their debts are transferred to other traffickers or employers, so that they are effectively "sold". This commodification process is dehumanizing, destroying their sense of themselves and their own value as human beings. The transaction takes various forms (in the vast majority of cases the victims are placed in situations of debt bondage). Situations have also been identified in which victims are forced to recruit other victims in order to pay off or reduce their debts to the traffickers.

To ensure control, traffickers use various tactics such as frightening, deceiving, behaving unpredictably to confuse the victim, restricting all movement, removing decision-making power, emotionally blackmailing the victim.

Destination and operation stage

This is the period of exploitation when the victim is put to work for the traffickers.

The tactics used by traffickers to strengthen the dependency and submission of victims include three fundamental mechanisms:

- Keeping victims in extreme conditions of repression that barely allow them to survive, making them feel that the possibility of death is real and imminent and leading them to understand that their safety no longer depends on them but on their captors.
- Promote "physical and emotional exhaustion" by forcing victims to work for hours and days, with no time to rest and under the control of their captors. Without rest, victims are weakened and unable to consider different options or think of self-defense strategies.
- Ensuring control and isolation by traffickers as factors that reinforce dependency. These psychological control tactics include: intimidation, threats (against the well-being of loved ones or against the victim herself, such as revealing compromising details of her life to family members, of being resold to another workplace under worse conditions than she currently has, or with the implication of acquiring a new debt that would further prolong her captive situation); lies and deception (making victims believe that if they go for help they will be imprisoned, tried and prevented from returning to their country of origin or making them believe that the police are part of the local trafficking network and that they will take care of returning them to their traffickers); emotional manipulation.

Concrete actions to weaken the will and control over the victims include, in addition to those mentioned above, deprivation of liberty, seizure of migratory and identity documents; deprivation of sleep and food; limitation of personal space and privacy; isolation and solitary confinement; forced drug use; debt bondage, among others.

Arrest, rescue or escape stage

Victims who have managed to leave the trafficking situation may have escaped, returned on their own, been rescued through police operations and returned by an organization, or been deported by the authorities. Victims often feel deeply distressed and confused at this stage, are suspicious of the help they are offered, and are sometimes subjected to revictimization and even mistreatment by the authorities or people they turn to for support.

Authorities come into contact with victims in a variety of ways, the most common of which are through a non-governmental organization or through police or immigration actions in places where people are known to be working under suspicious conditions. Rarely do victims contact the police personally. Once the situation is identified, the procedure varies according to the laws of each country. Some cases have been reported in which the employers or pimps release the victims to the authorities because they are no longer useful to them for their purposes (in cases of pregnancy, for example). In other cases, traffickers release victims as a result of a family member initiating an investigation into their whereabouts with the authorities or an NGO.

Most police or migration agents are unaware of proper procedures for identifying the immediate health and safety needs of victims. In many cases, they are interrogated as suspected criminals and no procedures are applied.

The company does not refer the affected person to health care centers, except in cases where the person's discomfort is very evident.

In addition, when the detention is carried out by police or immigration authorities, in many cases the conditions provided to the victim are equivalent to those of any prisoner or criminal. In most cases, not only is the victim not provided with access to any type of assistance services, but also his or her rights and the satisfaction of basic needs such as food, a place to rest, etc., are violated. In some cases, detention lasts for months, during which the victims are not informed of their immigration and legal status, of the charges for which they are being detained, nor are they allowed to communicate in any way, thus plunging them into a new traumatizing situation.

When captured and immediately deported to their countries of origin, people usually do not have the opportunity to say that they are victims of trafficking (many do not even know or recognize that they are), have no access to legal counsel, cannot have contact with family or friends, and cannot express health concerns or ask for medical help when detained in undocumented centers.

After being rescued from exploitation, many victims are faced with the choice of whether or not to participate in the prosecution of their traffickers or exploiters. To date, it is known that few victims agree to participate.

Return and reintegration stage (by deportation or voluntary repatriation)

This stage covers the period of physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration. Its impact and duration depend on the support network and the particularities of each victim. At this stage, feelings of being stigmatized and the desire to isolate oneself from any condemnatory reaction from the people around them may predominate. The inability of the social environment

The main causes of victims being re-trapped by trafficking networks are rejection and the lack of resources to reintegrate them into the community.

At this stage, conditions conducive to a dignified return and personal safety, assistance in obtaining documents and access to health services, foster homes, social and psychological assistance networks, recreation, and labor or educational insertion are indispensable.

The absence of safe procedures to carry out the return of victims has very risky implications, as follows:

- It is common for members of trafficking networks to seek them out in their countries of origin immediately after their deportation in order to return them or "collect" the debt from them.
- Deporting people without a proper identification procedure as victims of trafficking leaves them out of the possibilities of free help in their countries of origin. It leaves them unprotected, without resources, without the medical help they need and, more often than not, at risk of suffering further consequences of their trafficking experience.
- Poverty, outstanding debts to traffickers and lack of protection make victims very vulnerable to reprisals from traffickers and their organizations, or at risk of being re-recruited by them.

3.9. Trafficking dynamics and traffickers

Traffickers are considered to be "those who engage in the recruitment and transportation of persons, those who exercise control over trafficked persons, those who transfer or maintain them in a situation of exploitation, those who participate in related crimes, and those who derive direct or indirect profit from trafficking, its component acts and related crimes" (United Nations, 2002: 6).

Traffickers include recruiters, agents, madams, pimps (boyfriends, husbands, etc.), pimps (boyfriends, husbands, etc.), pimps, pimps, agents, madams, pimps (boyfriends, husbands, etc.), and pimps.

destination.

employers, store owners, etc. men, women of all ages, nationalities, educational levels, etc. (Baráth Árpád, 2004).

Colombia's experience has identified the following basic functional organization in trafficking networks:

- **Recruiters:** They are the ones who make contact with the victim. It is an activity predominantly carried out by women. They are also called recruiters, recruiters, promoters.
- **Moneylenders:** They are in charge of lending the money for the trip under the guarantee of a mortgage or bill of exchange. In some cases they are outside the trafficking network although they suspect the crime. Some of these are in charge of intimidating the victim to continue paying.
- **Forgers:** These are the people who forge documents (passports, birth certificates, bank statements, etc.). Generally, the person who makes contact with this link is the middleman.
- **Intermediaries:** These are the people in charge of carrying out travel procedures and immigration requirements. In some cases they travel with the victims. Sometimes they also act as recruiters.
- **Receivers:** They are the ones who transport the victims to the place of exploitation. In some cases they are from the country of origin and have been naturalized in the destination country.
- **Harvesters:** They are in charge of collecting the product of the farm.
- **Managers:** They ensure that the profitability obtained from the exploitation of the victim and the productivity of the forced activity is always on the rise. They use various means, ranging from coercion to the use of force. In some cases, the collectors and managers are the same person.
- **Watchmen:** They are in charge of controlling the victim's mobility. This activity depends on the type of network, the destination and the type of exploitation.
- **Trip owners:** These are the people who benefit directly from the exploitation of the victim. They can be found both in the place of origin and in the place of

destiny. It may be the owner of a farm, a factory, a brothel. Many victims are led to believe that the trip owner is a link in the chain and rarely know who he or she really is. In some networks they are never known and operate clandestinely.

It is believed that alongside the network there is a wide variety of collaborators such as doctors, lawyers, cab drivers, state administrative workers of different types, who are located both at the place of destination and at the place of origin. Their involvement with the network is varied and changes in terms of the time of collaboration as well as in relation to the number of victims exploited by the network.

The nationalities of traffickers vary from region to region, almost all have links to the country of origin in some way.

3.10. Consequences of trafficking on people's lives

Trafficking has negative impacts on people's quality of life. The effects include emotional, but also physical, social and economic harm. Although it is often difficult to calculate them precisely, it is possible to identify the most important ones for each trafficked person. Making these effects visible is a first step in the recognition of trafficking and, consequently, in the development of strategies to confront it and contribute to its eradication.

The negative consequences for individuals can be divided into several categories:

Physical health consequences:

Most of the physical injuries and illnesses observed in trafficked persons stem from the physical and sexual abuse to which they have been subjected. In addition, other ailments are reported as a result of strenuous working hours, poor diet, lack of sleep, overcrowding, lack of hygiene and health care during their captivity (most traffickers do not take their victims to health services for fear of being discovered). They are

Problems related to poor nutrition, lack of sleep and hygiene, and substance abuse are common in minors. In women, problems related to sexually transmitted infections, renal dysfunction, ovarian inflammation, pregnancy complications and miscarriages, cervical dysplasia and cancer, substance use and abuse, and others are frequently observed. In men, mutilation of limbs, infections due to little or no attention to wounds, health problems associated with poor nutrition, fatigue and contact with toxic or harmful substances are also reported. Damage to victims due to escape attempts, and ailments associated with prolonged exposure to stressful situations and the absence of supportive human contacts are also reported.

Mental health consequences:

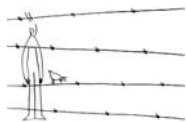
Psychological violence is used by traffickers in multiple forms as a tactic to maintain control over victims by reinforcing their dependency and thus keeping them in bondage. Psychological abuse is usually persistent, extreme and often perpetrated in such a way as to destroy the physical and mental defenses of the victims. The negative consequences for mental health are numerous and long-lasting.

Interpersonal and social consequences: Most trafficked persons are exposed to a situation of absolute isolation, which is a product of the control actions carried out by the trafficker and is reinforced by the illegal status and social exclusion in which they live. Isolation can be understood as a product of: *the restriction of movement, time and activities* (they are permanently accompanied, they are not allowed to interact with anyone except for work), *the absence of social support* (any meaningful interpersonal contact is forbidden and contact with their families - when it exists - is strictly monitored), *the cultural, social and linguistic barriers* of the place where they are, and the creation of confrontations between the victims who work and the traffickers.

for the trafficker (through manipulation or blackmail, the trafficker tries to destroy any sense of solidarity among trafficked persons, which in turn diminishes the possibilities of bonding among them and of rebellion against the situation in which they find themselves).

Economic consequences: Economic exploitation is a mechanism of control and perpetuation of slavery. The vast majority do not know what they earn and in all cases the profits are not managed by them but by their "owners". Debt bondage is the main tool used to keep the victims captive. These debts are acquired for travel costs, immigration procedures or expenses incurred while working. The debts are set up in such a way that they are unpayable or that the victims always end up spending more than they earn. Economic abuse should also be understood as another factor that undermines the psychological well-being of victims. Having access to money, even if it is only to meet one's basic needs, is one of the decisive elements for mental health.

Legal consequences: The vast majority of trafficked persons do not know their legal status in the destination country, as they have never had their identification documents or work permits in their possession. In general, identity and other documents are handled from the transit stage by their traffickers or pimps and they, whether they entered the destination countries legally or illegally, remain without papers during the exploitation stage to prevent them from fleeing and are generally deceived about the repercussions of their immigration status and the implications of going to the police and migration services as a method of control. This makes victims more vulnerable and affects decisions related to their safety and health, as well as contact with the outside world, as they fear they may be "detected" by migration agents if they visit a health center or seek information.



4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1. Regulatory framework

inclusion of only three purposes for the criminal activity leaves the

The definition of the crime of trafficking in persons has undergone several transformations throughout the history of Costa Rican criminal law. Currently, the Penal 172Code article punishes anyone who promotes, facilitates or favors the entry or exit of a person of any sex into or out of the country for the purpose of engaging in prostitution or being subjected to sexual or labor servitude.

The *active subject* is the "promoter", "facilitator" or "facilitator" of this punishable conduct. The *passive subject* is the person who by his will or under threat or violence, enters or leaves the country for the purposes mentioned in the crime. The *typical action* is specified as the entry or exit of the country, with the use of legal or illicit channels to carry out any of the mentioned purposes.

The *means* to commit the crime are not indicated in the basic type of the law, but in the aggravated figure: Article 170 of the Penal Code, which refers to the use of deception, coercion, threat, violence, abuse of authority or of the victim's situation of need.

The law defines only three possible *purposes*: the exercise of prostitution, sexual servitude or labor servitude.

The *penalties* for the basic offense are from three to six years, and for the aggravated offense, from four to ten years. The crime is *aggravated* if the passive subject is a minor or the active subject is a relative, legal protector of the victim or exercises any of the aforementioned means, such as the use of violence, threat or abuse of power.

Internal trafficking is not regulated in this type of crime. This establishes serious limitations to the work of the prosecution and the judiciary. Certainly, the restrictive

all others are excluded from the restrictions of criminal law.

The type is established in Title 111 of the Criminal Code on "Sexual Offenses". This location is not the most appropriate, since it is a crime that violates human rights; however, since it is considered a multifensive crime, it is not limited by its material location, but by the legal right that is violated in the particular case.

In Costa Rican criminal law there are a series of *crimes related* to human trafficking; that is, crimes that are directly related to it; for example: pimping, coercion, threats, injuries and homicide in its different modalities, illicit association, illicit trafficking in persons.

It is necessary to point out some of the purposes of trafficking in persons determined by the Palermo Protocol; one of them is organ trafficking, which is typified in a very brief way and only with respect to possible victims who are minors in the process of adoption.

The crime of trafficking in persons may be concurrent with one or more of these crimes, whether the crimes are committed in a single act or in several acts.

The crime of trafficking in persons can be prosecuted outside the national territory in accordance with the rules established in international legal instruments ratified by Costa Rica and with the national criminal law. Although these are general rules, in the case of trafficking they acquire greater relevance, since this is a typical crime of international character. The description of the criminal type itself (article 172 of the Penal Code) establishes that its causes and effects take place outside the country.

Human trafficking in Costa Rica is a *crime of public action*, in which the Public Prosecutor's Office can act *ex officio*; that is, the victim is not required to file a complaint.

In both cases, basic and aggravated crimes, the *statute of limitations* is established for the moment in which a number of years equal to those of the maximum penalty have elapsed. However, thanks to a recent reform of the Code of Criminal Procedure, in sexual crimes committed against minors, the statute of limitations begins to run after the age of majority of the victim.

In both cases, basic and aggravated crimes, it is established that the statute of limitations will run when a number of years equal to the maximum penalty has elapsed from the time of the commission of the crime. However, thanks to a recent reform of the Code of Criminal Procedure, in sexual crimes committed against minors, the statute of limitations begins to run after the age of majority of the victim.

Based on the fact that the type of crime corresponding to trafficking in persons is found in the Sexual Offenses title of the Penal Code, this type of "special" statute of limitations could be applied when the criminal activity has a sexual purpose and specifically the victim is a person under eighteen years of age.

Attention and protection of victims of human trafficking has been minimal. In the first instance, *the attention and protection of victims and witnesses* in criminal matters is the responsibility of the Office of Attention to Victims of the Public Prosecutor's Office, which, with very limited resources, provides primary physical and psychological attention to persons affected by crimes, especially minors.

4.2. Magnitude and characteristics of trafficking in women in the country

Costa Rica does not yet have specific studies on the problem of trafficking in adult women. The approach to the study of trafficking in persons from the point of view of the

The gender perspective is recent and is the result of initiatives promoted by the International Organization for Migration, IOM, as well as activities being developed by the National Women's Institute, INAMU, with funds from international cooperation.

Moreover, there is a lack of reliable and systematized information, both on the different modalities of human trafficking in general, as well as in relation to victim populations in particular. This is recognized by the National Coalition Against the Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons when it states that "... *the necessary tools do not exist to quantitatively measure human trafficking within the national territory*". This highlights not only the gaps in the legal framework (where, for example, internal trafficking is not criminalized) but also the absence of institutional records.

In all the institutions consulted, it was stated that trafficking in persons is a problem that clearly exists in the country, although its dimensions are not known, since the evidence of its execution is not documented, much less are there studies that allow us to quantify its magnitude. It is known, however, of the existence of networks that operate in the country, violating the national and international legal system, with the greatest impunity. This situation is clearly expressed in the words of two institutional representatives:

"The issue of trafficking is a fairly new topic, even for many officials. Most of the population still does not identify what trafficking is and I think it is a concept that is not so elaborated, probably in the future. ...Like when we used to talk about child prostitution in some documents, which little by little was understood and was called commercial sexual exploitation. I feel that we are at the beginning of this work (...)" (IM2).

"(...) trafficking cases are not dealt with for several reasons: because the Prosecutor's Office does not refer them to us or because they do not consider them as a trafficking case, but because they are not considered as such."

are considered as isolated crimes, not as the phenomenon of trafficking that it is (...)" (IM5).

It is important to emphasize that the lack of knowledge of the problem is evidence of institutional weaknesses in addressing it, i.e., there is a lack of policies, a lack of knowledge of the dynamics of the crime and the specific responses that institutions should provide. This, in turn, leads to a lack of interest in the management of issues related to this crime and, therefore, to a lack of resources. In this regard, an official said:

"(...) since this is an issue that is just beginning to be talked about here in the country, there is, as it were, a lot of insecurity... a lack of clarity. One sees it, when one tries to get the route, what each instance has to do; then it is more or less when you have an idea of trafficking, how it is operating, what is happening. So, this is something that is just beginning to be investigated in the country, it is better investigated in other countries...". (IM7).

Because of this situation, knowledge of the problem is currently only possible based on the recording of data found through various sources of information and their integration (cases handled, formal and informal complaints, suspicions, etc.). The product, therefore, is only an approximation of the reality that requires greater efforts of investigation and research for its confirmation or rejection.

Along these lines, according to the U.S. Department of State Report, presented on June 12, 2007, the reality is as follows:

"Costa Rica is a country of origin, transit and destination of women and girls who are trafficked for sexual exploitation. Women and girls from Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Panama, Russia, Bulgaria and the Philippines are trafficked into the country for sexual exploitation... Costa Rican women and girls are victims of internal trafficking and external trafficking to El Salvador, Guatemala, Japan and the United States also for sexual exploitation... Costa Rica serves as a transit country for victims... Costa Rican women and girls are trafficked to El Salvador, Guatemala, Japan and the United States also for

sexual exploitation... Costa Rica serves as a transit country for victims... Costa Rica is a country of origin, transit and destination for women and girls who are trafficked for sexual exploitation.

trafficked to the United States, Mexico, Canada and Europe. Men, women, girls and boys are trafficked internally into agriculture, fishing and domestic servitude. Chinese nationals have been trafficked to Costa Rica for forced labor (Trafficking in Persons Report - Report Home Page - Released by the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons June 12, 2007 - free translation).

