Child Trafficking Prevention and Awareness Levels in The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the breakup of Yugoslavia and the collapse of the pyramid scheme in Albania, trafficking in human beings has emerged as a major source of migrant labor in the Balkans. Whether forcing girls and young women into prostitution, or male and female children into begging, traffickers have devastated the lives of countless women and children.

Under the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (SEE) there is a Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, and UNICEF has taken responsibility for raising awareness of this type of trafficking. In order to gauge how best to direct their efforts and provide a forum through which non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may learn from each other, UNICEF is beginning to explore perceptions and attitudes regarding trafficking of children and adults in the region, and pulling together an analysis of current practices of NGOs engaged in anti-trafficking campaigns.

After being piloted in Albania, Moldova and Romania, this research was conducted in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). The goal was to analyze children’s current awareness levels, analyze child perceptions of the dangers of trafficking or working abroad and analyze their responses to existing anti-trafficking materials. Intensive interviews were also conducted with NGOs to gain a better understanding of current initiatives and future plans. The results provide country-specific and region-wide suggestions for future initiatives.

General awareness of trafficking appears to be fairly low in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Awareness typically came from stories heard on television, in the newspapers, or through rumors. A very small minority of participants had been exposed to awareness campaigns or education initiatives. Awareness levels also varied across regions, ethnicities and by age and gender. Where higher levels of awareness did exist, there appear to be three factors which contribute: active youth centers or connection to an engaged social organization, proximity to borders, or being from the capital.

Future awareness raising campaigns should be tailored and regionally specific and need to utilize interactive workshops and discussion groups. Other components that should be developed include: improved services and access to services for victims and potential victims; increased coordination among NGOs, International Organizations (IOs) and the government; trainings for the police, the media and NGOs; and enforcement of existing anti-trafficking laws.

The Former Yugoslav Republic and Macedonia has typically been seen as a transit and destination country for trafficking, however, Macedonian women are increasingly becoming at risk of being trafficked themselves. The worsening economy both in the country and regionally, could cause trafficking to become an even more pervasive problem. Specific preventative actions must be taken now to raise awareness and combat trafficking, before the problem explodes any further.
II. INTRODUCTION

Trafficking in human beings, particularly women and children, has been a growing industry for many years. The problem involves sectors of domestic and international economies, national and international organizations and governments, and international organized crime. Nearly all nations play a role in this global industry—as source countries for women and children, as transit countries through which they are forced to travel, or destination countries, where they are forced to work in bondage. The Palermo Protocol defines trafficking as:

"Trafficking in persons" shall mean 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. 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... The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons."

Article 3, Palermo Protocol

Several regions known to have high levels of trafficking activity include; Southeast Asia, West Africa and the Newly Independent States/Central and Eastern Europe (NIS/CEE). Estimates of people trafficked each year in these regions vary. The Congressional Research Service estimates one to two million people are trafficked per year worldwide, 700,000 of whom are women and children. The former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are important new sources of women and girls for the sex trade. The EU estimates that between 200,000 and 500,000 women are trafficked through Southeast Europe each year. Destinations include countries in Eastern Europe, East Asia, the Middle East (particularly Jordan) and the United States. In addition, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated that 500,000 women and children were trafficked to the European Union in 1995, the bulk were from the NIS/CEE region. This discrepancy in statistics shows the difficulty getting an accurate picture of trafficking. However, even conservative estimates are shockingly high.

Several UN agencies have begun addressing different aspects of human trafficking. UNAIDS, UNDCP, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNIFEM recently formed an Inter-Agency Project on Trafficking in Women and Children in the Mekong Sub-region to combat trafficking in Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. This consortium focuses on legal reform and programming through government and local capacity building. UNICNI launched the UN Global Program Against Trafficking in Women and Children in 1999, which combats trafficking in the context of international organized crime.

1 For a list of acronyms please see acronym list at the back of the report.
In 2002, UNICEF received a mandate to coordinate its trafficking efforts. As part of this effort, a research team was assembled to design a pilot project to analyze children’s awareness levels and perceptions of trafficking in the region, and gather information on NGO anti-trafficking initiatives, with a focus on media-based awareness campaigns. This research project was piloted in three countries: Albania, Moldova and Romania. However, ultimately the aim is to conduct this research in all South Eastern Europe Pact (SEE Pact) countries.

Upon the completion of the pilot research and release of the report, UNICEF FYROM requested a more in depth analysis of awareness levels of trafficking and NGO/IO initiatives in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.² The following report is the result of this research.