Although this report does not include the sources that support its claims, it is internationally considered an important credible reference point.

At the national level, the first specific reference to the problem of trafficking in adult women is found in the country report presented at the *First Central American Meeting on Trafficking in Women*, held in San José on December 4 and 5, 2006, sponsored by the Council of Central American Women's Ministers (COMMCA).

At this meeting, the National Women's Institute of Costa Rica (INAMU) reported, based on its own records and those of other related agencies, the following data on the incidence of trafficking in women:

- *Costa Rica, country of origin and destination of trafficked women:*
 - *Costa Rican women trafficked to Japan.*
 - *Women brought from Russia, Dominican Republic to Costa Rica.*
 - *Type of existing trafficking or exploitation.*
 - *Trafficking for sexual purposes.*
- *Main victimized populations:*
 - *Women, girls, adolescent women and children.*
- *Statistics:*
 - *INAMU:*
 - (2004): Dominican woman treated in Costa Rica.*
 - (2004): Russian woman murdered by trafficking networks.*
 - (2006): Costa Rican woman trafficked to Mexico.*
 - *IOM:*
 - (2005): Costa Rican women trafficked to Japan.*

As can be seen, the data provided by INAMU, the governing body for the advancement of women, are recent, which is evidence of the recent incorporation of this issue into its work agenda.

The Miscellaneous Crimes Section of the Deputy Prosecutor's Office in San José was consulted and stated that it does not have data on the magnitude of the problem in the country. However, it does state that trafficking has been identified as a phenomenon led by international networks, whose headquarters country is Costa Rica. They have information that these networks plan to start trafficking women who already work in night clubs in the country, with the purpose of taking them to Mexico and the United States. It is also alleged that the country serves mainly as a transit point for people heading to the north of the continent. Most of the victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation are women (among them, those of Oriental origin, Dominicans, Colombians and Nicaraguans are the most common). Regarding the total number of victims, regardless of the purpose of exploitation, it is reported that there is an equal number of men and women. It is hypothesized that drug trafficking is sponsoring human trafficking in the region (IH1).

From the above statements, it is noteworthy that there are no records or data to corroborate the statements made.

For its part, the Prosecutor's Office for Sexual Crimes and Domestic Violence in San José indicated that, at the time of this study, it was following up on cases⁶, all related to commercial sexual exploitation of minors. She is also aware of a case currently dismissed for lack of evidence, which involved a woman based in Desamparados, who was in charge of bringing women from Panama, Dominican Republic, Colombia and Haiti. She kept them in apartments and working in night clubs in San José. Here they waited for some time to obtain

immigration documents, not always false, in order to be able to send them to their destination: Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, the United States or Europe (IM8).

By consulting other sources, it was possible to obtain the information from the tables and 89.

Table Criminal cases⁸. entered into the Judicial System during the period - 20022006

Year	Human trafficking crimes
2002	8
2003	7
2004	18
2005	10
2006	11

Source: information provided to CONAMAJ and prepared by the Planning Department, Statistics Section, Judicial Branch.

Table Persons ⁹.sentenced by criminal courts for the crime of "Trafficking in persons" and type of resolution during the period - 20022006⁷

Year	Total	Type of sentence	
		Condemnatory	Absolute
2002	1	1	0
2003	1	1	0
2004	2	2	0
2005	6	6	0
2006	0	0	0

Source: information provided to CONAMAJ and prepared by the Planning Department, Statistics Section, Judicial Branch.

The fact that the data included in these tables are not disaggregated by sex and do not include any other type of classification variables makes it impossible to know who the victims were.

⁷ It is not known what the criteria established for classifying information are, particularly because the institution's personnel do not know this information or are not aware of these criteria.

of these crimes and the characteristics of their victimization process. However, its inclusion is considered appropriate as an illustration of the information available on the judicialization of processes related to trafficking in persons in the country, as well as the difficulties encountered in studies such as this one because the production of institutional information does not include a gender perspective.

Despite the generality of the records, it is striking that, of the 54 criminal cases that entered the Costa Rican judicial system in the years 2002-2006 for the crime of human trafficking, only 10 persons received convictions, which is equivalent to 18%⁸. Of the remaining 82%, there is no information, which could indicate that difficulties in the investigation stage have led to dismissal or acquittal due to problems in establishing evidence, or others, in the intermediate stage. In other words, 82% of the trafficking cases prosecuted in the Costa Rican criminal justice system do not reach the trial stage; this reflects a high degree of impunity.

As a complement to this information, the following data is of interest, which was detected through the review of judicial files carried out within the framework of the *Regional Study on regulations related to human trafficking in Central America and the Dominican Republic: national study of Costa Rica* by Luis Fernando Centeno.

The information in Table 10 shows that, at least in the judicial instances, there are records on the crime of trafficking in persons dating back to 1998. Likewise, the diversity of national origins of the victimized persons and their heterogeneity in age is also visible.

It is also possible to note that the vast majority of victims are women of all ages. It is reaffirmed by

Thus, human trafficking is one more manifestation of the specific violence suffered by women throughout their life cycle. However, as with other manifestations of violence against women, it remains invisible and the victims are stigmatized.

Another particularly relevant piece of information that can be extracted from the table is¹⁰, the identification of a case of femicide⁹ of a woman of Russian nationality who was trafficked, a fact that is further explained in the following press release.

"Agents of the Judicial Investigation Organism (OIJ) of Quepos, in charge of the investigations, were able to establish that the woman was initially in the country with a temporary student permit, but then Migration and Alien Affairs cancelled it. It was also determined that she worked as a dancer in a nightclub located in downtown San José, where she was known as Natasha. However, a short time later she stopped working in that place and dedicated herself to being a companion, especially for foreigners" (La Nación, 18 February 2004).

The authorities presume that this case corresponds to an international network that brings women to the country to "cool them down" and then send them to other developed countries such as the United States and Canada.

This information is consistent with the results of the regional study *"Femicide in Central America 2000-2006: the case of Costa Rica"*. The study states that:

"...In the year 2004, woman of Russian nationality appears dead in the Central Pacific, presenting all the indicators and context of human trafficking. Although the police investigation was not decisive given the complexity of the situation, the Judicial Power concludes that this woman worked as a dancer and sex worker and that she was ordered to be murdered by her

⁸ This is assuming that each person sentenced corresponds to one criminal case entered, which is not necessarily the case, as it could happen that several persons are sentenced in relation to the same trafficking case. If so, this percentage could be lower.

⁹ Violent death of a woman associated with violence against women and gender-based violence.

Table Cases10. related to trafficking in persons tried or under investigation in the Judicial Power

Date	Sex	Age	Nationality	Internal trafficking (I) external (E)	Purpose of trafficking ¹⁰	Final resolution	Remarks of interest
1998	4 women	3 adults and 1 minor	Dominican	External	Sexual exploitation	Two sentences: The girlfriend of the trafficker operating in the country was convicted. Chamber III annulled the sentence on the grounds that she was a victim. The Public Prosecutor's Office charged her again and she decided to accept the charges.	None of the traffickers -in Costa Rica or the Dominican Republic- was located.
2002	Women	4 years	Costa Rican	Internal	Sale of minor for illegal adoption.	Two defendants charged with child abduction and abandonment of an incompetent person in a final judgment.	It is presumed that the child was abandoned near a riverbed and was found dead in a dam.
2003	9 women and 9 children	Women between 19 and years28, children between 0 and 2 years of age	Guatemalan	External	Sale of minors and illegal adoption	The Public Prosecutor's Office considered that the women (mothers) were part of the trafficking organization and charged them criminally. They were tried for the crime of human trafficking and some people15 were convicted. The case is in Cassation due to appeals filed by two defendants.	A Public Defender for one of the women considered these women to be victims, because of the degrees of ignorance and misery, in addition to that they did not speak Spanish, and stated that they were manipulated.
2004	4 women	All minors, between 13 and 15 years.	Costa Rican	Internal	Sexual exploitation	The guy who cheated on the girls was sentenced	Through the offer of household appliances and other items, they were tricked into moving to work.
2004	1 woman	24 years	Russian	External	Sexual exploitation.	The case is in the prosecutor's file (pending further investigation).	The woman was found dead.
2005	4 women	Minors4 between and 1317 years of age	Nicaraguan	External	Sexual exploitation	The case is in cassation	The gang recruited these young women to work at home and then sexually exploited them.
2006	6 women	All between and 2428 years old	Costa Rican	External	Sexual exploitation	The case is under investigation.	They were recruited by deception, being offered jobs as hostesses. in Japanese restaurants.
2007	56 people	6 were minors	China	External	Labor exploitation	Case awaiting trial, charged with human smuggling.	A ship from Ecuador.
2007	57 people, of them 12 women	5 children and the rest adults	44 Ecuadorians, 13 Peruvians	External	nd	Under investigation.	Processing is in progress for the crime of trafficking of people.

Source: Information obtained in Estudio Regional sobre normativa en relación a la trata de personas en América

.....
¹⁰ Sexual exploitation, labor exploitation, illegal adoption, forced marriage,...

expatriate. The results of this study allow us to identify new scenarios where women are killed in conditions directly associated with their gender condition and which, in turn, are associated with new socio-economic and political realities in the region and the world. Although some of these problems do not have the level of impact or prevalence that they have in other countries of the region (e.g., human trafficking and/or sexual exploitation, gangs, etc.), the fact that they appear in Costa Rica as a clearly identified cause of femicide allows us to suspect that some of the deaths of women that in other Central American countries appear undetermined (either due to a real lack of information or public disinterest in investigating) could also be associated with this type of problem (Hidalgo 2006).

In conclusion, as a result of the consultation with public service providers, it is worth mentioning that it is noteworthy that two institutions interviewed, the Administrative Police (Ministry of Public Security) and the General Directorate of Migration, which are key because of their relationship with the problem, do not have information on the trafficking of adult women in the country.

In the private sphere, in two of the entities where interviews were conducted in this research process, it was stated that they are aware of the situation of trafficking in women in the country, but that there is no documented information regarding this, as both entities lack the resources to address the problem.

On the one hand, Caritas (a social assistance institution associated with the Catholic Church) stated that it had received a complaint from the Ambassador of the Dominican Republic indicating sites of possible trafficking in women. However, it was reported that nothing could be done about this problem. It is not known whether a formal complaint was filed with national authorities (OH1).

On the other hand, ASTRADOMES (a private organization that works with women in domestic service) indicated that they know of at least two undocumented cases related to girls who comment that there are companies that specialize in bringing young women to work in houses but that *"they end up in other places"*. It was also stated that staff of this institution know of fellow domestic employees whose employers have confiscated their passports and personal belongings and do not allow them to communicate with their families. It was assured that, on at least four occasions, this organization has had to go to remove female companions from houses from which they were not allowed to leave. The officials were accompanied by the police and were able to verify that these women were kept in this situation because they had been threatened with being reported to Immigration for being undocumented. Most of the women in this situation were Nicaraguan (OM3).

Finally, the Rahab Foundation, which implements a specific project on prevention and attention to human trafficking in the Central Pacific region, in partnership with the IOM and with resources from the U.S. Government, provided valuable information on trafficking in women. This information is the product of their direct work with victims, potential victims, service providers and local communities. Much of this information has been passed on to the appropriate entities for investigation, but to date, no results of the investigations are known.

"...there is trafficking of adult women for the purpose of sexual and labor exploitation. And that is in bars that function as brothels, that have rooms in the back and that are normally transit bars for the use of truck drivers, sales agents... The type of exploiter that frequents these places is basically either a national or a foreign worker... (But trafficking) has become part of the landscape at The officials say: "Ah... yes it's true, they are like from the Caribbean, but they are very pretty, they walk around with their braids and in groups and they look so good..."

arranged..." That is, they have been seeing them, at least in the center, that they are women who are not linked to the community, and it turns out that when the first trainings are given and they are asked if there is that here (trafficking) they say there is not, when we say that there is and that it is this, then: "Ah!... Yes, it is true" (OM4).

The lack of information on the part of the community and the lack of awareness on the part of the authorities generate, in the opinion of the Foundation's technical team, a situation of "naturalization" or "normalization" of the crime of human trafficking, and the lack of follow-up on complaints increases the feeling of impunity. Thus, the community, which could be a resource for denouncing human trafficking, is unable to differentiate between the exercise of prostitution and forced prostitution.

"everybody knows, for example, that at the entrance of Puntarenas, in... there is a bar... Everybody knows that the women of the Caribbean do not leave that place, they know that in... there is a brothel that says on a big sign Bar Restaurant Hotel. there is a brothel that says on a big sign Bar Restaurant Hotel Bar, and it turns out that there is nothing, there is no reception, nothing, it is the only license they have for that and at night it works as a brothel; that the women cross from the house where they are during the day to the brothel at night; that when they go out it is accompanied, to buy underwear and things they need and that they go out in groups, and the people in the communities see it as a cultural and real thing, like they are very well off and that this is how they like to live. Working at night and sleeping during the day" (OM4).

This project includes documentation on the experience of a Colombian woman who was transferred from her country to Costa Rica through deception, and who was a victim of labor exploitation in San José and later of sexual exploitation in the Pacific zone.

...she was there in Colombia. And when

she was going through that crisis, she was telling a beauty products salesman and the salesman told her that why didn't she go to Costa Rica, which was the best place in the world for her.

closer, ~~International Organization for Migration (IOM)~~

she said "But how can I go?" "No, it's just that Fulana... had been offered a trip to Costa Rica, to work in a beauty salon", but her friend couldn't come and why didn't she take advantage of the trip? And she said yes, because she was desperate, and in a matter of months she arranged the trip... She called, they gave her the number so she could call directly to Costa Rica, she spoke with the owner of the salon and she told her to come, that she would give her 50% of all the profits.... She got everything ready and came and when she arrived she found different conditions... She didn't know what was going to happen to her, so much mistreatment, meeting bad people who were going to hurt her... And she had them both living there, sleeping on the floor and working in the hairdresser's shop. And since these friends from Colombia got her a job in San Pedro, she told her friend: "Look, let's get out of here". And when they told the lady that they were leaving, the lady got angry, she told them that they could not leave, that she had done so much for them, that they could not leave her alone, she took their clothes and passports. She is a Costa Rican woman..." (OM4).

In addition to Colombian women, the presence in the area of women from the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua has been confirmed.

The project has also documented cases of internal trafficking, such as the following case of a Costa Rican woman in a situation of extreme vulnerability, who was captured in San José and transported to the Central Pacific to be exploited as a sex slave.

"...this woman met an American and the American offered her a very good job selling bikinis and she would earn colones 5.000 for each one. Then she, fighting with her husband, victim of domestic violence, having left her children with a sister, needing to send money to her sister to feed her children, she saw that she was

good for him, and after that he told her to get in the cab and she left in a cab for Jacó. The

The same day he arrived he took her out to eat and showed her the place, and she saw that there was another woman there who was like the man's partner or roommate, and that same day he told her to take off her clothes because he liked them to walk around the house naked and that she had to sleep with him. So she said "What am I going to do if I have nowhere to go..." And so it happened, in a condition of sexual abuse... that she could not put on clothes, he put her to have sex with the other woman, he threatened to beat her, the woman used her as a guardian, also the woman used her to sell drugs. The girl would leave the apartment, but she would go out with the woman or with the man. She was like that for about two weeks until a neighbor called the security forces to denounce an alleged situation of domestic violence and they were able to rescue her" (OM4).

Unfortunately, this case of internal trafficking was not typified as such by the Prosecutor's Office, and no complaint was filed, because the prosecutor assumed that she was very angry because she had not been paid for the prostitution service, but that if she had been paid, she would not be there asking for anything:

"you are a prostitute and he didn't pay you, that's why you are angry and that's why you want to leave" And she was a woman trafficked from San Jose to... for domestic sexual servitude. So the prosecutor said no. She had to leave rescued, she had in an oversight when they went out she saw that the owner of the place was there and she said look, please take me to her house. So, they took her into the house and from there she was able to call the police" (OM4).

Finally, the representatives of this Foundation add that women in conditions of sexual exploitation suffer many types of aggressions and humiliations, and there are even known cases of death of women who could have been trafficked. *"This makes what is happening at the trafficking level even more clandestine and hidden".*

Women have mentioned witnessing a corpse being taken out of the brothel in a clandestine manner... without daring to ask what happened to this woman... Rather, they react with fear and submission before exploitative clients and hotel employees because they think that this could happen to them... others have reported observing blood and traces of organs or skin in brothel and hotel rooms; without daring to denounce for fear of reprisals against them or their children... (OM4).

All this raises suspicions of the presence of trafficking networks for commercial sexual exploitation that use extreme physical violence to subdue their victims, but that are clandestine, and the cases are still not being investigated. It is believed that some of these victims have no record of entry into the country and there is no family member, friend or friend who can report their disappearance, so the murders that may be occurring go unpunished.

In addition to the above, on some occasions, local authorities carry out raids but what they find and record are "women in irregular migratory conditions", who are immediately deported without any investigation into the possibility that they are victims of trafficking. *"Of the total number of people consulted in Jacó, 34 were transferred to the center due to their irregular migratory status, of which 20 are Dominicans and 12 Nicaraguans, all women, as well as two more Nicaraguans with false documents,"¹¹ reads a press release.*

"The authorities do not take into account that these women have been recruited in their countries under offers to get work in Costa Rica and receive good salaries, jobs mainly as hairdressers, maids and waitresses. What these women say is that in the country they are provided with the necessary documents, during the trip they receive assistance and in the

~~International Organization for Migration (IOM)~~
Statements made by Francisco Castañeda, Chief of the Migration Police, on 19 November issued 2007 in a press release of the Ministry of Public Security.

They are waiting for them at the airport in Panama or Nicaragua to be taken by cab to the Pacific region. They mention that some of them realize on the way that they have come to prostitute themselves but that they have already contracted a debt and a commitment with their families and that is why they do not return. One of these women from the Caribbean said that "I endured hunger and mistreatment, threats for a month but then I put on the miniskirt, the first day was difficult... what I want is to be deported and forget all this, I hope that what I have told you does not get me into more trouble, but I am very angry with what they have done to me, they have trafficking of women here...". Once they are in the brothels, housed in houses where they receive "protection", they are facilitated to regularize their immigration status through false marriages and their passports are kept "safe"..." (OM4).

According to officials of this foundation, practices of this type are carried out by organized networks that operate transnationally, with links to lawyers, brothel owners, transporters, authorities, etc. Due to the tolerance that exists in Costa Rica towards the involvement of foreign women in the sex trade, some of these networks do not resort to confinement and total isolation, but their ways of keeping the victims in sexual exploitation are threats with the discrediting of their families in their countries, threats of physical aggression, dependence for the protection offered and fraudulent procedures for migratory regularization; in addition to emotional violence and the offer of drugs. These networks are highly organized and legally advised, in such a way that their "business" is tolerated by the community that blames the women for leaving their country to prostitute themselves.

In conclusion, the following words of an informant constitute an excellent corollary to this section, which can be none other than that - beyond the numbers and statistics - trafficking in persons and, specifically, the trafficking of adult women, is a growing reality in Costa Rica.

Rica that demands, from the state and society as a whole, clear and decisive actions to guarantee respect for the human rights and dignity of all those who are victimized, and to prevent other girls, young women or adult women from being trapped in the nets of trafficking criminals.

"First of all it is a reality that we have trafficking; the problem is that people don't realize it. I don't understand why there hasn't been the political will to say 'this is the problem, this is what we have faced'. I am very sure that many of the victims who have passed through here are victims of trafficking, and even we have made mistakes in identifying them. So the problem is much bigger than what society perceives at the moment" (IM5).

4.3. Public policies and institutional programs on trafficking in women

As a result of the interest developed thanks to the awareness-raising and training experiences sponsored by international organizations, human trafficking began to be included in the agendas of public institutions and non-governmental organizations operating in the country.

During the administration of President Abel Pacheco (2002-2006), specifically on November 8, 2005, the first inter-institutional body aimed at combating human trafficking and smuggling was formed. *The National Coalition Against the Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons*, created by Executive Decree No. 32824-G, would have among its objectives to provide, define, coordinate and execute a plan of action for the prevention, combat, punishment and eradication of these actions that violate human rights, the protection of its victims and the effective prosecution of those responsible for them.

The National Coalition began to carry out, with the technical support of the IOM and other international organizations such as Save the Children, as of June of last year, the following activities 2005,

Table Entities11. that make up the National Coalition against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants

Members	Observers Judiciary
Ministry of the Interior and Police and Public Security	Legislative Assembly
National Women's Institute INAMU	Ombudsman's Office
Ministry of Labor and Social Security Ministry of Health Costa Rican Social Security Fund Ministry of Public Education Ministry of Justice Ministry of Foreign Affairs Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (PANI) Judicial Power	

Source: Executive Decree No. of 32.8248November 2005; Decree No. 34199-G-MSP-J-MEP-S-MTSS-RREE of 12March 2005; Executive Decree No. 34199-G-MSP-J-MEP-S-MTSS-RREE of March 2005. 2007.

sensitization for representatives of various governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The main objective of this body is to develop an Inter-institutional Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons. In that year, the Ministry of Security and Governance assumed national coordination of the Coalition and other participating agencies were added.

Table 11 shows the composition of the Coalition.

The Decree provides for the participation of international organizations and non-governmental organizations linked to the problem of human trafficking in the Coalition's technical bodies. Of these, the following have been accompanying the work process of this institution up to the time of this study.

The Coalition, with technical support from the IOM, has been working with an inclusive and participatory approach, in

conjunction with institutions and non-governmental organizations.

The program's Action Plan for the next three years will include the development of a plan of action for the next three years. To this end, efforts have been made to develop a discussion on the conceptual differences between smuggling and trafficking in persons, with the aim of outlining institutional policies and practices according to the needs of each of these crimes and in accordance with the diversity of characteristics of the populations involved.

The Action Plan for the next three years has been defined according to six strategic objectives:

1. Promote and implement preventive actions based on the production of knowledge, communication, training and social participation.
2. Contribute to the adaptation and improvement of the legal and institutional framework.
3. Implement strategic alliances to maximize resources and results in the care of victims of trafficking and smuggling.
4. Attract resources from national and international sources.

Table International organizations¹². and civil society organizations that participate in the technical bodies of the National Coalition against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants

International Organizations	Non-Governmental Organizations
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Gender and Society Foundation
International Labor Organization (ILO)	PANIAMOR Foundation
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR Costa Rica)	National Network of Civil Organizations on Migration
	International Centre for Human Rights for Migrants
	Alliance for your Rights
	Defense for Children International (DCI-RC)
	CEFEMINA

5. Increase cooperation and improve information exchange networks and systems.

6. Raise the levels of training and performance of human resources to act in prevention, ensure adequate attention and protection of victims' rights.

Among the most important actions being coordinated at the time of the study, the following stand out:

- Development of maps for the identification of routes and blind spots that take into account variables such as places where the phenomenon occurs, traffic routes, areas of poor police control, etc., as medium-term measurement instruments to guide the design of public policies; establishment of training and awareness-raising processes focused on each area.
- Execution of training and awareness-raising programs aimed at personnel of governmental and non-governmental institutions that may eventually come into contact with trafficked persons. In this regard, progress has been made in the development of methodological guidelines for the detection and specific approach to victims, and processes have been carried out to

The project also includes awareness-raising and training programs for members of the migration police, as well as "training of trainers" processes aimed at the multiplication of existing information.

- The National Women's Institute is developing a specific module on trafficking in women to be incorporated into the specialized telephone service protocol of the Operational Center for Attention to Domestic Violence (COAVIF) incorporated into the 911 Emergency System. It is also implementing a project to raise awareness and disseminate information specifically on trafficking in adult women, in conjunction with the Central American Feminist Network against Violence against Women and the IOM, with funding from the Swiss Embassy in Costa Rica.
- Design of the Repatriation Protocol for Child and Adolescent Victims of Trafficking, in which various sectors and national institutions are working together.
- Development of the "Human Trafficking Hotline" within the framework of the project implemented by the Rahab Foundation in the Central Pacific region of the country.
- Work on proposals for the modification of the new Migration Law.

4.4. Women survivors of human trafficking

As mentioned in the previous sections, a total of testimonies¹¹ were collected from women who at some point in their lives had been victims of human trafficking. Of these, two were interviews conducted directly by this consultant during the research period. The remaining nine testimonies were given to officials who had contact at some point with the survivors and kept their accounts in writing; from there they were taken by the researcher. All the testimonies were given when the women had already left the trafficking situation.

The following section presents the most relevant findings on the trafficking experience, directly referred to by the voice of the women victims.

4.4.1. Characteristics of the survivors

Annex 1 describes the most important characteristics of both the women victims and the trafficking experience suffered by each of them, as revealed in their stories.

It is observed that all the women included as informants in this study were victims of **external trafficking**; that is, all of them were transferred to an international destination, outside their place of origin, for the purpose of exploitation.

During the inquiry with service providers, it was found that cases of **internal trafficking** have been detected in Costa Rica; however, so far, the existing legal instruments in the country prevent their identification through criminal casuistry. This observation is an attempt to warn that, although this study identified only cases of external trafficking, it should not be concluded that this is the only modality of human trafficking in the country.

Another outstanding characteristic of the data presented is the confirmation that Costa Rica is a country of both **destination** and **origin** of human trafficking. Thus, the 5 Costa Rican women were transferred for exploitation outside the national territory and the 6 foreign informants experienced their exploitation in Costa Rica.

It should be noted that only women² reported having been trafficked for the purpose of **labor exploitation**. In both cases, the victims were Costa Rican women and the exploitation took place outside the country. At the other extreme, the majority of women, 9 in total, were trafficked for the sole purpose of **sexual exploitation**. Of the latter, women⁵, all of them foreigners, reported having experienced exploitation in Costa Rica.

Regarding the personal variables, we conclude that it is not possible to construct a typology of the victims, as there is great heterogeneity in variables such as age, previous occupation or educational level (in this last variable, the absence of information in some testimonies prevents interpretations).

Despite the above, after a qualitative analysis of the various testimonies, it is observed that all the women presented, at the time of recruitment, some characteristics that could define them as women in conditions of vulnerability, as will be analyzed below.

4.4.2. The trafficking experience

Living conditions prior to recruiting or recruitment

The decision to migrate to an unknown place, far from the context in which women have lived, have their families and their culture, is invariably motivated by factors of the most diverse nature; personal, social, past and present factors in women's lives.

Not in all the accounts is it possible to know the factors that precipitated the decision to make the trip. For the majority of the women, the proposal of a job

The most important reason for this was the fact that they were better paid at a time of great economic need and in a context of **social and labor exclusion**.

"A friend of mine told me about the possibility of working in Mexico in domestic service. She told me that I would earn more and that I would do very well, that they could send money to Costa Rica every month. (...) I was interested in the proposal, especially because I have a 19-year-old son who is studying and I wanted to help him with his studies. (I10).

On the other hand, of the total, women⁶ (the only ones whose personal background is known) expressed in their stories the existence of family and social backgrounds, such as **extreme poverty**, having suffered serious situations of **violence** during their lives, **school dropout**, history of **exploitation** and **alcoholism** in their families.

"I started prostitution when I was 16 years old... at 16 years and nine months. (...) I lived with my eldest's father, but he mistreated me a lot, so I came to Costa Rica and met a friend. I was in need and had no diapers or milk for the little boy, so I became desperate, so I went to a friend of mine and she took me to the man. (I1).

In this regard, it is possible to observe:

1. History of violence in personal history: of the total number of trafficked protagonists who provided information on their personal history (6 in total), one hundred percent reported histories of domestic violence and sexual violence in life prior to the trafficking experience, either as a victim or as a witness in their home:
 - 5 of women⁶ reported having been direct victims of **domestic violence** in their homes;
 - all (6) reported having been victims of **sexual violence** in their childhood.
- "(...) my father was an alcoholic (...) an old satyr. My siblings and I lived a terrible life since we were very young, he liked to touch our breasts that did not*

I don't know, my mom's and dad's family is kind of perverted. (...) "Sometimes I think that since I was a little girl, it was a life of violence and sexual abuse, because my father touched my breasts that I didn't even have, and the abuse of prostitution of those women, because I was a little girl. If they told me I had to be with men¹⁰, I had to do it and for as long as they wanted me to last. Then I started to think about whether my destiny had to be so ugly". (I1).

"What we experienced terribly was that my father, who we adored, and my mother, both of us, saw him hitting my mother, because my mother had long hair, down to her waist, and my father would roll it up in his hand and hit her with the other hand. He pulled out her normal teeth and her false teeth in lots of opportunities and we lived all that since we were kids. And that does not go away with a pardon or an excuse me. (...) The last partner I had treated me as inept, stupid, brainless, idiot, he yelled at me and humiliated me in front of people. I was with him for 8 years trying to get in because I wanted to be with him, but after a few years⁸ I said I couldn't take it anymore, that he had to love me a little more and I left him". (I2).

"My sister's husband had disrespected me, my sister took me to live with her on vacation and my sister drank a lot of liquor at that time and left me alone with him and he grabbed me by force, he touched me, he never had sex, never, (...) he touched my private parts, I told my sister and she did not believe me, I was about years¹⁰ old (...) what he did was hit me and hit me." (I3).

2. Development in contexts of alcoholism, homelessness and parental abandonment:
 - women³ stated that their development took place next to at least one parental figure with **alcohol** problems.
 - 4 women reported their development in contexts of **physical abandonment**, or

the time of recruitment. Of these, they worked⁴ in domestic jobs or in factories; one of them, a

The main causes of child labor are affective, or one or the other, along with street and **child labor exploitation** (most of them through begging).

"My dad left us, they fought a lot (...) I went to my aunt's but they mistreated me a lot, it was the same as with my stepfather, they beat me and ran me out of the house, it was always like that with all my aunts and then when I went back to my mom they still treated me badly" (I4).

"I was a minor and my mother had to sign; at that time she was asked for a visa, but she made all the arrangements for us. We were supposedly passed off as mommy and daddy's little girls, who were waiting for us there for a vacation.... My mom would sign. They talked to the moms, because the moms agreed (...) Mom knew that I was involved in the prostitution trade, she left me and signed. What's more, the first time I went to Mexico, they sent me back because my mother's signature was missing, and then three days later my mother signed and everything" (I1).

3. Five of the six women who reported personal histories recalled that their development took place in environments of **extreme poverty**:

"(...) when my father drinks, fights... there is always a fight, he would run my mother away, sometimes my siblings would get involved and they would all get into a fight. (...) All my siblings worked because my father did not earn well and we had to buy food... my mother does not work because she does not know how to read or write, she is not very good at it" (I5).

"I only went to the first grade of school, from there they took me out to work. A baby taking care of another baby, I had to take care of a little one who was only months⁷ old, and I was years⁸ old. It was a disgusting life" (I1).

It was of interest to the research to inquire about the occupation of the women survivors. Of the total number of testimonies reviewed, eight contained information on the women's occupation at

They were minors. Two women said they had university studies and were working informally in jobs related to their specialties. Two women stated that they were working as sex workers: one of them was a minor, so it can be said that their condition was truly one of commercial sexual exploitation.

Recruitment

"(...) I was working in a factory; I was 20 years old. In a discotheque I met a guy who told me what I was doing in a factory, that I was very pretty, that I had a nice body and how I was living on 900 colones per month. That he could give me a better life, that he could invite me to go to Toronto, to Canada, to work there. That I could paint houses, that I could paint a house like a man. And I told him that if it paid well and that it would get me out of poverty, I would go. So, I went to Canada (I2).

The recruitment of women for trafficking purposes was carried out in all the cases studied **by deception**. In general terms, all the women were offered work outside the country, with the promise of earning "a lot of money" quickly and easily, thus taking advantage of the women's needs at the time of recruitment.

In some cases, the deception was also characterized by an abuse of the vulnerable conditions of the victims using **a previously established relationship of trust**.

In Table 13, we have disaggregated the different means to carry out the collection and the general means for the maintenance of the operating situation (the latter will be discussed in more detail in the specific section on the operating phase).

As can be seen, all the women were offered work in suitable conditions and jobs different from those to which they were eventually transferred. The jobs offered were diverse: jobs

Table Victims13. according to recruitment characteristics

#	Age (years)	Type of catchment	Relationship with recruiter	Medium used	Main means for farm maintenance**
I1	17	Acquaintance contacts recruiter (female pimp).	Unknown	Deception; only on conditions.	Easement for debt.
I2	20	Identification and direct approach by recruiters.	Stranger you meet in a bar	Deception.	Easement for debt.
I3	17 ó 18	Identification and direct approach by recruiters.	Unknown	Deception.	Easement for debt. Use of force
I4	12	Identification and direct approach by recruiters.	Community acquaintances	Deception based on abuse of a position of power and relationship of trust. Payment to relatives is not ruled out.	Abuse of position of vulnerability. Threat. Use of force.
I5	16	Identification and direct approach by recruiters.	Family of your employer	Deception based on abuse of a position of power and relationship of trust.	Abuse of position of vulnerability. Threat. Use of force.
I6	33	Search for recruiter for knowing that she provided outside employment.	Unknown	Deception.	Easement for debt.
I7	15	Search for recruiter for knowing that she provided outside employment.	Unknown	Deception.	Easement for debt.
I8	21	Search for recruiter for knowing that she provided outside employment.	Unknown	Deception.	Easement for debt.
I9	22	Search for recruiter for knowing that she provided outside employment.	Unknown	Deception	Easement for debt.

* Deception referring to the type of work and the conditions of the same or only the conditions of exploitation.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

** Exploitation was carried out in conjunction with other means of coercion and tactics for maintaining dependency and submission. These are explained extensively in the following sections. The most important control factors are highlighted in the table.

as maids, waitresses, or maintenance workers. Only in the cases of informants I1, I10 and I11, the deception was related to the working conditions and not to the work for which they were hired. In these cases, the women knew about their future jobs; however, they were deceived about the working conditions; they were subsequently subjected to exploitative labor conditions under the excuse of the debt acquired for relocation expenses, about which they had never been informed:

"A man arrived and told me that he would pay for my ticket and passport and everything, he told me that if I didn't like the job I could come back at any time, on the same flight; but it wasn't prostitution, it was as a maid (...)" (I2).

"That I was going to have my own house, my own car, my own money. (...) That I was going to buy a lot of things. So they made it all rosy for me and when I saw what they were really like, well, what's the use" (I1).

In the case of the Nicaraguan minors, recruitment was carried out through **an abuse of power** by the traffickers, who offered unspecific work, under the deception of providing them with better living conditions and care. While in the rest of the cases, the women agreed to the transfer with the deception of future jobs that never existed, in the case of the minors, the deception was also based on a relationship of trust with two adults, taking advantage of the vulnerable conditions of the two young women, who did not have the emotional or maturity skills to discern the offer that was made to them:

"I am Nicaraguan and in December of that year I2004 was working as a domestic servant taking care of a lady. In that month the denounced, who is the daughter of the lady and is Nicaraguan, came to visit her mother in the company of Don..., he is Costa Rican, and there I met them... A few days later she told me that why didn't I come with her to Costa Rica and here I would go to

to work and earn more money... that in Costa Rica there was a man named... who had a lot of money, who was going to give me a lot of money and I could buy whatever I wanted" (I5).

"I met... when I went to my aunt... She once asked me if I would go with her to accompany her because she said her husband was traveling and was leaving her alone, so I told her, "tell my mom to see if she would let me go". She asked my aunt first and then my aunt let me go and then the next day I went with my aunt to my mother to say goodbye; then my mother was not there and I told her to arrive the next day because I was leaving for Costa Rica at about nine o'clock" (I4).