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² For ease of the reader, throughout this report, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) will be referred to as Macedonia. However, it should be understood that all references to Macedonia should be considered references to the FYROM.
III. OVERVIEW OF TRAFFICKING IN MACEDONIA

Anti-trafficking efforts vary from region to region. Even within Southeast Europe (SEE), trafficking takes on different faces depending on the particular country in question, and it is difficult to accurately gauge levels of trafficking activity. This is partly because trafficking is a criminal activity, and partly due to the social stigma surrounding the issue. Several organizations conducted research to identify the extent of the problem, and to determine a division of responsibility in the field. This following section is based on the reports that resulted from this research, and provide a brief outline of the prevalence of trafficking and the tactics employed by traffickers in Macedonia.

A. Overall Picture of Trafficking in SEE

Within the SEE countries, it is estimated that more than half of trafficking victims are younger than 25.3 Common characteristics of trafficking victims include being: female, from a rural area, poorly educated, single and/or a victim of domestic violence before leaving home.4 Methods of trafficking vary somewhat, but generally women and or children are promised work or marriage abroad or in another region within their country. Children may also be sold into trafficking by their parents. The geographical paths through which traffickers lead their victims are complex, therefore some countries, such as Macedonia and Albania, serve as both source countries and transit countries.

Macedonia

Until very recently, Macedonia has been seen primarily as a transit or destination country for trafficking victims from countries such as Romania, Moldova and the Ukraine.5 The 2001 conflict in Macedonia temporarily halted trafficking activities, but the problem has recently reemerged. Over the past year, the perception of Macedonia as primarily a transit country is shifting. A pattern of internal trafficking in Macedonia is becoming increasingly apparent. Local NGOs have expressed opinions that the trafficking of Macedonian women has been increasing over the last two years, and this directly correlates with the slow-down in the economy.6 Trafficked women in Macedonia range in age from 13 – 41, with an estimated 15-30% being trafficked while underage.7

As a transit country, Macedonia is on the route of traffickers operating from the Ukraine, Moldova, Russia and Bulgaria. The exit points are typically through towns on the south and west borders: the provincial southern towns of Dojran and Gevgelia on the Greek border, Struga on the Albanian border, and Tetovo, near the Kosovar border. Bulgarians cross the border into Macedonia, in the east, and then cross into Albania via Lake Ohrid.

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6 Interviews with local NGOs, July 2003.
7 This estimation comes from the figures and ages of trafficked victims in Macedonia. The number is not exact, because it is not clear at what age these woman entered into trafficking and it does not include victims of internal trafficking.
or along the Schkodra road, and from there into Italy, and other Western European countries.

Macedonia is also recognized as a destination country. The nationalities of those most likely to be trafficked to Macedonia are Moldovan, Romanian and Ukrainian. During 18 months between 2000 and 2001 these three countries represented 92% of the 253 victims assisted by IOM.\(^8\) Trafficking networks in Macedonia may also be impacted by the increased efforts in Kosovo to combat trafficking, which may have resulted in women being moved from Kosovo into Macedonia.\(^9\)

The recognition of the problem of internal trafficking has been slow. Tracking the problem of internal trafficking is hampered by the lack of official statistics, or research into the problem. Anecdotal evidence points to a growing problem of Macedonian women, including minors, being trafficked within Macedonia itself. It appears that women from poorer regions, towns or communities, are being trafficked to areas of Macedonia known for their brothels and prostitution networks. However, Macedonian women found in raids on brothels, where trafficking occurs, are not given the same assistance as foreign victims of trafficking, rather they are often charged with crimes. The police are responsible for determining the official status of women found in these situations. The women themselves are not able to claim they have been trafficked, nor is there any independent overview of the process.

The routes into internal trafficking networks appear murkier than those into external trafficking networks. The later tend to be more organized, with specific routes, border crossing tactics, and organized crime connections. Their recruitment methods tend to be more organized, with offers of jobs, or marriage, and there are handlers moving women from destination to destination. Routes into internal trafficking can be similar to those into international trafficking rings, but may be more gradual, where traffickers prey on those already engaged in more risky behaviors, such as ‘informal prostitution.’ Informal prostitution is a phenomenon whereby young women, often of school age, agree to exchange sexual favors for money, rent, clothing or help with tuition. In some circumstances they are even ‘lent’ to friends of the perpetrator. They typically do not consider themselves prostitutes, but are at greater risk of coming into contact with trafficking networks, and being coerced into forced prostitution or being trafficked.

In addition to this distinction between external and internal trafficking, patterns of trafficking vary greatly between the different regions of the country and among the various vulnerable populations. There appear to be differences in the vulnerabilities of different ethnic groups within the country. There also appears to be a gap in the perception of trafficking as solely a women’s issue, while in fact, the problem must be addressed by adequately educating both men and women, potential perpetuate the problem, as well as potential victims.

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\(^8\) *Victims of Trafficking in the Balkans*, IOM, 2001, 45.

\(^9\) Limonowska, 107.
The overall situation of trafficking in Macedonia is highly complex, as Macedonia is a transit, destination, and source country, the victims are of multiple nationalities, including Macedonian, and trafficking is both an external and an internal problem. Effectively addressing this problem will require a nuanced and multifaceted approach from the government and the NGO community. Programs will need to be specifically tailored and targeted at specific audiences, with appropriate messages. However, limiting the focus of messages to those at risk, will not address the issue as it affects the wider Macedonian community.

**NGO Efforts to Prevent Trafficking**

Efforts to prevent trafficking can take on a number of forms, have several targets, and be implemented at different key times in the process of trafficking. To clarify the efforts this report will focus on, it is useful to employ the Haddon Matrix, which is commonly used in the design of public health interventions:

**Table I: Examination of Anti-Trafficking Efforts Through the Haddon Matrix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Event</th>
<th>Host or Individual</th>
<th>Agent or Vehicle</th>
<th>Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raising awareness of trafficking as an issue, as well as methods traffickers employ. Establishment of hotlines for help with investigating job offers.</td>
<td>Raising awareness of the legal consequences of engaging in trafficking in human beings. Requiring more strict surveillance of newspaper advertisements, job agencies, etc.</td>
<td>Creating a sense of societal responsibility for trafficking through awareness raising and education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Education about how to escape from traffickers, how to find Embassies abroad, etc. Establishment of hotlines.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Instruction of border guards, customs agents, and police on methods commonly employed by traffickers; reduction of corruption among these professions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Event</td>
<td>Provision of needed social and reintegration services to victims of trafficking.</td>
<td>Rehabilitation of traffickers</td>
<td>Training of members of society to recognize victims of trafficking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The host or individual is understood to be the victim of trafficking, the agent or vehicle is the trafficker and the environment is the local, national, and international environment in which trafficking occurs. The programs described in the light-blue section are the focus
of this study, and fit into the UNICEF Stability Pact responsibility of “raising of awareness.”

Examples of activity types that might fall into the three areas of concern in this report are:

Pre-event, host/individual:
These activities include those designed to raise awareness of trafficking among the at-risk population, to help members of the at-risk population prevent themselves from being trafficked. Activities could include:
- Training of teachers in anti-trafficking education, cooperation in prevention campaigns and anti-trafficking education in schools;
- Awareness raising and information campaigns targeting at-risk populations; these may take place in schools, summer camps, concerts, discotheques or other places where children and young people gather;
- Hotlines to help young people investigate job offers and job agencies;
- Training and support for unemployed;
- Training courses for staff working in institutions; and
- Include trafficking in school curricula.

Event, host/individual
These activities are designed to provide at-risk population with tools and knowledge about what to do if they are trafficked. Activities might include:
- Awareness raising and information campaign instructing children on what to do if trafficked;
- Hotline for trafficking victims;
- Posting hotline numbers at airports, bus terminals and train stations; and
- Printing trafficking-related assistance information on the reverse sides of train, airplane, or bus tickets.

Pre-event, environment
These activities are designed to raise societal awareness of trafficking, and create a sense of social responsibility for trafficking. This category also encompasses legal reform; however legal reforms will not be considered in this report. Activities within the scope of this report include:
- Training teachers in anti-trafficking education;
- Training of trainers on women’s rights and trafficking;
- Trainings and seminars for parents and other community members;
- Awareness raising and information campaigns targeted at the general population; and
- Research.
IV. RESEARCH DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY

The increasing prominence of trafficking in South Eastern Europe, since the end of the Balkan conflicts and the breakup of the Soviet Union, has led to a heightened awareness of the issue within non-governmental organizations. An increasing number of organizations are active in this field, but it is not yet clear how awareness within these organizations and awareness campaigns have translated to awareness with children and young adults—the vulnerable populations.

The problem of trafficking is relatively new to this region. Efforts to date throughout the region have focused on media campaigns, victims’ assistance, school programs and legislative reform. This research focuses on children’s awareness of trafficking and their response to selected awareness materials as well as on NGO initiatives in the region.