In both cases, it cannot be ruled out that an economic arrangement was made with their relatives in order to obtain consent for the trip. In this case, the trafficker was a native of the victims' community

and believes that she had previously taken other girls from the area to Costa Rica. It is noteworthy that the minor who reported the above, even though she was the one who fled and filed the complaint, days later, in a jurisdictional evidentiary hearing, requested the presence of the traffickers to give her statement and denied having been previously reported. It is very likely that family pressure, intimidation or the perception of power that these people had over her family and community had a decisive influence on this retraction. On the other hand, according to the sources, many of the first contacts were made by acquaintances who referred them to people offering jobs abroad, but in none of the cases was it possible to establish that these acquaintances were involved in the subsequent negotiations. With the information provided, it is difficult to know whether these people were involved in any way in the subsequent negotiations. way into the network of traffickers.

"(...) my friend Ania, who worked as a miscellaneous store clerk, told me about the possibility of working in Mexico in domestic service. She told me that I

International Organization for Migration (IOM)
would earn more and that I would
do very well (...) Ania introduced
me to Mr. (...) he introduced me to
Mr. (...) he told me that I would be
able to work as a maid in Mexico
(...).

said that I could work in Mexico (...) he arranged and paid for the renewal of my passport, airfare and personally took me to the airport. He gave me a letter dated in the name of the company saying that I was going to do a training in the sales and marketing area of that company" (I10).

In all cases, except in the experiences reported by the underage Nicaraguan informants (I4 and I5), recruitment was mediated by a person in charge of recruitment, who, in all cases, was also in charge of making the arrangements and arranging the paperwork to obtain the documentation for the victims' transfer. In all these cases, this person also acted as a forger and intermediary for the future administrators of the exploitation.

In the two cases of the Nicaraguan minors alone, the administrators, a Nicaraguan-Tico couple, were in charge of the entire trafficking organization, from recruitment to the exploitation of the women.

It should be noted that in all cases, the recruitment was carried out directly by the recruiter. Only in the case of woman I11, the arrangement was carried out by telephone by a recruiter who was in the destination country and who was later found to work for the administrator of the place where the victim would be transferred.

Finally, the case of a Costa Rican woman (E3) was extracted from the judicial files; she was not included among the informants who narrated their experiences in the first person because the document studied corresponds to the complaint filed by her mother and only presents the summary of the investigation and an interview conducted with the victim eight years after her recruitment.

In this summary, the investigator states that the mother filed the complaint six years after her daughter's disappearance, after being alerted by a neighbor who was a pimp, who told her that her daughter had been deceived by a woman with the excuse of studying cosmetology and that she

believed she was in a situation of sexual exploitation.

Once in the country, eight years later, the young woman stated that she frequented a bar and was a follower of a musical group at the age of eight²³. She says that she had lost her job and that the singer of the group and his wife offered to take her to Mexico with the promise of turning her into a model. The woman says that she went alone with the woman to Mexico and, once there, she was placed in the house of a Guatemalan woman dedicated to sexual exploitation. She reports that there the intermediary charged her for the airfare and travel expenses. The young woman reports that she escaped and began working in the sex trade in Mexico City to return to Costa Rica. According to the investigation data, it was learned that this Costa Rican intermediary was a woman, also a pimp, who recruited women and minors and sold them to the Guatemalan woman in Mexico for \$500 (E3).

Transfer

In 9 of the 11 cases studied, according to the victims, the transfer was carried out by air, and legal means were used to leave the country of origin and enter the destination countries. In all cases, the recruiter was responsible for arranging the necessary documentation for the transfer. These arrangements included the purchase of airline tickets and the preparation of passports and entry visas. With the information available, it was not possible to establish whether the documents were processed through legal channels in the countries of origin or whether they were forged by the recruiters.

The only land transfer took place in the case of two underage girls (I4 and I5), who were transported together by the same pair of traffickers. In this case, both were transported in the trunk of the traffickers' car, with the objective of evading the customs post to enter Costa Rica. On the other hand, this is one of the two transit experiences that can be described as traumatic and high-risk for the victims. Although both cases do not

There is sufficient information about the experience of the young women during this stage, the following statement was recovered:

"(...) neither of us had papers, they brought us hidden under our suitcases, we were suffocating, it was very hot, but when we crossed the border we were fine. Once at Costa Rican Immigration, they took us out of the car and took us to a soda to have a soft drink and don... came to do the paperwork, then the police asked... (trafficker woman) who I was and she said that I was her employee and that... (the other victim) was her goddaughter, they didn't say anything else, nor did they ask for papers" (I5).

The other story that best exemplifies the risks to which women are subjected during this transit phase is that of a woman (I11) who had to make two attempts to reach her destination. After being tricked by an intermediary who contacted her by telephone and offered her a job as a singer in Mexico, the woman bought the airline ticket with money that the intermediary sent her and set out on the trip alone. She said that she took the flight to Mexico, via San Salvador, but when she arrived at her destination, the immigration authorities detained her for approximately three days at the city's airport. She said that during these three days she was the victim of physical and verbal aggressions by immigration officials and recalls that at some point a doctor injected her and she lost consciousness. On the third day, she was deported to Costa Rica and upon her arrival she went to the hospital because of severe pain in her legs and genitals. There the doctors told her that she had been raped. A month later, the doctor sent her the money for the airline ticket and told her to take the flight via Panama. The woman reported that she did as she was told and this time she managed to enter the country of destination without any problems.

Of the eleven experiences reported, in only three cases did the recruiter accompany the women during their transit. Of the three references, two correspond to the case of the two Nicaraguan minors.

The third case corresponds to informant I2, who was recruited in a bar by an unknown man, who, after deceiving her about a future job painting houses, traveled with her to Canada where he sold her to a brothel manager. She recalls:

"I went with him, he paid me everything and took my papers. I have a passport because of him. But well, I just went and signed, I don't think I had to get a visa. I was there for three months...sad because I went through horrible things" (I2).

Destination and operation

In all the victims' accounts, it is possible to see that they place the moment in which they became aware of the deception to which they had been subjected, at the destination stage.

"(...) about three days later, because as soon as we arrived he told me that we had to meet a person who was going to give me a job. And I said to him "what is that job? ... for women?"

*...because he only talked to me about women. So, that day we didn't go, I stayed in the room. About two days later he took me to a man in a brothel and that's where my whole story began, everything that was to know that I didn't have my passport, no money, and that I didn't have to go to paint anyone's house, but that I had to work in the place with men. (...) they locked me in, I was carrying my bag, when the gentleman left, I went to look for it and I didn't have it. I went out and the man was gone, he had left. After a few days I cried and cried, and I told the guy at the store that I didn't understand why that boy had done that to me, that he had cheated me. He told me *that* I had to pay him some money, from the money he had paid my friend, for leaving me there, and I also had to pay for his plane ticket. I was thinking about how many men I was going to have to be with to pay him and how I was going to leave without a passport" (I2).*

As initially mentioned, out of the total, women9 were trafficked into

for purposes of sexual exploitation. They can be distributed as follows for analysis purposes:

- 2 Nicaraguan minors, identified, recruited and exploited by a couple in their home in Guadalupe, San José, Costa Rica. In their testimonies, the girls reported that during their exploitation they lived with at least three other minors, also Nicaraguan, who were possible victims of trafficking.
- 4 women, among them a minor, recruited in the Dominican Republic, with an independent air transit, sexually exploited in a bar-brothel in Siquirres de Limón. During their statements, the women reported the presence of other women victims of exploitation, but the data cannot be corroborated.

(...) when we arrived in Costa Rica this girl was waiting for us (...) she met us at the airport, greeted us, asked if we were the girls that Mari sent, we said yes, from there we took a bus, then a cab, then another bus and finally we boarded another cab until we arrived at the business located in Siquirres, the business had no name (...) there a guy, the owner of the business (...) introduced himself to us, asked us if Mari had said where and why we were going, we answered him what Mari had said, then he told us no, we were not going to "go there", he told us that we were going to "go there".) introduced himself to us, asked us if Mari had told us where and why we were going, we answered him what Mari had said, then he told us no, that we were going to "fuck men", that the first entrance was his, that is, to go to the room to have sex with a man, because from there he charged for food and sleeping quarters; he went twice or more and gave us a token, worth two thousand colones, and the men paid three thousand colones for the service" (I6).

- 1 woman recruited by a Costa Rican pimp for exploitation in a brothel in Mexico, where, according to her, there were about 100 other women of different nationalities living in similar conditions.
- 1 woman recruited by an unknown man for exploitation in Mexico. In her interview she did not clarify where she was

recruited.

exploded, she reported that she was being held in isolation under armed surveillance.

"They took me to Mexico, they left me lost there for a month and 18 days (...) when I left and arrived in Mexico there were two men waiting for me there and it said Costa Rica on a sign like that, and when I approached them, they put a gun on my back, I do not know what it was, they told me "Walk and give me your passport, give me everything, otherwise I will kill you here".... I got on and they forced me to prostitute myself for 15 days and they didn't give me any money or food, nothing, they kept me in a room and gave me water and tortillas. (I3).

- 1 woman recruited by a man who took her to Canada where he sold her to a brothel manager.

The remaining two women reported having been exploited for labor purposes:

- The first woman was recruited by telephone to work as a singer in a hotel. She reported that, the day after her arrival, she realized that she had been deceived by the recruiter; there was no orchestra and no work contract as promised. She was threatened with being reported to the immigration authorities; she was forced to work as a singer for more than four hours at a time without rest, under the agreement that she had to pay for her airfare. There she was kept with only one meal a day and under constant sexual harassment by her recruiter (I11).
- The other woman was recruited to perform domestic work in a tenement house where she was exploited in slave-like conditions.

"At the airport Mr.... of Colombian nationality was waiting for me. I informed him that I only had permission to stay for 20 days but he did not say anything. The wife showed me the house and the room where I would stay. I got up at 5:00 a.m. every day so that I could start my work at 6:00 a.m. My chores were housekeeping and cleaning. My chores were cleaning and

cooking for the family and I finished working between 9:00 and 10:00 p.m. I was in the kitchen. When they needed something and I was already resting, I would have

I had to answer. After a month I asked the gentleman for what I was owed and he told me that he would not pay me until I returned to Costa Rica and that I had to stay there for a year. I told him that I needed to send money to my son who is studying in Costa Rica and that I also needed it for my personal expenses, but he denied me. The following fortnight (a month and a half later) I asked for my salary again, but he ignored me. Generally when I asked for my money the man scolded me, he told me things like "Oh, you do cry, you do fuck" ...and I always got the runaround" (I10).

As mentioned in the previous sections, the 11 women were kept in their exploitative situation by the imposition of a debt acquired for the costs of the transfer (debt bondage). It was detected that, in most cases, in addition to the above, traffickers used other tactics to ensure the victims' submission:

1. Except in the case of the two women exploited for labor purposes, the main tactic to ensure control over the victims was the seizure of their documents and isolation, which varied according to each particular case, but in all cases consisted of prohibiting them from communicating with acquaintances in their place of origin. In one case, the woman recalled that they were forbidden to talk to their roommates. Another woman reported that they could not go out under any circumstances, because at all times there was an armed man at the door, who watched their movements.

"I could not call, I could not talk on the phone (...) once I needed underwear, the man asked me for the sizes and he sent a lady to buy them for me" (I2).

"They wouldn't let us go out. (...) We could not talk on the phone, nothing. Do you know what they told my mother? That I was going to arrive in a box; she herself arrived and told my mother that, when they left us lying there, that I was dead" (I1).

2. Keeping victims in extremely exploitative conditions:

Some women were forced to work long hours with little access to food and rest. In several accounts, women recalled how their managers forced them to take drugs during their rest hours in order to keep them in subordinate conditions:

"In Mexico I fell into a deep alcoholism (...) they gave us cocaine and at night sleeping pills, because we had to be relaxed. After drinking all night with a client, sleeping all night with a client, the next day they gave us pills" (I1).

3. Other women reported violence as the main method of maintaining control over them. In some cases, this violence consisted of threats and threats to their personal integrity; in others, the violence was physical and repeated. In almost all cases of sexual exploitation, violence by business managers was primarily sexual, ranging from corruption to rape by traffickers:

"(...) I want to say that when this woman took me to a dance, don... hit me because I hid behind a car. Another day when they took me to buy drugs, that is, stone... (the other exploited girl) stayed at the house and the man left the cell phone in the house and it turns out that the girl made three phone calls, I don't know to whom because she didn't know anyone here. When we arrived at the house, this man asked her if she had made a phone call and she said no, then he hit her with his fists and kicked her all over her body; she went into the bathroom and he kept hitting her and until the lady went inside he stopped hitting her (...) I had sex with him for food, water, electricity, the house, because he told me that I could not be there for free" (I5). "So I came and at the beginning she was all good, then she took us to dances here in Costa Rica, she took us to the Tobogán and the Típico, also her son (...) Every time she took us to a dance, she took us to the Tobogán and the Típico, also her son (...).

we would go to dances, they would give me liquor and then they would make me watch vulgar pornography movies in the house, we lived in Guadalupe, which is private, in private houses (...) the movies were shown by don... and doña ... says "Look girls, you have to see that, the money is for us to eat, for them to come and visit us, you have to do that, she says, you have to sleep with don..." (I4). (I4).

Finally, regarding the place where the exploitation took place, it should be noted that, in 8 of the 11 stories, the women report having been exploited in brothels, bars or brothels, where the main service was prostitution. Among these cases, one of the two cases of labor exploitation has been included, in which the woman was exploited as a singer in a brothel.

The remaining three cases correspond to two minors, exploited for sexual purposes in the traffickers' own home in Costa Rica, by means of telephone appointments, and the case of the woman exploited for domestic purposes in a home in Mexico.

Output

"(...) Last night, at twelve o'clock at night when they closed the business, without making noise, we prepared our bags, we went to bed and at about three o'clock in the morning my friend... woke me up and we left the room through the bush to the highway. For about an hour we ran, when vehicles passed by we hid... That's how we got to Siquirres, there we took a cab that took us to Guápiles; in Guápiles a man in a car, after explaining the situation, brought us here" (I6).

The survivors' exit from the trafficking situation occurred under different circumstances. In four of the cases (I3, I4, I6 and I9), the women escaped at serious risk to their physical integrity, in extremely dangerous conditions:

"(...) until one day, as I was no longer able to do anything, the man at the door told me that he was going to let me escape because he could see that I was not able to do anything.

They were going to kill me, he told me "I will let you escape, but run and run, don't get caught because if they catch you they will kill you" (...) and I left, without knowing where I was, in a huge country, without knowing how I got here... I had nothing, not even a five, only the clothes I left with, with which I escaped. When I went around there, there were prostitutes, there were transvestites and everything, I stopped there with them and I told my case to a girl and she told me to get pinched and to go live with her and everything and that when I made money to come back here, I said no, I didn't want to because I was too scared, I was tired of being a prostitute.... so she got into a car and left and said "Wait for me here", and when she left I walked and walked and walked and thought "what am I going to do here", and a cab driver passed by and the cab driver picked me up; he was a Christian cab driver and he took me to my mom's house and they had me there and they took me to a church and they made a circle in the church so that God would open doors for me to come back here, the mom and him, but more than anything he The next day he started to make the turns and everything they helped me to come here and I came here again...." (I3).

"Then she put me there in the room with Mr..., "Mrs... shall I take a bath? I said to her: "Take a bath, I'm going to bring the cloth" and then I took off my clothes to pretend that I was going to take a bath and then I quickly put on my clothes and ran out of the hotel, and then a lady from the hotel gave me to sleep with her and then the next day I left and went straight to a church and I told everything to a lady who goes to church, and that day they called the police and the police asked me questions and took me to the police station" (I4).

Thanks to the escape and denunciation of the women mentioned above, three other women (I5, I7 and I8) managed to be rescued through police operations.

Another woman (I2) was also rescued by a member of the Costa Rican Embassy.

Rica, who was informed by a fellow operator that she had a better chance of mobilization and filed a complaint to help her:

"She went and asked for help... Her name is..., she is a brunette, thin... she will be there and if you are the one who arrives I will show her to you. Because sometimes I didn't leave the room, only when someone asked me, so he had to come and ask me. Then, we went to the room and he explained to me that he was a Tico, that he wanted to help me, that if I had papers, how could I prove that I was me. I told him "This is my mom, my dad, we are from Perez Zeledon, this is my ID card, I have a son, these are my sisters...". In other words, I was giving him everything. So, he went out and went to talk to the man, and I stayed in the room but I was scared to death, and a little later he came with the man to the room. And he told me: "Get your things ready and leave" ...I don't know what that boy said to the gentleman (...) We were in a car on the way and he told me that he had threatened the gentleman, that he had said "If you don't give me this girl to send her to your country, I will send the whole law, it is more convenient for you that I take this girl and if there are others who want to leave, I will take them, whether they are Ticas or not". Then, the gentleman said "No, take her". Then, I said "What about my passport?" ...And I had not finished paying him for three months and he owed me a lot of money, he exploited me... It was like deportation, because I had no money to pay for the ticket, so what they did was to send me to Migration and they deported me without papers" (I2).

The departure of the remaining three women, as reported, was carried out as follows:

- The trafficker reported her to the immigration authorities once the woman, after eight months of captivity, paid the full amount owed for the transfer (I1).
- The two women in labor exploitation had fewer mobility restrictions, so they left by their own means with the help of third parties. One of them, before her

She filed a complaint with the Embassy in Mexico and was helped to leave the country by the Costa Rican Consul.

"On Sunday in 16 July when the gentlemen were out of town, I decided to leave. Since I had no money, I asked my daughter to send me to Mexico City and pay for my lodging. A friend helped me with acquaintances in Mexico City to help me. Through them I contacted the Costa Rican Consulate (...) The Costa Rican Consul General spoke with the gentleman, who at first told her that I had stolen some jewelry and that they had blocked my return air ticket and would not unblock it until I paid them the cost itself. The consul told her that she could report to Immigration the irregularities they had committed in my transfer. Apparently they felt threatened and unblocked my ticket" (I10).

The woman in this story was subsequently assisted by the IOM, which facilitated her relocation and provided her with psychosocial support.

In relation to the care received by the women at the time of their departure, Table 14 compiles the information obtained from their accounts.

In the case, the last informant was trafficked for the purpose of labor exploitation to sing in a brothel. According to her statement to IOM, the manager offered to fix her immigration status in exchange for \$1,000. As the woman did not have it, the man told her that she had lost her documents. Some time later she got another job where she was sexually abused by her new employer. She arrived at the immigration offices because her original traffickers, once she left the place, reported her to the immigration authorities (I11).