The methodology was piloted in three South Eastern European countries: Albania, Moldova and Romania. The piloted methodology was refined and expanded for the Macedonian research. While ultimately the aim is to conduct research throughout all SEE Pact countries, the three original countries were selected because they are source countries for child trafficking. Macedonia represents a country that is considered both a destination and transit country, but is also evolving into a source country.

This research is two tiered, and focused on children’s awareness levels as well as gaining a better understanding of current and future efforts within the NGO/IO community. The primary focus of this research is to gauge children’s awareness levels, and to determine if they have been affected by campaigns in their communities. It also aims at discovering how they feel these messages could best be conveyed. To add to our understanding of the issue, where possible, we sought the perceptions of adults in the community.

METHODOLOGY

I. Main Research Questions

In Macedonia, what are at-risk children’s awareness levels and perception of trafficking? What factors influence their perceptions and behavior? What are their reactions to a selection of anti-trafficking materials and their suggestions for future anti-trafficking initiatives?

The research addressed these questions through:

1. Analysis of children’s current awareness levels and perceptions;
2. Analysis of child perceptions of dangers of trafficking if working abroad or elsewhere in Macedonia;
3. Evaluation of any campaigns significance within the greater spectrum of messages surrounding the issue (such as news stories, advertisements for work abroad, information from teachers, parents and friends);
4. Analysis of children’s responses to a selection of current regional anti-trafficking materials (i.e. posters); and

In designing the research plan it was determined that both qualitative and quantitative information gathering methods would be necessary. The bulk of the research time concentrated on gathering qualitative textured information from focus groups with children and a few with adult community representatives. A simple questionnaire was administered to all focus group participants in order to gather basic quantitative information, and in-depth interviews were conducted with NGOs working on trafficking prevention in the countries.

II. Overview of Focus Group Participants

In conducting this research, focus group participants were selected from different regions, region types, ethnicities, and ages, in order to compare the various perspectives, responses, and suggestions from these different groups. Where possible, efforts were made to identify participants from potentially more at risk groups within the communities. (For a breakdown of each focus group’s characteristics, see Annex 2.)

UNICEF FYROM, and their local partners identified focus group participants. Participants were identified through schools, youth groups, orphanages, social organizations, and local groups. (For more information about participant selection guidelines, please refer to Annex 1.11)

Our primary research group is the target audience of the campaigns, children between the ages of 8 and 18. The primary research method used with this group was focus groups. A short questionnaire was also administered to focus group participants and other children with whom the researchers come into contact during their field research. (For detailed information about the research methodology, please see Annex 1.)

Ages

A total of 39 focus groups were conducted, with the majority of the focus groups concentrated in the primary target age group—13 to 18 years of age. Focus groups conducted with adults and children aged 8 to 12 provided additional perspectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Young 8 – 12 years</th>
<th>Middle 13 – 15 years</th>
<th>Older 16 – 18 years10</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Focus Groups Conducted</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Participants</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 * While every effort was made to limit participation to those under the age of 18, there six individuals between the ages of 19 and 22, who were spread between 3 focus groups.
Gender
The majority of the focus groups were conducted with groups of girls, as girls and young
women are the primary target for trafficking awareness campaigns. Further, due to the
sensitive nature of the subject, girls and young women were more likely to participate
freely in single sex groups. A small number of groups were conducted with groups of
boys, and mixed groups, to provide additional perspectives. The younger groups (8 – 12)
were conducted primarily in mixed groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Focus Groups</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rural, Provincial and Urban Comparisons
A key comparison of this research was between different regional types. The categories
were rural (villages, and towns of less than 20,000 inhabitants), provincial (all towns of
over 20,000 inhabitants, which included cities which were not the capital), and urban (the
capital of Skopje).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region Type</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Provincial</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Focus Groups</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Region and Location
Another point of comparison throughout the report is among the different regions of the
country. Focus groups were categorized as West, East, South and the Capital. Because
of the importance of borders in trafficking, focus groups conducted along the southern or
western border were placed in categories separate from the more general South and West
Categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region Type</th>
<th>Western Border</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>East</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>Southern Border</th>
<th>Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of Focus Groups</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debar (3)</td>
<td>Nerashte (2)</td>
<td>Chiflick</td>
<td>Bitola (2)</td>
<td>Gevgelia (4)</td>
<td>Skopje</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slatino (2)</td>
<td>Kochani (2)</td>
<td>Ohrid</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strumica (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probistip (2)</td>
<td>Struga (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stip</td>
<td>Sveti Nikola (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Ethnicity**
Ethnicity was also a key point of comparison in this research. Three ethnic groups were represented in the focus groups: Albanian, Macedonian and Roma. For a point of comparison on three occasions the groups were mixed. Of the 39 focus groups conducted, the majority were Macedonian (25). This is reflective of the larger Macedonian population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Albanian</th>
<th>Macedonian</th>
<th>Roma</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong># of Focus Groups</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Analysis of children’s and adult’s awareness levels and perceptions

Comfort Discussing Trafficking
On the whole, groups were fairly comfortable discussing trafficking and responding to the posters, which had very clear anti-trafficking messages. However, in nearly every group, at least one participant, but up to ten, appeared embarrassed and reluctant to discuss the issue. The younger groups did not seem more uncomfortable than the other groups, but frequently did not comprehend what trafficking was and therefore did not tend to understand the posters or link the discussion of travel safety, and stories they may have heard to trafficking.

In the few cases where the entire group appeared ill-at-ease it may have to do with their close proximity to the issue. One group in Struga and one group near Tetovo were physically uncomfortable and extremely reluctant to participate, but seemed to know a lot about the issue and could even give examples.

The groups that were the most uncomfortable discussing the issue of trafficking, particularly the posters, were the three Roma groups. This was particularly true in the focus group conducted outside the capital in Stip. These girls appeared embarrassed and displayed physical discomfort and a high degree of reluctance to discuss the issue.

Awareness
Awareness was analyzed based on whether participants described the phenomenon of trafficking or used the term ‘trafficking’ without prompting by facilitators or posters. When conducting the focus groups, trafficking, as a concept and the word, itself were not introduced to the participants unless they brought them up themselves independently. Additionally, each group was rated with respect to their level of awareness and intimacy with the issue.

General awareness appears to be far lower than in other countries in the region where this research has been conducted: Albania, Moldova, and Romania. Most of the awareness came through stories heard on television, in the newspapers, or through rumors. A very small minority of participants had been exposed to awareness campaigns or education initiatives. There were very few stories of trafficking involving people with whom they had direct contact, although these did exist. Even within groups where there were higher levels of awareness, responses varied significantly from person to person.

Four groups out of a total of thirty-nine, had personal stories about trafficking. Two were stories about young girls, personally known to focus group participants. A third was a story about a girl’s cousin who had rescued a Romanian woman who had been engaged in trafficking. The fourth story was about an uncle who was arrested for being involved in trafficking Ukrainian women.
Just over a quarter of the groups had no knowledge whatsoever of trafficking, and frequently even after seeing posters dealing with the issue, did not seem to link the posters to trafficking, or travel safety. These groups were common in age and ethnicity: on the whole they were younger, and/or Roma. Four groups do not fit this pattern: two were focus groups conducted with boys in the capital, who seemed to consider this a woman’s issue, and two were conducted in sheltered rural communities.

“Trafficking” Stated
Fifteen groups described the phenomenon of trafficking before seeing the posters, but only five of the fifteen groups specifically used the term ‘trafficking.’ The term was not introduced to the discussion groups by the facilitators, until groups themselves used the term, or until the term appeared in the text of the posters.

Even within the five groups where trafficking was mentioned, the term was not widely used. Typically, it was mentioned only once or twice during the discussion, and usually only by one or two individuals. Later in the course of the focus groups, the word ‘trafficking’ appeared in the text of several of the posters, and so the term was used with reference to the text. However, we have not taken this as an indication of familiarity with the term, because participants were often still reluctant and seemingly uncomfortable using the term.

There appeared to be distinct reasons for the term to be used in the five groups that did so. In two of these groups, there were participants whose fathers were policemen, who had come into direct contact with trafficking through their work. Three of the five groups took place in very active youth centers, (“Babylon Centers”) in Strumica and Bitola. These particular youth centers offered participatory social awareness programs to the children. A fourth group was conducted near Struga, in a southern town with a reputation for its brothels, and prostitution. Finally, one group was conducted with university students in Skopje. These girls tended to have higher levels of awareness of news items and social issues.

Trafficking Described
There appears to be no clear regional pattern or commonalities between towns in the groups that described trafficking, but did not specifically mention ‘trafficking.’ Their awareness came mainly from their exposure to the media and rumors, and in only one case was there a personal story mentioned. Most of these groups had a high level of awareness, but in several groups, there were only one or two individuals who shared stories. Typically, the rest of the group would agree or acknowledge that they too had heard stories, but did not articulate them.