The stories of women I1 and I11 are clear examples of how the stage of leaving the situation of exploitation can become a high-risk moment for survivors, who are often exposed to revictimization, including by

Table 14. Institutional assistance received by survivors at the exit phase

Informant	Referred help
I1	Traffickers report her to immigration authorities. Apparently along with other women, she was dropped off at the Costa Rican embassy in Mexico and from there they were all deported in a migrant bus to the Guatemalan border. They had no documentation. They made the rest of the return trip on their own.
I2	She was detected by an official of the Costa Rican Embassy in Canada. She said that from the Embassy she was deported to Immigration, where she was in a shelter for several days and from there she was deported to the country without documents. There is no data of specialized attention.
I3	Escape. People from a church helped him buy a return ticket.
I4	Escape. She was helped by unknown persons to reach the police station. She filed a complaint and her care was assumed by the Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (PANI). The case was treated as a case of corruption, trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. She was provided with comprehensive care and shelter.
I5	Rescued in a police operation. Her care was assumed by the Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (PANI). The case was classified as corruption, trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation. She was provided with comprehensive care and shelter.
I6	Escape. Complaint filed with OIJ. Unknown care provided. The case was investigated as a case of trafficking and deportation is inferred.
I7	Rescued in police operation. It is not known how she was treated. The case was investigated as a trafficking case and deportation is inferred. It is not known if PANI intervened.
I8	Rescued in police operation. Complaint filed in OIJ. Unknown care provided. The case was investigated as a case of trafficking and deportation is inferred.
I9	Escape. Complaint filed with OIJ. Unknown care provided. The case was investigated as a case of trafficking and deportation is inferred.
I10	She filed a complaint with the Costa Rican Embassy in Mexico. She was referred to the IOM for attention and reintegration.
I11	She left on her own without documentation. At some point she was detected by the IOM, which provided her with care.

State officials who, instead of helping them, identify them as illegal migrants and not as victims of an international crime. The following is a moving account that exemplifies the high price that trafficked women can pay due to the absence of policies and programs aimed at improving the detection of this crime:

"We were dropped off at the Embassy in Mexico. There they arrived, made a

We were 5 girls (...) we were imprisoned for about 2 days (...) We came together, one disappeared in Guatemala and I don't know anything about her (...) and they threw us like a dog on a bus. And the ambassador. I don't know if she is the same one from so many years ago, maybe it's someone else, but she... As I said, they treat prostitutes very badly, they say they are a zero to the left, they treated us very badly.

wrong. I thought that if they deported us they were going to send us on a plane and not that we were going to be in Guatemala for 6 months, that they were going to rape me in Chiapas, never (...) From Mexico we went to Guatemala, to Chiapas. We were caught and raped in Chiapas (...) Policemen, the policemen raped us. They gave me a venereal disease, gonorrhea. After that we crossed the river and arrived in Guatemala. We stayed in Guatemala for months6 and the same.... I was in Guatemala for 6 months with my friends. One of them got pregnant by a policeman, one of those who raped us. Later she had an abortion. (...) We met some French people and they were the ones who paid the money for us to come. At the Nicaraguan border...I was carrying 2 gold rings and I had to give them to the guards and my friends also gave us their valuable belongings. Because they were going to send us back from Nicaragua to Guatemala because we didn't have papers. And I started crying because I wanted to see my son and I told him that I would give him 2 gold rings but he had to let me go" (I1).

Resettlement and reintegration

In general terms, no information on this stage of trafficking was obtained from most of the accounts studied, mainly because most of them corresponded to interviews conducted at the time of identification. On the other hand, no reports were found on the follow-up of the psychosocial care given to the victims or on their community integration. In some cases, it is not even known whether the victims were reintegrated into their country of origin.

It is known that some survivors received specialized care from national protection agencies during the period in which they remained in the country.

The following story reflects the loneliness, fears and lack of protection and support that survivors face upon returning home after the trafficking experience.

"I received no help, nothing. I went to work in a bar with my godfather and there

I kept trying to raise my son. But nobody was waiting for me at the airport. Today I say that with the experience I have and if it had happened to me today, I imagine that an institution should have been there to support the person... It was up to me alone. I had to face my family. And after

9 hours of flight, taking a 3-hour bus that took me home... arriving and having to tell what was happening to me, and if they believed me or didn't believe me, or if they suffered... It was telling what I had inside me. And for my family to believe me. And something that made me very upset was that I came without a five in half, I arrived as I had left and owing the people who had taken me there (...) Ah, I felt that I had been born again, (...) Talking to them a little more liberated, because it had not only happened to me, but also partly to them, which was my absence, my mother taking care of my little boy... But you could see that my older brother said: "That one (...), that one (...): "I'll kill him, who is he?, Where is he, is he a tico? (I2).

Impact of the experience

Due to the methodological limitations of the present study, the impact of the trafficking experience can only be determined through a process of inference, using as a starting point the knowledge of the traumatic experiences to which the survivors were subjected.

As seen in the following response from one victim to the question of what she considered to be the impact of the experience, it is clear that many survivors do not always immediately recognize the aftermath as being associated with the trafficking experience. This is not to minimize the serious personal and family consequences inherent in the traumatic experience of trafficking:

"I told my best friends what happened to me, and I told them "You know, I tell them so they'll peel their eyeballs, but if I didn't know you were at risk, I wouldn't tell anyone because it's really ugly,

I feel ashamed, I feel silly, and I tell them because I feel it is my duty, it was horrible to be in a room as a prisoner, as if I had done something wrong". Many of my friends also noticed and they were also very angry and one of them said that he went to the disco to see if he could find the guy, because I gave them signs, but he never went, I never heard from him again. My mother cried, she said that she never believed that this would have happened to me, that there would be such a bad person as to take a person like that, to hide his papers...". (I2).

Stigmatization, shame and self-blame are perhaps the most chronic after-effects of the trafficking experience that have been identified. They occur as a consequence of the rejection and condemnation to which society subjects these women victims, due to the lack of knowledge it has about the enslaving experience of human trafficking. Due to this lack of awareness, all responsibility for what happened is placed on the victims and they - who do not escape this cultural and ideological reality - end up assuming as valid this attribution of responsibility that has been made to them. All of these dynamics have a determining influence on women's maintenance of secrecy. And keeping the secret implies living with a psychological, emotional and spiritual cancer that corrodes the women's entrails and prevents them from healing the wounds produced by the trafficking experience.

Other negative consequences that have been identified through the stories collected in this study are the following:

Physical health consequences:

- Those that are a consequence of physical violence. Although they are not reported, there is no evidence of their absence in cases where violence of this type occurred.
- Those associated with sexual and reproductive health: one woman reported infection with gonorrhea as a result of rape during the return period. Two underage women were also reported to have been exposed to HIV-AIDS; they were required to have sexual relations with their partners.

treating physicians who are carriers of the disease, without the use of condoms.

- Induction of substance addiction: in the case of one woman, the forced ingestion of alcohol and substances such as cocaine and barbiturates, subsequently led to an addiction that consumed, according to her, several years of her life.
- Sequelae associated with conditions of food and rest deprivation (not directly referenced, but taken as potential risks not ruled out).

Mental health consequences:

- Consequences associated with sexual violence in all its forms: post-traumatic stress, stigmatization, traumatic sexualization and other specific sequelae of sexual trauma. It is important to note that, except in the case of one woman (I10), all survivors reported having been subjected to direct sexual violence.
- Consequences associated with situations of torture: These are not directly referred to in the accounts, however many women mentioned feelings of great terror and threats to their physical integrity during their captivity, which should be read as psychological torture. Likewise, as has been shown, the conditions of captivity and deprivation of liberty are in themselves extreme conditions that put emotional survival at risk (I6).
"...because at times I feel like I am going crazy, I walk and I feel like there is nothing... I mean, I am not well in my head; I am sure of so many things that have happened to me. Right now I can be talking calmly with you, as I can be crying. Life itself made me be like that ,a very strong, very strong character too strong I think. I don't know, but I do feel that I'm a little bit scared" (I1).

Economic consequences:

Some women reported that they had to sell all their belongings to pay for the initial travel expenses, with the promise of recovering their investment when they arrived at their destination. One of the Dominican women reported that

the friend with whom she came to the country, mortgaged the house in order to pay the recruiter the requested sum. Some also stated that they had quit their jobs to make the trip (I6, I2).

Interpersonal and social consequences:

For many women, trafficking meant uprooting from their community and loved ones during the time of migration. There were also references to the obstacles they faced in reintegrating into their country once they had left exploitation.

4.4.3. Traffickers

In none of their accounts did the women identify the recruitment as having been carried out by an organization. Most of the women acknowledged, once in the destination country, that they had been deceived by the people who recruited them. Although several of these victims even mentioned having witnessed the constant communication that existed between these people and their final exploiters, they were unable to define the workings of a complex organization, due to the limited access to information they had during their time in detention.

From the information extracted from the accounts under study and according to the operation of the traffickers, it can be deduced that these women were trafficked by organizations of two types:

Structured networks, possibly regional

Eight survivors (I1, I2, I3, I6, I7, I8, I9, the experience referred to in file 03, E3) were trafficked by what appears to be an established human trafficking organization for the purpose of sexual exploitation; recruitment was mediated by persons other than the exploiters or trafficking managers and a payment was made for each woman recruited. Some women even reported that at some point they learned that the people who trafficked them had been recruited for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

recruited were engaged in the practice of trafficking in an organized manner:

"Afterwards, he took me to a lady, Marieta, and when she saw me as a minor, she started to sell me and then she offered me to go to Mexico, Canada or Japan. So I told her Mexico because it was closer (...)" (I1).

This woman said in the interview that the Costa Rican pimp who acted as a recruiter continues to recruit women for trafficking purposes 15 years later. She also mentions that she has met two other women who were taken for sexual exploitation to Japan and the United States.

In the case of the four Dominican women (I6, I7, I8, I9) sexually exploited in Costa Rica, all acknowledged that they went to look for the recruiter because they knew that she offered jobs abroad for young women:

"I met a lady named Mary, this is her first name (...) I told her I wanted to travel, since she travels out of the country, not only here to Costa Rica, but to Mexico...she has several connections (...) I only know that she collects the passports and takes care of the paperwork and we have to give her eight thousand Dominican pesos which is equivalent to approximately one thousand forty dollars (On the relationship between the recruiter and her managers in Costa Rica, she responds) (...) they keep in communication. Mary called this week to say that two more Dominicans were coming on Sunday (...) they told me that she has a document or residency here" (I8).

In all cases, as mentioned above, the women were recruited directly by an intermediary. The intermediary was in charge of the travel arrangements (in some cases the victims paid for them) and then they traveled alone, by air, with the exception of informants I2 and the one mentioned in case E3, who traveled in the company of their recruiters.

Subsequent to the transfer, they were exploited by managers of businesses dedicated to the sex trade, where, it is reported, other women subjected to exploitation were passing through. In all cases, the business manager was apparently the direct beneficiary of the exploitation.

It is likely that within this same type of structure we should include the organization through which the woman who was taken to Mexico under conditions of labor exploitation (I11) was taken to Mexico. This is because, although in her case, the apparent purpose was for her to work as a singer in a brothel under conditions of servitude, it is reported that several traffickers were involved in the recruitment and management of her exploitation, namely: a Costa Rican recruiter based in Mexico and the administrator of the business, who also acted as her exploitative beneficiary. No further information is available, however, to determine whether the practice of trafficking was common in this brothel.

Individual and family networks

The remaining three cases correspond to women who were subjected to trafficking by people close to their original context, who used a relationship of trust to carry out the recruitment and, in addition, the exploitation was carried out by themselves or by people who were close to them.

- The two Nicaraguan minors were recruited and sexually exploited by a couple who offered the service privately in their home (I4 and I5).
- The other case corresponds to informant I10, who was recruited by the manager of a large company, who offered a job as a domestic employee in Mexico. In this case, the recruiter took care of the paperwork for the transfer and it is inferred that the manager in Mexico paid the airfare. The exploitation occurred on an individual basis in the administrator's home. It is difficult to determine whether the original recruiter knew about the

working conditions to which the victim would be exposed.

4.4.4. Recommendations women

During the two interviews conducted, the survivors gave some recommendations to other women and to service providers that support victims of trafficking. The most relevant ones are presented below in the survivors' own words.

To women:

"Don't pay attention to these things, don't believe and even less if someone says that he pays you for everything and then they fix it, because things are not that easy. Because what they say is 'Oh, yes, he's going to pay me', and 'How nice this guy is, he pays me everything, how interested he is in helping me, he's going to give me my passport and everything'. Because that's what I said (...) I told my best friends what happened to me, and I told them 'You know, I tell them so that they peel their eyes, but if I didn't know that you were at risk, I wouldn't tell anyone because it's very ugly, I feel ashamed, I feel silly, and I tell them because I feel it's my duty, it was horrible to be in a room like a prisoner, as if I had done something bad' (I2).

To the borrowing institutions:

"The government should pay more attention to this problem, because there are women who are very lively but have fallen into that (...)" (I2).

"I would have liked someone to come and sit down and talk to me. If they had given me information as it should be, I would not have fallen for that. But in Costa Rica there is none, (...) but here in Costa Rica I had not heard of anyone advising you, the parents" (I1).

"And when I realized that I had lived that situation, it was years after I was here, that I heard about white slavery, human trafficking and all that. And I thought that I had already lived that situation, trafficking. I didn't even know what it was called. (...) But

When that happened to me, it never crossed my mind that it existed, or that it could happen to me. I thought I was going to come with a lot of money to help my mother and build a house for my son and me. But in the news, for example, I never saw it" (I2).

4.5. Institutions providing public sector services

The institutions considered in this study were chosen strategically for their relevance and the role they should play according to their institutional profile in the care of trafficked persons and crime prevention. These institutions were:

1. Ministry of the Interior and Police and Public Security.
2. Ministry of Health.
3. Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
4. General Directorate of Immigration and Foreigners.
5. Judiciary.
 - a. Public Prosecutor's Office. Office of attention to the victim.
 - b. Public Prosecutor's Office. Office of Sexual Offenses.
 - c. OIJ. Office of miscellaneous crimes.
6. National Institute of Women.

For a better understanding, the most important results obtained for each borrowing institution are shown in tables of results, which can be consulted in the annexes.

From the information provided by the personnel interviewed in the public entities, it is clear that the issue of human trafficking, in general, and trafficking in women, in particular, are new, little known even by the heads of the institutions and that, in the cases where there are programs to address the issue, they have been developing only incipiently in the last year.

Regarding the experience in care, all the institutions presented difficulties in clearly defining the prevalence of the survivor population, fundamentally

due to the lack of conceptual clarity about trafficking in women and, therefore, to the lack of specific policies for its detection and attention.

The Judiciary and INAMU, whose direct assistance agencies have begun to take an interest in the detection of trafficking victims, although still in a very embryonic way, deviate from this line.

INAMU has provided training for some of its officials from the Women's Delegation and COAVIF, who are involved in the direct care of women victims of gender violence; however, this has not been a homogeneous practice with respect to all officials, nor are there institutional protocols specifically for dealing with victims. Likewise, there are no clear records of the cases dealt with up to the time of this study.

In the case of the Judicial Branch, whose prosecutors reported that they were in the process of training on the subject, some criminal cases were still under investigation; however, at the time of this study, there was no statistical record of the attention provided to the population of victims of trafficking. It is possible that many of the investigations have been oriented to follow cases for other criminal offenses, given the normative limitations that exist in the country, and therefore have not been identified as cases of trafficking in persons. Likewise, the lack of an institutional guideline that articulates the specific efforts that some prosecutors' offices have been developing in this area in an isolated manner is also noteworthy. This has operated to the detriment of the attention, which has not been assumed in a specialized and centralized manner and has tended to be centralized in the metropolitan area.

In the other agencies involved in direct attention to victims, training efforts were reported, mainly in the area of detection and approach in the first instance, for officials of the Ministry of Public Security and the Government: Public Force, Migration Police and Community Police.

This is also the situation of Ministry of Health personnel, who do not yet have an institutional policy to guide the detection and care of this population in health services throughout the country.

Regarding ongoing institutional services and programs, the training of civil servants is the most important strategy being developed in the country. The target population for training activities varies according to each institution, and in most cases their choice responds to the commitments assumed in the context of the National Coalition.

At the time of this study, no institution had a specific policy in place. There were a few isolated initiatives financed by international organizations, such as the project of the Embassy of Switzerland and INAMU, and the cooperation project of the Embassy of the United States and the Judicial Branch.

In addition to the training work, the following services or actions were found to be under development:

1. The Ministry of Public Security and the Interior stated that it is in the process of mapping risk zones and routes nationwide.
2. The Directorate General of Migration and Alien Affairs was in the process of building a database on Costa Rican victims of human trafficking; it is working jointly with the Judicial School on the new Migration Law and is also finalizing a Repatriation Protocol in conjunction with the IOM.
3. INAMU carries out actions aimed at prevention (campaign directed at women) and the development of a new protocol for the Operational Center for Attention to Domestic Violence, COAVIF.

The most outstanding limitations of public service providers that were detected are the following:

- Limited political will to work in this field.

- Lack of training on the issue of trafficking in women at all levels of the institutions.
- Lack of institutional intervention guidelines and protocols
- Lack of human resources.
- Lack of budget to implement actions.
- Lack of a national diagnosis of the trafficking situation.
- Lack of knowledge of the work carried out by other public institutions involved in solving this problem, and weak inter-institutional coordination.

4.6. Private sector service provider institutions

This group included civil society organizations and international agencies active in the country. These were:

1. Rahab Foundation.
2. CIDEHUM, International Center for Human Rights for Migrants.
3. ASTRADOMES, Association of Domestic Workers.
4. Caritas Costa Rica.
5. IOM, International Organization for Migration.

In each of the agencies, as was done with respect to public sector service providers, individual interviews were conducted with key officials. In the cases of the organizations ASTRADOMES, Caritas and CIDEHUM, the information obtained was very limited because, in general terms, they were not working on the issue of human trafficking at the time of this research. Thus, for the purposes of this research, only the experiences of the IOM and the Rahab Foundation will be analyzed in detail.