For women traveling alone, trafficking is the worst thing that can happen.
–Teenage girl, Strumica

“Some people can use you, treat you like a slave, give you money for sex and ruin your life”
–Teenage girl, Strumica, Southern Border Town

“A passport can be taken away and they can be forced to work as a slave or a prostitute”
–High School student, Skopje
Levels of Awareness
Each group’s responses were categorized into three awareness level groups: High, Moderate, and Low/None. Our research targeted vulnerable populations as participants, and these populations may have been more aware of the issue, compared to the population at large. Even though our research shows low overall awareness among participants, we believe awareness levels for the population as a whole to be considerably lower.

We define High not only as describing or using the term ‘trafficking’, but also as having a sense of coercion, slavery, forced labor or how force can become a part of prostitution. On the whole, even among those with High levels of awareness, their descriptions of trafficking were in general terms, without a specific understanding of how trafficking might operate, or even who would be at risk.

Groups with Moderate levels of awareness had some knowledge of the issue, but were unable to fully articulate their feelings. This was either through lack of knowledge, or what appeared to be an unwillingness or fear of openly discussing the issue.

Low/None was defined as minimal or non-existent awareness of the issue.

High
Fourteen groups showed High levels of awareness of the issue of trafficking. Within these groups, each of the participants were more likely to be involved in the discussion, and there were higher levels of comfort in discussing the issue. These were the only groups who had a holistic perspective on the issue of trafficking, and an understanding of how it operates. There appear to be three factors contributing to these higher levels of awareness: active youth centers or connection to an engaged social organization, proximity to borders, or being from the capital.¹¹

Over two thirds of the groups with High levels of awareness were associated with either an active youth center which promoted the discussion of social issues and human rights, or a social organization engaged in gender issues, which held discussion groups. This appears to be the largest determining factor in raising awareness. The youth involved in active youth centers, because of their discussion of social issues, discussed trafficking as an abuse of rights, or a loss of freedom, and as something of concern to their community as a whole. They did not, however, identify themselves as being at risk, rather they often felt responsible for doing something about it in their community. These groups were in Bitola, Ohrid, Strumica, and Vicina. Four groups were connected to social organizations focused on gender issues in towns were prostitution was recognized as a major issue affecting youth. A connection between prostitution and vulnerability to trafficking was mentioned in all of these groups.

A second contributing factor to High levels of awareness was proximity to a border, and an association of prostitution within that town. However, not all border towns were equally aware. The groups that were aware were from Strumica, Struga, and Debar.

¹¹ See Annex 2, Table 3.
Finally, the last group of highly aware youth was older girls, living in the capital, with higher levels of exposure to all media, and recent awareness campaigns, such as the IOM poster. It is interesting to note that the Roma community based on the outskirts of the capital, as well as boys and young groups in the capital, had low levels of awareness. This may be indicative of the targeted nature of the campaigns.

There were no rural groups with High levels of awareness.

**Moderate**

Moderate was the smallest category, with only four focus groups. It appeared that either groups had had direct contact with the issue of trafficking, or knew virtually nothing about it. There was hardly any middle ground. Even though those in the Moderate group had some level of awareness, they really were not at any less risk than those in the Low/None category, because they still did not understand how the mechanisms of trafficking function, or what it entails.\(^{12}\)

The one Moderate group that used the term ‘trafficking’ did not fully understand how trafficking works, who is at risk, and how it might manifest itself. These characteristics indicated that this group of girls (based in Skopje), had been exposed to an awareness campaign or news, but had no clear picture of trafficking. A second Moderate group talked around the issue of trafficking. It seemed as if they were repeating messages that they had heard, but again, it was apparent that they had no meaningful understanding of the issue.

**Low/None**

The largest category in this research, by far, was Low/None. Over half of all focus groups were in this category, and in addition, certain participants in groups of both Moderate and High awareness level groups also showed Low/None awareness. All ages are represented in this category, and all groups of fourteen years old and under are included. There was Low/None awareness in all regions, and all types of communities: urban, provincial and rural are also represented. All ethnic groups showed Low/None awareness levels, but it is important to note that all Roma groups fell into this category.\(^{13}\)

**Who is at Risk?**

In all but three focus groups there was virtually no understanding of exactly who is at risk of being trafficked. The three exceptions to this included: the two older groups at both orphanages and a group in Sveti Nikola, a poor town in eastern Macedonia. The girls at the orphanages self-identified as being at risk and were extremely concerned about their safety in this regard. The group in Sveti Nikola described one route into trafficking through ‘informal

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\(^{12}\) See Annex 2, Table 4.