Rahab Foundation

This Foundation has been developing a comprehensive care project for trafficked persons in the Pacific region.

Trafficking in Persons in Asia.

The project's main objective is to develop a central program called *"Prevention, Protection and Care for Victims of Trafficking in the Central Pacific Region of Costa Rica"* that takes into account the cantons of Parrita, Quepos, Garabito, Esparza and Puntarenas.

This is a project executed under the technical and financial management of the IOM (Regional Office for Central America and Mexico) with resources from the United States Government and with a duration of 2 years (it will conclude in July 2008).

The area of execution of this project was selected for three main reasons: a) because of the development of tourism in the area and its link to sexual exploitation; b) because of its proximity to migratory routes conducive to the smuggling of migrants; and c) because it is an area identified as a destination for internal trafficking.

The general objective of this project is to "promote awareness and training processes to promote prevention, protection and care for victims of trafficking", and has three components: a) assistance to victims; b) development of preventive actions; and c) promotion of inter-institutional coordination processes to improve the assistance response. The assistance offered includes psychological and legal support and attention to basic needs.

Although this project is not specific to the care of adult women victims of trafficking, during its development it has managed to systematize relevant information on trafficking in women in the region and in the country and has provided assistance to victims of this crime. Fundación Rahab is the only private entity identified in this study that offers comprehensive care to adult women victims of human trafficking.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The International Organization for Migration began discussing the issue of human trafficking in Asia as early as the year 1946. In Central America, the issue began to be discussed around the year 1997, when the IOM became a participating organization in the Conference on

Regional Migration Commission, which brings together all the countries of Central America, North America and the Dominican Republic.

This political platform made it possible for the IOM to develop studies on migration issues, specifically on human smuggling and, albeit marginally, human trafficking in the region. The first approaches made the problem visible in the region, and IOM was asked by the political authorities to provide technical support for the development of diagnoses and training programs.

In compliance with this commitment, the IOM -through the Unit against Trafficking and Smuggling of Persons for Central America and Mexico- has been developing training workshops aimed at institutional strengthening, especially for migration officials and service providers to migrants. The main objective so far has been training in the identification of trafficked persons.

As part of its work, the IOM has been developing inter-institutional training sessions²⁰⁰⁵ since the beginning, through the creation in each country of coalitions made up of state institutions and civil society organizations. The coalitions currently operate in the countries with internal coordination exercised by national institutions, and are strengthened by the creation of action plans drawn up on the basis of participatory workshops.

Specifically for the case of Costa Rica, IOM has been working on:

- Institutional strengthening through the training of government and civil society officials, with a view to creating the necessary internal response network in each country to deal with the situation.
- The formulation and publication of a *Psychosocial Intervention Guide for victims of trafficking*, aimed at service providers.
- Diagnostic consultancies on existing regulations on human trafficking in the country.

- The technical strengthening of some immediate attention agencies, such as 911, INAMU and PANI, through training in this area.
- A project, in conjunction with the Ricky Martin Foundation, to strengthen the care of unaccompanied migrant children or victims of human trafficking, implemented in partnership with PANI and the Emergency System. 911.
- The implementation of a project on attention to and prevention of trafficking in adult women in conjunction with the Central American Feminist Network against Violence against Women and INAMU, and with the financial support of the Swiss Embassy. This project includes awareness-raising activities on trafficking in women aimed at organizations that work with migrants, grassroots women's organizations, youth leaders and promoters of the National Council of Young People, as well as a media campaign on trafficking in women.
- Encouragement of coalition building and regular technical support.
- Assisted return program for victims of human trafficking in the region.
- Support in the field of training.

As can be seen, among the private entities considered in this study, only one, the Rahab Foundation, offers comprehensive care to victims of trafficking, including adult women, although all of them have some knowledge of the existence of the problem. The other entity that is truly uninvolved is an international organization, limited, therefore, in its functions and attributions at the national level.

The most important limitation for the Rahab Foundation's assistance work has to do with its real possibilities of sustainability, since it only depends on an international cooperation project that is being implemented. However, according to the findings of this study, it is the organization with the most experience in assisting women victims of human trafficking.

It is in the process of providing comprehensive care to the victims that these

institutions have established contact with public entities and have been able to learn from their own experience about the obstacles faced by the women they have accompanied in search of support.

Among these obstacles, the following were noted:

- Absence of a gender focus:

"The global debate on the issue of trafficking has no gender analysis. In fact, the women's movement is absent almost everywhere in the world... the objective is how to integrate the women's approach both institutionally and in the civil sector into the trafficking debate" (OM5).

- Ignorance and minimization of the problem of trafficking in persons and women in the country by public authorities:

"...at the institutional level there is talk that there is no trafficking in this country; for example, a head of the regional delegation of the OIJ, says that he does not even require specialized investigators in the issue of trafficking, that this is a waste of resources because the reports of trafficking do not come in every day or every month, and that then there would be periods of the year in which his investigators would be doing nothing. This is not only a cultural issue, it is a question of apathy for difficult issues, lack of political commitment" (OM4).

- Lack of investigation and follow-up of complaints and impunity:

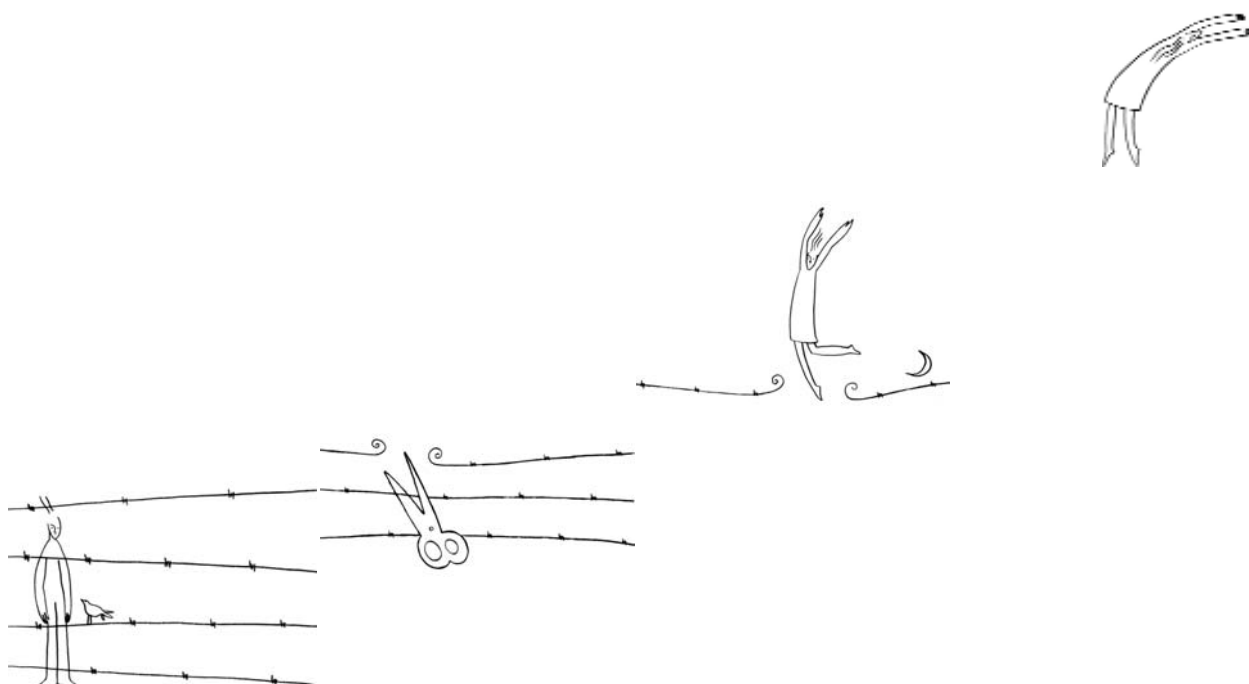
"...because in..., for example, it is known in plain sight where the clandestine houses are, which are houses that on the outside are nothing but inside they have girls for commercial sexual exploitation. So, what do we need for the police to be able to go in there and take these girls and give them attention? I don't really understand what it takes for that to happen, but I see it as so simple. When I go to PANI and I tell them "You should see that the police don't want to do anything about this, there is a clandestine place where there are girls....". And they tell me "Oh...! We can't do anything there... (OM4).

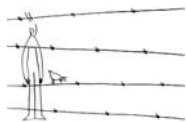
- Limitations related to regulations: From the point of view of the informants, there is both the need to guarantee the application of the current law and the need to reform it to include all modalities of human trafficking and not only trafficking for sexual exploitation, as well as internal trafficking. There is also an urgent need for legislation to protect victims and witnesses.

"...a very big weakness is the incipient legislation that has not yet been implemented.

allowed to sanction more than one case, which is not the case in other countries" (OM5).

- Revictimizing institutional processes:
"...When they have made raids what they find are irregular women, they take them, take them to San José and deport them...it is easier to get rid of the lump...besides the woman is taken as a woman who comes from outside and who knew what she was coming for and that what she is causing is more social problems...that women prostitutes bring drugs, robberies..." (OM4).





5 CONCLUSIONS

This section includes, on the one hand, the conclusions related to the methodological approach and, on the other hand, those that refer directly to the subject of the study.

5.1. Conclusions related to the methodological approach

The need to make the original methodological design more flexible responded to the conditions encountered in the field work, where access to primary sources is still very limited. It is important to say that none of the changes made affect the reliability and validity of the information.

The most important obstacles encountered in the application of the methodological design are indicated below:

- The absence of documentation and systematization in the institutions, both on the subject and on the work carried out or being carried out in this field. It follows that the reconstruction of the route followed by the different institutions presented in this document constitutes a first systematic approach to this topic.
- The existence of contradictions in the identification of cases in the institution in charge of detection, which reflects the novelty of the issue of trafficking and the recentness of its knowledge. This situation makes statistics on prevalence generally unreliable and shows the need to create common instruments for the identification of cases and the systematization of information.
- Access to survivors is still limited. In cases that have currently been detected or are in the process of being detected, access to survivors is still limited.

In the investigation process, the victims are placed in conditions of extreme vulnerability, which did not allow an approach to them.

In addition to the particularities mentioned above, a very important limitation of this research can be pointed out: territorial representativeness, since it only considers the vision of institutional representatives established in San José. This is truly relevant, since it is precisely the officials working at the borders who have received the most training and have specific experience in dealing with the problems of trafficking in women.

5.2. Conclusions on the research findings

Human trafficking is a problem in Costa Rica, although its dimensions and characteristics are not clearly known. The lack of information is even greater in relation to the trafficking of adult women.

The problem has only recently been incorporated into the public agenda and that of civil society organizations, and this implies, for example, that there is still not enough clarity about the concept and its differentiation from that of human trafficking, and that there is no legislation that covers both internal and external trafficking, nor institutional records of cases. The lack of knowledge of the specific characteristics of the problem in the country is evident in the institutional weaknesses related to its approach, which inevitably affects the victims of this crime.

The limited nature of prosecution and punishment of traffickers is of concern, as well as the

impunity that they enjoy. For example, with the data collected in this research, it is possible to realize that there is a significant percentage of human trafficking cases that enter the Costa Rican judicial system, but do not reach the trial stage, presumably due to difficulties in the investigation stage. It was pointed out by the borrowers interviewed that this crime is not prosecuted as a transnational crime in the technical-specialized sense. In addition, the absence of legal mechanisms and other types of protection for victims and witnesses limits reporting.

Lack of knowledge or little information about this crime is most evident among the general population, which has difficulty in differentiating trafficking from smuggling or, for example, in identifying the differences between voluntary and forced prostitution. This has become evident through the experience of the consulted non-governmental organizations, which have encountered this particular difficulty when working with directly affected communities. This lack of knowledge has led to the naturalization of the problem, the attribution of responsibility to the victims and their stigmatization and, therefore, to the inhibition of denunciation.

The stories of women survivors of trafficking included in this report provide insight into some of the characteristics of the development of the problem in the country.

A first hypothesis confirmed by this research is that **Costa Rica is a country of destination and origin** of human trafficking. It is also important to point out that the research yields sufficient information to consider that Costa Rican territory is being used by international trafficking networks as a space to legalize the migratory status of foreign women victims, for example, through the use of the figure of marriage by proxy, or through false marriages, and **as a bridge** for the transfer of these victims to other countries and continents where they will be exploited.

Although it is impossible to construct a typology of victims in terms of age, previous occupation or educational level, it is possible to say

that the testimonies show the presence of some conditions of vulnerability of the victims in all cases: for example, a history of domestic or sexual violence, poverty, development in contexts of alcoholism, abandonment by parents, and life on the street.

From the information gathered by this research, it can also be concluded that the trafficking networks operating in the country have complex structures, involving people of diverse origins and occupations, and that they may even be international in nature, with contacts in several countries in the Americas, Europe and Asia. The violence with which the trafficking networks operate makes the danger to victims extreme. The degree of vulnerability to which they are exposed, either because the trafficking is unknown or because it has been made invisible, reaches a similar magnitude.

On the other hand, the deficiencies of Costa Rican authorities and those of other receiving and transit countries with respect to the care provided to victims are evident. In destination countries - including Costa Rica - the prevailing intervention approach is usually the same as that provided to any person in an irregular migratory situation. One of these mechanisms of invisibilization is the identification of victims as "irregular migrants", which diverts attention to another problem, leaves the crime of trafficking in impunity, and implies that victims are treated as criminals responsible for the whole process of victimization experienced. The actions taken are generally the deportation to the country of origin or only the transfer to the nearest border for their exit from the national territory. This lack of specific attention to the crime exposes women to new cycles of mistreatment and even exploitation or recapture by the networks.

Among the most important conclusions, and according to the suggestions of the victims, is the urgent need to provide comprehensive care for these women, so that the solutions cover all their needs: social, economic, emotional, emotional, and security. It is also worth emphasizing

the need for the government's response to be coordinated, both among its own agencies and with civil society organizations, with the aim of implementing a decentralized action plan covering the entire national territory.

Despite these problems, it is recognized that the Costa Rican government has made important efforts to address the problem, such as the creation of the National Coalition against the smuggling of migrants. Although it has been slow, progress is visible and it is hoped that the Coalition will continue to influence Costa Rican society to confront this problem, since one of its main strengths is that it is made up of institutions from the public and private sectors and international organizations, which allows for complementarity of visions and actions.

Another positive step taken by the Costa Rican government is the incorporation of the issue of human trafficking into the National Development Plan 2006-2010, in the *"Policy Axis 1: Improvement of the country's comprehensive security through the control and prevention of violence and the commission of crime"*. It establishes a strategic action called: "Interinstitutional and intersectoral action plan aimed at preventing, combating, punishing and eradicating human trafficking"¹². It is hoped that its inclusion in this national governmental planning framework will be a means to guarantee the effective fulfillment of the obligation of public institutions to combat human trafficking.

Notwithstanding these achievements, one of the most important conclusions of this research is that existing public policies lack a gender focus that recognizes and identifies the specific characteristics of trafficking in women (particularly adult women) and the particular needs that derive from them in terms of care and prevention, and that, therefore, adequately operationalizes the response of the institutions.

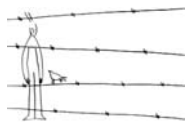
Training of personnel on the issue of trafficking is the main action being carried out by government agencies. Although it is positive, the fact that it does not go beyond this type of actions, denotes the absence of institutional policies for the treatment of the crime. Efforts to provide proper attention to victims are isolated and do not meet the necessary criteria of specificity, depth and comprehensiveness.

Other limitations perceived through the consultation with public service provider institutions were the limited political will to work on the issue, the lack of trained human resources, the scarcity of economic resources and the difficulties of inter-institutional coordination.

In private institutions, the issue has not been addressed in depth either. According to the research conducted, only one of the institutions included in this study works specifically to address trafficking in women, through a project financed by international cooperation. This dependence on international funding constitutes a serious limitation for moving forward in this line of action and for the sustainability of the care offered, as it imposes time and economic limits.

On the other hand, civil society organizations, in an effort to provide comprehensive care to victims, have tried to seek support from government institutions; however, they have come up against major obstacles, which are the same as those faced by women who try to seek help from these entities. These include the absence of a gender perspective, lack of knowledge and minimization of the problem, lack of investigation and follow-up of complaints, impunity of offenders, gaps in legislation, and the existence of revictimizing institutional processes.

¹² National Coalition against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants in Costa Rica. Proposal for the inclusion of actions in the National Development Plan 2006-2010. Annual Institutional Programming Matrix (MAPI). 2008.



6

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. General recommendations

- Follow up on the recommendations made by the CEDAW Committee when it considered the combined initial, second and third periodic report and the fourth periodic report of Costa Rica (CEDAW/C/CRI/1-EN).

3 and CEDAW/C/CRI/4) at its 612th, 613th and 619th meetings, held on July 2 and 9, 2003 (see CEDAW/C/SR.612, and 613619); specifically:

26. *The Committee takes note of the Government's efforts to combat sexual exploitation and forced prostitution, through the enactment of the Law against Sexual Exploitation of Minors, the creation of the Sexual Offences Prosecutor's Office and the Sexual Exploitation Unit of the Ministry of Public Security. However, the Committee notes with concern that at the political or judicial decision-making levels and, in general, in Costa Rican society, there does not seem to be awareness of the social and cultural implications of the crime of trafficking in persons and sexual exploitation of women and girls.*

27. *The Committee requests the State party to strengthen actions to combat trafficking in persons and sexual exploitation of women and girls, and to raise awareness among all sectors of Costa Rican society, in particular judicial and public security authorities, parents and educators, to implement measures to prevent the sexual exploitation of children, adolescents and adults. It is also recommended that vigorous measures be taken against the trafficking of women and girls, and the revision, if necessary, of the following*

The existing institutions responsible for addressing this problem, encouraging the participation of and collaboration with interested non-governmental organizations.