\(^{13}\) See Annex 2, Table 5.
prostitution\textsuperscript{14} and risky behavior. They identified their community as being at risk and a hotbed for this type of activity.

Those unaware of trafficking tended to identify uneducated, poorer segments of the population as the at risk group. They described potential victims of trafficking as easy girls, or dismissed them as individuals who took the wrong path and didn’t listen to their parents. With the exception of the three groups mentioned above, the girls never identified themselves as falling into these categories and therefore being at risk. An extreme example of this was a student in Skopje who was approached and solicited by a man while working in a café with an offer to work for him “for lots of money” in Gostivar, a town known for its brothels (she refused his offer). Troublingly, she did not take this offer as an indication of her vulnerability. Later in the session, this girl said she didn’t know how girls might be approached or how they might end up in vulnerable situations.

\textit{Intimacy with the Issue}

We categorized the level of intimacy with the issue of trafficking in each focus group according to the degree of personal connection to, and distance from, the issue. They were divided into four levels: personal connection; indirect connection or rumors; remote connection or through the media; or no intimacy at all.\textsuperscript{15}

**Personal connection** is defined as one or more people in the focus group personally knowing someone who is involved in trafficking. There were only four groups that fell into this category.\textsuperscript{16} These groups often included more than one individual with a personal story. The people they knew were close friends, next-door neighbors, or members of their family. The stories involving close friends and next-door neighbors were all stories of victimization, but stories about family members were more diverse. They included a story about cousin who died as a victim of trafficking, another about a cousin who rescued and married a victim of trafficking, and a third story about an uncle who had been arrested for trafficking foreign women into Macedonia.

**Indirect connection or rumors** was the second smallest category of intimacy, with eight groups included. This category included groups who knew of specific stories from specific towns and could site details of the case, but did not know the victim or the trafficker personally. The majority of these groups described trafficking and had high levels of awareness. It is interesting to note that roughly a quarter of both Macedonian and Albanian groups fall into this category. The stories they told almost always took place in their region. Since this was the case in the Eastern, Western, and Southern regions of the country, where these eight focus groups were conducted, trafficking may not be as localized as is often suggested.

\textsuperscript{14} See definition in ‘Overview of Trafficking’.
\textsuperscript{15} See Annex 2, Table 6.
\textsuperscript{16} This level of connection is far lower than the levels of connection in the other three countries studied. See Not For Sale: Child Trafficking Prevention in South Eastern Europe, Pilot Research in Albania, Moldova and Romania.
Remote connection or through the media was the second largest category of intimacy, and included eleven groups. The groups in this category could either only recall media stories or rumors with limited details and texture. These groups were all provincial and rural (with the exception of a group of young children from the orphanage in Skopje), and covered all regions. Individuals in these groups displayed low, moderate and high levels of awareness. This may mean that their absorption of the news and media stories about trafficking varied significantly depending on personal interest and frequency of exposure.

The final category was of no intimacy at all and was the largest category, including fourteen groups. Nearly forty percent of all focus groups fell into this category. They included provincial, rural, and urban groups, and every region of the country. Some belonged to youth groups, social organizations, or had no such affiliation. It is difficult to pinpoint why they lack intimacy with the issue, however their high percentage is extremely significant in conceiving the broader picture of trafficking awareness in Macedonia.

**Age**

Only older participants had any awareness of trafficking, and with an increase in age, the descriptions became clearer, and more textured. The turning point seemed to be at the age of fifteen.

Even though it is at fifteen that children’s awareness of trafficking begins to develop, this should not be taken as a natural point at which to begin awareness raising programs. This was evident through the children’s stories and the ages of known trafficking victims, who were as young as thirteen.\(^{17}\)

**Urban/Provincial/Rural Differences**

For this analysis we focus on the primary target group, young and adolescent girls. Therefore, focus groups that were included for comparative analysis only, such as focus groups with boys and adults were not included. There were seven focus groups conducted in urban settings, seventeen in provincial towns, and seven with rural communities. Overall, the population typically fell either into the ‘high’ category (42%), or the ‘low’ category (45%). However, there were differences when comparing urban, provincial and rural areas.