- Promote the necessary regulatory reform to ensure better and more effective prosecution of the crime of trafficking in persons in all its forms, including internal trafficking.
- Promote the enactment of specific legislation for the protection of victims and witnesses of human trafficking as well as a protocol for the repatriation of adult victims of human trafficking.
- Take advantage of previous inter-institutional action and planning experiences in the areas of domestic violence (PLANOVI) and sexual exploitation of minors (CONACOE), in order to make use of the lessons learned and the results of the various public strategies used in both cases, as well as the country's infrastructure of grassroots organizations.
- To strengthen inter-institutional coordination through the Coalition against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, in order to unify the conceptual orientation and the strategy for addressing these problems in all participating instances and, specifically, to ensure that the gender approach is adopted, so that they are treated in a manner that takes into account their specificity, in the National Coalition and in all the institutions that are part of it.
- Ensure that a gender perspective is adopted in all public institutions that can contribute to the comprehensive care of women victims.

This would lead to having public services that guarantee them due protection and security and specialized professional accompaniment in the necessary fields, and that have protocolized procedures for repatriation processes in cases of international trafficking. This would also imply designing national policies to support the resettlement and reintegration of survivors of trafficking, both nationals and foreigners.

- Develop and institutionalize awareness-raising and training processes on the problem of human trafficking in general, and trafficking in women specifically, in all public institutions involved in dealing with these problems. Pay special attention to public officials who are potentially exposed to the care of trafficking victims, as well as to personnel working in non-governmental organizations.
- Promote the design and application of inter-institutional intervention protocols for cases of human trafficking in order to avoid re-victimizing processes or those that place victims at additional risk.
- To deepen specific research on trafficking in persons and trafficking in women, in order to continue generating new knowledge in the country and develop the best and most effective methodologies to address the issue. Stimulate the work in thematic roundtables and case studies, relying on the contribution of each of the participating entities, their specificity and knowledge.
- Conduct regular information and awareness-raising campaigns in the mass media that contribute to social education on the problem of human trafficking and prevention among at-risk populations. At the same time, allocate the necessary institutional human and budgetary resources to meet the demand that is expected to be generated.

6.2. Recommendations for the Administration of Justice

- Promote the issuance of specific guidelines from the Supreme Court of Justice and the Public Prosecutor's Office for judicial intervention in cases of trafficking in persons and trafficking in women.
- Promote the incorporation and active participation of the Office of Attention to Victims and the Technical Secretariat of Gender of the Judiciary in the National Coalition against Trafficking in Persons.
- Ensure that the follow-up of reports of the crime of human trafficking is carried out with a focus on organized crime, and that it is undertaken jointly by specialized intelligence and investigation units.
- Promote training and specialization in the specific field of human trafficking for officials directly involved in the prosecution of the crime: judicial police and prosecutors.
- Promote the inclusion of the topic of human trafficking in the regular courses of the Judicial School and, specifically, in the training of criminal judges.

6.3. Recommendations for the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security

- Promote the training and specialization of police officers throughout the country, including community police, police and immigration officers.
- Develop a protocol for police intervention and immigration intervention in cases of human trafficking in general and trafficking in women specifically.
- Revise the rules of operation and organization of the Alien Securing Center, in order to guarantee a private, secure and independent space.

for migrants who may be potential victims of human trafficking -especially women- during the process of detection and clarification of their actual condition.

- Promote regional coordination among migration and police agencies in order to establish uniform policies and controls that make it possible to identify traffickers and limit transit through the region's borders.

6.4. Recommendations for the Ministry of Health

- Include in the National Health Care System and in the national protocols and guidelines where relevant, the specificity of trafficking in women, in order to guarantee the care of the victimized population and the development of prevention and awareness actions in the communities.
- Include the issue of trafficking in persons and women, and the responsibilities and functions related to these crimes, in regular staff training processes.

6.5. Recommendations for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Develop specific norms and protocols to guide the intervention of Costa Rican diplomatic representations abroad in relation to trafficking in persons and women.
- Include the issue of trafficking in persons and women and the responsibilities and functions related to these crimes in regular staff training processes.

6.6. Recommendations for the National Women's Institute

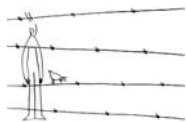
- Promote the inclusion of the issue of trafficking in women as an axis of intervention.

The company's activities for the prevention of and attention to violence against women and in all specific areas of inter-institutional intervention are carried out on a regular basis.

- Provide training to ensure that the gender approach is adopted and enforced, as well as the development of specific public policies aimed at the prevention and comprehensive care of trafficking in women in the country.
- Strengthen the Gender Violence Area with human and budgetary resources so that it can follow up on specific public policies on trafficking in women.
- To ensure that women victims of human trafficking are cared for in the institution's regular services.

6.7. Recommendations for private institutions and international organizations

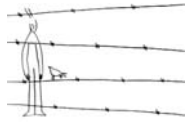
- Strengthen advocacy work to promote the approach to the problem of trafficking in women in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, and to promote the development of state and institutional policies with a gender perspective and from the perspective of violence against women.
- Promote the development of prevention and community education campaigns among women, aimed at crime prevention.
- Promote and stimulate the development of specific research on trafficking in women in the country.
- Train its staff and incorporate the vision of the specificity of trafficking in women into the institution's regular services and programs.
- Urge international organizations and cooperating agencies to provide permanent support to both governmental and non-governmental institutions to address the problem.



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ANNEXES

#	Age	Nac.	Previous and current occupation	Longitudinal background	Transit treaters	Media	Place treatments	Time of treatment	End of trafficking	Operating conditions	Egress	Most important sequelae	Source
1	Trata 17 years. Age 32	CR	Sex worker. Current domestic employee	Illiteracy. Labor exploitation by parents, prostitution in the family, incest and alcoholism. Mother sells her as a child and starts prostitution. Victim of domestic violence. Poverty.	Costa Rican female pimp. She acts as a recruiter and counterfeiter. He knows her as a friend. Knows that this woman traffics other women to Japan and the U.S. and continues to be linked to trafficking. Air transit alone. In Mexico, a relationship is established with the house manager.	In-gurati on working conditions. Debt servitud e.	Mexico	8 m	Sexual exploitation in a house with other women in the 100 women	Isolation absolute Theft of documents, clothes, money. Confinement for travel debt. Theft of 60% of profit. Drug administration.	Trafficker reports her to immigration authorities Embassy takes her out of Mexico and leaves her without papers in Guatemala. She spends months6 trying to return. It is never detected as a victim.	Alcoholism and drug addiction Post-traumatic stress. Rape and STD infection by authorities during the exit route. Difficulties in interpersonal linkage. Loss of bond with child.	Interview
2	Trata 20 years. Age 46	CR	He worked in a factory. She is currently working as a saleswoman in a market where she	Complete elementary school. Witness to domestic violence.	Recruiter and apparent counterfeiter and intermediary: man he meets in bar. Air transit with him. In the destination there is a male receiver and an administrator who pays the former for the woman.	In-gaño. He offers him a job painting house s. Ame-naza. Debt servitud e.	Canada	3 m	Sexual exploitation in whorehouses	Confinement for travel debt. Solitary confinement in a room. Total theft of earnings. Prohibition to talk to other women. Atemo- rized for threatening to kill family members.	A woman who was allowed to leave was deported and an official introduced himself as a client. She was deported accompanied.	Not addressed.	Interview
3	Treat s or 17 18 years Age tes- tim. 26 years	CR	Callejiza	Incomplete primary. Ex- trem poverty. Alcoho- lism father and child labor exploitation. Homelessness Teenage pregnancy Incest. Domestic violence.	Recruit and fake: unknown person offering you a trip. Air traffic alone. She is met at the airport by two armed men. Kept under guard by men. No further information.	In-gaño. He offers you work as a maid. Use of force	Mexico	1 m and 15 days	Sexua l exploitation	Open confinement with armed surveillance. Extremely violent environment. Deprivation of food and exhausting working hours. Absolute lack of communication.	She escapes with the help of a guard who lets her out for fear of being killed. She is helped by particulars.	Specific sequelae are not addressed in his testimony.	Testimony compiled by Funda- tion Rahab

#	Age	Nac.	Previous and current occupation	Longitudinal background	Transit treaters	Media	Place treats	Time of trafficking	End of trafficking	Operating conditions	Egress	Most important sequelae	Source
4	Trata 12 years Textile 12 years	NIC	Student. Unknown.	Completed elementary school. Witness and victim of domestic violence. Alcoholic mother. Growing up with physically abusive surrogate figures. Sexual Abuse	Couple, Costa Rican man (in the license plate business) and Nicaraguan woman (teacher). They are recruited in Nicaragua from the community where they know their families. The older one took care of the trafficker's mother. They manage them themselves in CR. Transit under high-risk conditions, border crossing without papers in the trunk of the vehicle.	Deception based on a relationship of trust. They offer care and better jobs. Abuse of position of vulnerability. Use of force. Debt servitude .	CR	18 days	Sexual exploitation, in private home. Contact with wealthy people is made by cell phone. Men visit the house. It is mentioned that during the stay there were other minors of and 17, 14 under 18 years of age. 13 years. At the time of capture they had gone to Nicaragua.	In condition of sexual servitude. With high levels of physical and emotional violence. Food deprivation and alcohol administration as control mechanisms. Isolation and prohibition of free transit. She is injected with a contraceptive. Both traffickers corrupt through pornography and "family" orgies.	The young woman escapes during a walk and files a complaint. It is served by PANI and then referred to a shelter.	Alcohol exposure. Exposure to pornography and rape by trafficker. They do not get to exploit it with other men. Physical violence.	Testimonials taken from the criminal case file against traffickers for aggravated pimping, trafficking, corruption, among others. During the jurisdictional preview, the young minor requested the presence of the traffickers and withdrew. As of 2006, there was no sentence.
5	Trata 16 Textile 16 years	NIC	Domestic services at the trafficker's mother's house. Student.	Completed elementary school. Witness to domestic violence. Child domestic work, begging.			CR	50 days		Sexual servitude. Sex in exchange for light, water and food. Physical violence and isolation. Exposure to alcohol and drugs. She was forced to have unprotected sex with HIV-infected traffickers.	It is detected following a complaint filed by a minor 12. Currently in shelter.	Alcohol and drug exposure. Exposure to HIV infection. Corruption.	
6	Trata 33 years Textile 33 years	DOM	Services domestic	There are no data.	Recruiter: Woman in dominicana offered jobs in other countries (also in Mexico). counteracting and intermediation. Apparently paid ticket by administrator in CR with which the communicated by telephone. The business was administered by man and woman (also	Deception offered work in restaurant with high pay. Debt servitude .	CR	4 days	Captivity due to transfer debt. Payment by tokens, with commission to the administrator. They paid a fine for refusing to provide "service". They paid a fine for refusing to provide "service". The debt was to be settled through sex with the trafficker. Theft of documents upon arrival.	Captivity due to transfer debt. Payment by tokens, with commission to the administrator. They paid a fine for refusing to provide "service". The debt was to be settled through sex with the trafficker. Theft of documents upon arrival.	Leakage by the mounting-na. Posterior denounces.	There is no data	Testimonial in the capacity of complainant. It is known judgment of the third chamber annulling the accusatory sentence against woman dominicana related with dealer for lack of test and possible victimization. Man in leakage.
7	Trata 15 years Textile 15 years	DOM	Unknown	No data available.	exploited, with whom she had an apparent romantic relationship). The woman is in charge of transit international, exploit-	Same as above.	CR	5 days	Same as above.	Same as above.	Search by immigration authorities following a complaint.	No data	Same file as above. Testimony in jurisdictional advance in the capacity of witness.
8	Trata 21 years Textile 21 years	DOM	Nurse	There are no data.	sexual-mind, he charged rarely. The main dealer was the man. International transit alone.	Deception work of waitress. Servitude for debt.	CR	5 days	Same previous. Add that administrator charged customers 3,000 colones per hour and he would let himself be 1,000. They were given tokens for every	Same as above. He adds that administrator charged customers 3,000 colones per hour and he would let himself be 1,000. They were given tokens for every	Allana- by authority status following a complaint.	There is no data.	Same previous.

The experience of trafficked women in Central America and the Dominican Republic and the performance of institutions

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#	Age	Nac.	Previous and current occupation	Longitudinal background	Transit treaters	Media	Place treats	Time of trafficking	End of trafficking	Operating conditions	Egress	Most important sequelae	Source
									token for every two clients, worth 2000 colones. For 1 man he charged everything.				
9	Trata 22 years Witness 22 years	DOM	Unknown	No data available.	Same as above. Knows recruiter in place of origin, does not clarify.	Deception work in homes. Debt servicing	CR	4 days	Same as above.	Same as above.	Leakage	No data available.	Testimony as complainant.
10	Trata 50 years Test 50 years	CR	No data	They do not refer to	Friend contacts recruiter, male, 50 years old, manager, Costa Rican, who arranged her papers (visa for 20 days and passport), wrote letter about training in destination country, lent money and accompanied her to the Transit airport alone. Upon arrival, a Colombian man, 40 years old, is waiting for her and takes her to his house as a maid.	Deception. He offers you to work in domestic services. He offered a salary of \$400 and airfare was paid by the recruiter's company. Servitude for debt.	Mexico	2 m	Labor exploitation domestic type.	Strenuous work days (from 5:00 AM to 9:00 AM). PM) with absolute availability, without overtime recognition (working Sundays). Illegal immigration status. He is never paid, he is told he will be paid when he returns to CR. Had to stay working for a year to pay for airfare. They blocked his return ticket. With exit restrictions and no money.	She left with the support of friends. In embassy Consul General of CR, intervened to free ticket, called the trafficker's house and he told him that she had committed robbery. With international support from IOM.	No data provided.	Testimony compiled by IOM in 2006.
11	Trata 32 years Best 32 years	CR	Singer	Incomplete university studies. History of violence in his childhood. Psychiatric history.	A friend of a band member gives her contact information of a CR man, living in Mexico, 40-50 years old. This man contacts her by phone to travel as a singer. He pays for transportation. Transit alone on 2 occasions. First attempt she is detained and raped by immigration agents. This man exploits her for labor exploitation in Mexico, along with a hotel owner.	Deception , you are offered D11000. salary, all inclusive. The contra- so in brothel as a singer. e.	Mexico	—	Exploitation at work as a singer in a bar.	She is taken to a brothel and forced to sing for 4 hours without rest to pay for the trip. Deprivation of food. Sexual harassment and threats due to immigration status. Her documents are stolen under false pretenses and then she is denounced by traffickers to the immigration authorities.	It is not clear about the outflow. It is detected by IOM who provide support.	Post-traumatic stress due to rape during transit. Exposure to sexual harassment by trafficker.	Testimony compiled by IOM.

APPENDIX Summary2. of interviews with public service providers

2.1. Ministry of the Interior and Police and Public Security

Institution	He is in charge of the Directorate of Migration and Alien Affairs. Currently and since the agreement of the agreement, he is 2007, the coordinator of the National Coalition against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants.
Experience in customer service victims of trafficking	Migration only knows of the experience of a boat with recently identified easterners. The people were approached by Migration and Alien Affairs, as well as by PANI. Most of them are currently at the Migration Shelter awaiting resources to proceed with their repatriation. The minors were taken care of by PANI.
Services and programs offered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In general terms, a review of the institution's gender protocols is being carried out. 2. Training strategies are being developed for law enforcement, both with the migration police and the community police, to reinforce prevention and identification work. 3. In coordination with the Public Security Forces, a unit of persons⁶ is being established to map the routes and risk zones. The interest of the mapping is to use it together with data related to drug trafficking and arms trafficking, in order to work in the areas of prevention and detection. In a second phase, it is intended to introduce the mapping in the databases of the recently created police intelligence unit, LADIPOL, with the objective of making the mapping more functional at the level of the OIJ and the Public Prosecutor's Office. 4. Resources: Migrant shelter.
Identified strengths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For years, minimum standards have been developed for these officials, as well as training programs in related areas by the Ministries of Finance, Government and Health, which have resulted in more sensitive personnel in these positions. 2. Logistical and technical support from international organizations or civil society, such as the support received from the IOM for the implementation of national actions in this area within of the National Coalition.
Limitations identified	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low budget: this is not a priority issue. 2. Little political interest in the subject. 3. Division among the State's collegiate institutions.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen existing state infrastructure before creating new ones. - Conduct a diagnosis of the trafficking situation in the country.

2.2. Ministry of Health

Institution	<p>It coordinates the attention and policy in this area at the national level.</p> <p>The institution has been working in the area of trafficking in persons since 2007.</p>
Experience in assisting victims of trafficking	No cases have yet been identified and there is no record of cases attended.
Services and programs offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the time of the interview, the Ministry does not offer any specific program on trafficking in persons in general, nor on trafficking in women in particular. They have been working on the issue of trafficking in two programs: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protocol, carried out in conjunction with the Governor's Office-IOM. 2. Follow-up to the Action Plan against Human Trafficking and Human Smuggling, developed by the National Coalition. <p>Work has also been carried out in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequacy of the work CONACOES has been carrying out in the area of trafficking. - In the area of child labor, personnel were trained and regional commissions were formed to use the intervention protocol developed by the institution. We have personnel working on community awareness-raising on the issue of sexual exploitation. This material contained basic information on trafficking and smuggling. In this sense, work is being developed focused on detection, through sensitization of personnel at the national level. Training is also being provided to staff of children's centers.
Identified strengths	They are not rescued by the consulting firm.
Limitations identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is a new topic, not known in the national health care system or in the communities. - The health system is not yet capable of providing homogeneous care in the area of human trafficking. - National guidelines and documents produced have a strong emphasis on trafficking in minors and leave out guidelines for other populations.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delimit risk cantons to prioritize work in these areas. - Continue working together to avoid duplication of functions by State institutions. - Build bridges with existing programs, such as the work done by CONACOES.

2.3. Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Institution	It is part of the recently created National Coalition.
Experience in assisting victims of trafficking	It is reported that they have not had knowledge of any cases of trafficking in the country, nor of experiences of nationals in this situation in other countries. There have been no reports in this regard from any consular office abroad.
Services and programs offered in this area	A training program for consulates on human trafficking and smuggling is being developed. They do not offer direct attention to victims.
Identified strengths	They do not refer.
Limitations identified	It refers to a lack of knowledge of the role of the Ministry or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in this matter.
Recommendations	They do not refer.

2.4. General Directorate of Migration and Alien Affairs

Experience in assisting victims of trafficking	They do not provide direct care but coordinate the care and training of care personnel from other agencies such as INAMU, PANI911, and the Red Cross.
Services and programs offered	It is mentioned that the work on trafficking is developed from several axes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training: Aimed at sensitizing and informing officials, especially the migration police, to improve strategies for the detection and psychosocial care of victims. 2. Training of high-level officials: Proposal executed jointly with IOM, aimed at sensitizing the heads of State institutions. 3. Database: Given the lack of data on the part of the Judicial Branch, due to difficulties in typifying the crime, work is currently underway to develop a database of trafficking victims in the country and an agreement is being made at the regional level to extend the base to the entire Central American territory. The objective of the database is to create a gateway to limit the entry or exit of persons involved in the crime across the borders of the area. 4. Migration Law Project: We are working together with the Judicial School and Paniamor on the modification of the new Migration Law, currently before the Legislative Assembly, regarding the classification of the crime of trafficking. 5. The Repatriation Protocol was prepared. 6. Resources: There is an Alien Securing Center, a temporary shelter, not specifically for trafficked persons.
Identified strengths	The inter-institutional work that has been developed since the creation of the National Coalition and the joint work with experienced organizations that provide feedback to the work of the institution, as is the case of Fundación Rahab.
Limitations identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low human resources. - Lack of budget.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a study on customs controls in Central America, since the lack of uniformity in requirements and controls makes detection difficult and facilitates the phenomenon in the country.

2.5. Judicial Branch - Public Prosecutor's Office. Office of Attention to the Victim

Institution	Office composed of an interdisciplinary team: prosecutor, two assistants, social work and psychology. They provide psychosocial and legal assistance. There is currently only one office in the country.
Experience in customer service victims of trafficking	Two cases of minors have been dealt with. One of them was repatriated to her place of origin. The second young woman is suspected to have been recaptured by traffickers.
Services and programs offered	They do not currently have specific programs for victims of trafficking. They are in the process of being trained by Paniamor.
Identified strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The current office has a large direct care and institutional coordination for specialized care. - In the coming months, victim assistance offices will be opened in each province.
Limitations identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Centralization of care in San José. - Lack of training of Judicial and Police officials for detection. - Lack of political will to make the issue of trafficking more visible. - Within the Public Prosecutor's Office there is a lack of knowledge of the comprehensive care provided by the office, so they do not refer victims.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a specialized prosecutor's office.

2.6. Judicial Branch - Public Prosecutor's Office. Office of Miscellaneous Crimes

Experience in customer service victims of trafficking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is reported that trafficking is a new issue in the prosecutor's offices. It is reported that there are 2 or 3 people in the OIJ trained in crimes of human trafficking and smuggling. The training has been provided by the American Embassy. - Trafficking victims are served directly. There is still no institutional guideline as to which office would handle internal trafficking cases.
Services and programs offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct attention to victims. - They do not have specific programs for human trafficking. Investigation and legal processes are offered for their work.
Identified strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specialized personnel are being trained in the area of human smuggling and trafficking.
Limitations identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of training aimed at detecting victims. - Few personnel with expertise in the identification and care of trafficking victims. - Lack of communication with other state and non-state institutions with expertise in the field. - There is no conceptual uniformity on trafficking in the OIJ.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve inter-institutional communication. - Expand training processes.

2.7. Judicial Branch - Public Prosecutor's Office. Sexual Crimes Office

Experience in customer service victims of trafficking	Currently there are cases ⁶ under investigation (only from data of this prosecutor's office, it is not national, there are 5 from 2006 and 1 from 2007, all related to commercial sexual exploitation of minors). There is one case currently dismissed due to lack of evidence.
Services and programs offered	They do not have specific programs for human trafficking. Investigation and legal processes are offered for their work.
Identified strengths	- The Public Prosecutor's Office is trained to detect human trafficking.
Limitations identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little reporting. - The regulatory framework does not facilitate identification. Nor does it allow for the identification and processing of the link in the chain responsible for the transit of victims. - The regulatory framework at the regional level is not homogeneous, making international detection and prosecution difficult. - Little police training in detection. Operations are not directed towards the detection of trafficking, the focus remains only on the recognition of persons in illegal situations, no investigation of exploitation conditions. - Centralization of attention and guidelines on controls and identification. Rural areas are marginalized by the authorities. - Lack of knowledge about referral processes for victim care. Lack of knowledge of the work done by the Office of Victim Attention. Lack of knowledge of the work of other victim assistance institutions and the work of the National Coalition.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise awareness among prosecutor's office officials about the need to carry out investigations with anonymous sources given the conditions under which complaints are filed. - Raise awareness of non-victimization care and victim safety. - Investigation should be directed to the treatment of trafficking as an organized crime and be carried out in conjunction with intelligence and specialized investigation units. - Need to include the Public Prosecutor's Office in the construction of a diagnosis of the problem at the national level in order to direct future actions. - Train public officials and police on the work of the Public Prosecutor's Office and OIJ and on reporting mechanisms.

2.8. National Women's Institute

Experience in customer service victims of trafficking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Women's Delegation has dealt with cases of women victims of trafficking referred by IOM for specialized attention. No details on prevalence are available. Interdisciplinary personnel have been trained for specific attention. - There is a telephone answering system through COAVIF, the 9-1-1 Emergency System. Only a third of the personnel had been trained on the subject at the time of the study.
Services and programs offered	<p>Within the framework of the project developed with the contribution of the Swiss Embassy and with the technical support of IOM, INAMU is working on the issue of trafficking from the component3 parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Training. The training has two target populations: a. Young population, in community prevention, especially in urban-marginal and rural areas. Aimed at both men and women. It works with the Council of the Young Person and the Cantonal Committees, by means of active forces in the community. b. Public officials who attend to the population at risk. b. Mass media awareness campaign aimed at the prevention of trafficking in women. c. Improvement of the hotline's service protocol 911.
Identified strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experience in prevention and attention to other manifestations of violence against women. - Existence of institutional support. - Existence of positioning of the issue in the current agendas of the state and civil society. - The existence of networks previously formed on the subject of violence.
Limitations identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The problem is not made visible as a manifestation of violence against women and gender-related violence. - Lack of human and budgetary resources at the institutional level and in other institutions. - There is not as much independence to work as from an NGO.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generating a demand to force institutions to respond to this demand, as described above, was the strategy used for domestic violence work. - To make the problem visible as violence against women. - Conduct a national diagnostic.

ANNEX Results3. of the 2007Project for the Prevention and Care of Victims of Trafficking in the Central Pacific region implemented by the Rahab Foundation and IOM

Overall results:

- Dissemination of information on the problem of human trafficking so that communities can be forewarned about trafficking networks.
- Production of knowledge on the situation of human trafficking in the region through research and systematization actions.
- Strengthening the reporting of cases through the Hotline and the registration of situations reported during information and training activities.
- Local coordination with key institutions in the platform of services for the care of victims and potential victims, as well as prevention.
- Encouraging coordination and exchange of information among the various authorities in order to strengthen justice in the handling of established complaints.
- Development of a theoretical framework to understand the problem of human trafficking in our country.

The total number of informative and preventive activities carried out with public officials, minors and civil society during this period is as follows

147 total number of people benefited was **4074**.

The total number of persons assisted as potential victims at risk of being trafficked is **169**, and the victims identified and assisted materially and psychosocially include **90** women, men and minors of Nicaraguan, Colombian, Ecuadorian and Peruvian nationality.

In addition, these other products were obtained:

- Establishment of an anti-trafficking support group for young people.
- Establishment of a support group for women.
- Development of a Homework Room Program.
- Development of a School Program for families.

Formulation of legal complaints in suspected trafficking situations (Rahab 2007).

APPENDIX Interview guide4. with service providers

The interviewer is introduced, the objectives of the study are presented and participation is thanked.

Identification data

- Name of informant.
- Institution.
- Program or department.
- Position.
- Occupation.
- Description of responsibilities.
- Date of interview.

General information on human trafficking and trafficking in women

- What do you understand by "human trafficking"?
- In your opinion, what are the causes of human trafficking?
- How common is human trafficking in your country?
- What are the most common cases?
- How many trafficked women has your organization served in recent months?

Experience in caring for trafficked women

- Have you ever cared for an elderly woman who is a victim of trafficking?
- Describe the specific experience: characteristics of the affected woman (nationality, type of exploitation, etc.), how she arrived at the institution, needs, care received, follow-up (if she was referred to any instance, which one, results, counter-referral).

Services and programs for the care of women victims of human trafficking

- What type of services does your institution offer for adult women victims of trafficking? (legal, psychological, shelter...).
- What are the requirements to access these services?
- Are there any limitations to women victims' access to these services? Which ones?

Strengths and limitations of care services

- What are the main strengths of the service or program you provide to the affected population?
- What are the main constraints your organization faces in providing effective and timely care to trafficked women?
- What suggestions can you make to improve services for trafficked women in the future (both at the level of the organization itself and in general)?

Identification of surviving women as potential informants

At this point, the steps included in the informant selection procedure should be followed.

APPENDIX Interview guide5. with women survivors of trafficking in persons

Before starting the interview, all the requirements established in the ethical framework must have been met to ensure that the informant is fully aware of the nature of the research, that she has given clear and informed consent for her participation, and that she is comfortable and willing to begin the process.

As part of this first conversation, it is important to explain what trafficking in persons is, its constituent elements, so that the informant can be clear about the parameters of the investigation and indicate whether her experience fits this definition. This is a resource for an adequate selection of informants through the "self-exclusion or self-selection" of participants at an early stage of the process.

In case the informant cannot be taken into account for the study, she should be thanked for her willingness to collaborate, taking care not to make her feel that she is not a member of the study.

that her life story is not important or delegitimize her experience of victimization. It may happen that the informant feels the need to communicate something or request information or guidance on a personal matter. In this case, she will be listened to and a referral will be made to an entity that can support her if necessary.

Once it has been confirmed that the informant can be part of the study, the interview process continues by asking the informant for some general information about herself:

- Age.
- Marital status.
- Schooling.
- Occupation / trade.
- Place of residence.
- Nationality.

The conversation should then begin by asking the informant to talk about her

experience with trafficking.

*The experience of trafficked women in Central America and the
Dominican Republic and the performance of institutions*

of people. From this point on, the conversation is oriented to try to cover the aspects contemplated in the following areas of research that will allow reconstructing and documenting their experience.

Recruitment

- How did you initiate the contact: through a family member, friend, neighbor, advertisement, Internet, boyfriend? What is the relationship (if any) between the recruiter and the informant? Did you contact her directly or through the family?
- What kind of promise, offer or offer was made to you: marriage, work, study. In case of work: what type of work, under what conditions, what type and amount of remuneration were you offered? Did you receive money in advance? In case of study: what type of study, under what conditions.
- Why did you decide to accept the promise, offer, or proposition, what were your expectations?
- What was her living condition before recruitment or recruitment (poverty, social exclusion, domestic violence, sexual abuse); in the case of migrant women, factors that prompted her to leave her home/country?

Transfer

- Was she transferred within the country or outside the country, was she forced to leave the country or did she leave voluntarily?
- In the case of transfer out of the country, was this done in a regular or irregular manner? In the latter case, it is important to describe the irregular border crossing: through blind checkpoints, bribery of authorities, etc.

- In the case of transfer outside the country, who provided and financed the immigration documentation (passport)?
- What were the means of transport used: on foot, by land, sea, air? Under what conditions did this transfer take place: describe? Who financed the transport costs?¹³
- Was she moved alone or in a group? What other people (women, men, children) were traveling with her and for what purpose?
- Did you suffer any type of mistreatment during this period?
- Did you feel your life was in danger at any time during the relocation process? Why?
- How did the relocation process affect your health and general condition?
- At any time during this period did you try to ask for help? from whom? What was the outcome of that request?

Exploitation

- What kind of activities was the informant forced to do? (characteristics, frequency and conditions)¹⁴ Was she transferred from one exploitation site to another?
- Under what conditions did the activity take place (overcrowding, isolation (no contact with family, friends, etc.), confinement...).
- Were there other people in the same conditions: men, women, children, of what ages, of what nationalities, doing what? Did you establish a relationship with any of these people, what kind of relationship?
- What control mechanisms did the trafficker(s) use to subdue and keep the informant in the exploitative situation: physical and/or psychological mistreatment; sexual abuse; limitation of movement;

¹³ It is important to take into consideration that several means of transportation may have been used and, likewise, the informant may have been moved several times from one place to another either to be exploited in different places, because she was "sold" once or several times and/or in order to hide her trail. It is important to allow her to describe and narrate these transfer processes and to record the route of her trafficking experience.

¹⁴ It is important to be clear, especially when it comes to exploitation for sexual purposes, that individuals may not feel comfortable or be willing to go into detail about the activity performed. In these cases, it should be sufficient for the informant to directly allude to the general nature of the exploitative (sexual) activity and should not be pressed for additional details.

withholding of documents; debt obligation; threats to family members or loved ones; physical exhaustion; food deprivation; denial of medical care; affective manipulation.

- Were you forced to use alcohol or drugs?
- How much money did your activity generate?
What percentage of everything produced by the informant stayed with her?
- How did the exploitation process affect your health and general condition?
- Did you ever feel your life in danger?

Search for help

- Did you try to seek help during the exploitation period? Where? With whom?¹⁵ Do you remember the name of the organization or institution?
- Were there any escape attempt(s): from her, from other people, what was the result?
- How did you establish contact with this organization or institution? Was it easy or complicated to establish this contact? Why?
- How was she treated? What kind of help did she receive: emotional support, legal advice, shelter, financial support?
- How did you feel about the care you received?

Output

- How did you manage to get out of the exploitation situation: escape, police operation, immigration operation, debt repayment?
- In case of being detained abroad: how long did the detention last, where and under what conditions did the detention take place; were you provided with medical, psychological or other care during detention; did you have contact with the consular authorities of your country of origin; were you deported; was your judgment sought before you were deported?

- Was there any experience of mistreatment and/or violation of your rights at that stage?

Resettlement / Reintegration

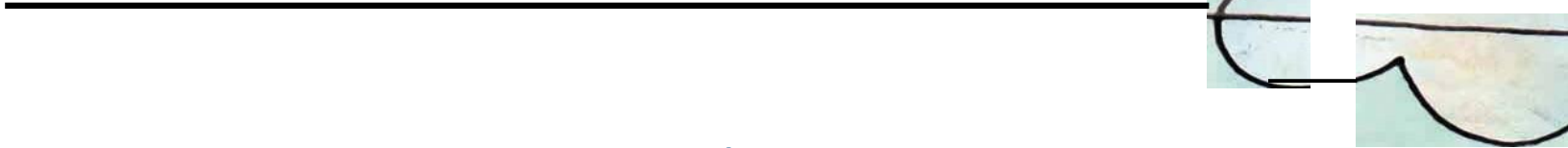
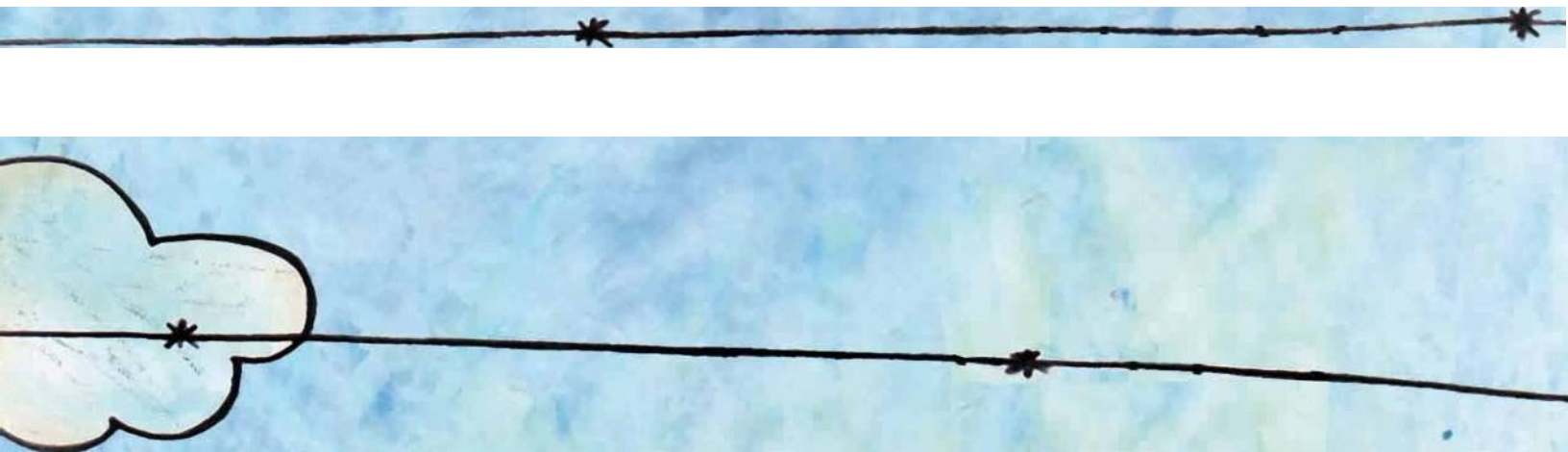
- After the trafficking experience, Were you returned to your country of origin or did you apply for residency in the country where you were rescued or in a third country?
- In the case of repatriation or deportation, What kind of problems or limitations have you had in joining your community: economic, social, with your family, partner and/or children? Have you received any kind of threats, blackmail or persecution from traffickers or other people in the community? Do you have a debt to pay off? How much does it amount to?
- In the second case (residence in a country other than the country of origin): What kind of help have you received to settle down? Who provided it? What limitations have you had to incorporate into social life?

Impact of the trafficking experience

- How do you feel now after this experience?
- What consequences has the trafficking experience had on your physical, emotional and psychological health?
- Have you had any consequences in your social, family, couple and/or work life?
- Have you had any legal problems as a result of this experience?
- Current situation: has a job, has housing, receives medical assistance, receives specialized psychological assistance, receives any specific help or assistance as a result of her trafficking experience.
- Recommendation for other women, for institutions or service organizations.

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¹⁵ It is important to be clear that the person may have sought help on several occasions, before different instances and in different places. It is important to record each of these occasions when the informant sought help.



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