\(^{17}\) We were informed by several NGO’s that there was a recent case in early July, 2003 of a 13 year old Macedonian girl from Bitola being internally trafficked. Also, the girls admitted to the shelter were as young as 14.
Levels of Awareness, Differences Across Region Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Provincial</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Urban areas a majority of the population, 71.5%, had awareness levels in the moderate or higher categories, which compares with 53% in provincial areas and 43% in rural areas. However, when looking specifically at high levels there was very little difference between urban and provincial, with provincial 5 percentage points higher, at 47%, than urban at 43%, and rural trailing at 29%. In the provincial towns with high levels of awareness there were frequently very active youth centers, or the towns had highly visible prostitution and forced-prostitution. The real difference between urban and provincial is in the moderate range. Urban children have higher levels of exposure to campaigns and media outlets. It does not appear, however, that exposure to these outlets creates high levels of understanding or a real knowledge of what trafficking entails and how it functions. The rural communities tended not to have either the active youth centers or the exposure to campaigns and media, which are the factors contributing to the low overall awareness in these communities.

Ethnic Differences

Awareness levels varied significantly across ethnic groups in Macedonia. 72% of Macedonians had awareness levels of moderate or above. Albanians only had about half of that with 38% having those awareness levels. Roma communities had low to no awareness levels. The Roma groups appeared completely unaware of trafficking, and were uncomfortable discussing the subject. This may be due to the fact that, topics having to do sex or sexuality were considered taboo.

Levels of Awareness, Differences Across Ethnicities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Albanian</th>
<th>Macedonian</th>
<th>Roma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When looking at the highest level of awareness, again, Macedonian focus groups were twice as likely as Albanian focus groups to score in this category. There are potentially three factors that could be contributing to this difference. First, Albanian girls and women tend to lead more sheltered and protected lives than Macedonian women of the same age and generation. The second contributing factor is language. Albanians appear to have more limited access to media if their Macedonian is not fluent, which, in the
focus groups conducted for this research, often appeared to be the case. Also, campaign posters frequently only appear in Macedonian and therefore will impact the Albanian community less. The third factor is a result of the spacing of the focus groups. A higher proportion of the Albanian groups were conducted in rural areas where levels of awareness are lower across the board.

**Gender**

We ran a small number of focus groups with boys, mainly as a control group for the research. Six focus groups were conducted with boys, and these were conducted in rural, provincial and urban settings. Participants in these groups were primarily Macedonian, with one in a Roma community.

All groups (with the exception of one) had low levels of awareness, no intimacy with the issue and no stories to share about trafficking. It was apparent in several of these groups that the boys felt trafficking was a gendered issue and therefore not relevant to them. Their interpretations of the posters also reflected this lack of connection to the issue. It was evident that none of the boys felt the posters were targeted at them (except in one group, where a participant suggested that the SOS number was a number to call to get women.) It is also interesting to note that half of these groups were conducted in the capital where girls showed much higher levels of awareness of the issue.

The exception to this pattern was the group of boys in Strumica, a border town, who were involved in a very active youth center. These boys were exceptionally engaged in social issues and had recently aired a call-in-show on their youth radio program on a local station about trafficking.

Unless boys and men become engaged in this issue and are more aware of the implications of this social problem, awareness efforts will be unable to reach and impact the opinions of the population at large. If trafficking remains solely a gender issue it has the potential to remain marginalized on the political stage of Macedonia.

**Parents**

In addition to the focus groups for the target audience of 8 – 18 year olds, two focus groups with concerned parents were added to the research study, again as a check and to create a fuller picture of how the issue is perceived. While both men and women were invited to participate in the groups, only one man participated. This further illustrates that the issue of trafficking is perceived as a gendered issue. Both groups were in Eastern Macedonia, one in Probistip, and one in Sveti Nikola. The levels of awareness were high or moderate, but neither group seemed to have a direct connection with any stories. The issue raised in both towns by the parents was their concerns for girls in their community being lured to another city and into prostitution, perhaps leading to forced prostitution. They identified the migration trend of leaving their towns to go to the capital or to towns in Western Macedonia. These women identified the lack of opportunities for young people in their communities as a main contributing factor pushing younger people to consider increasingly desperate ways out. However, while both groups showed concern for potential victims of forced prostitution or trafficking, both groups agreed that they
would not accept these victims back into their communities. The rejection of victims of forced prostitution by their own communities poses a serious problem for the future reintegration of victims back into normal lives. This issue cannot be addressed without community education initiatives that target the community at large.

**Knowledge of Preventative Actions**

On the whole, knowledge of preventative actions was not very detailed. It consisted mainly of asking advice of family, friends, or people who had been to the foreign destination. Other actions suggested included making sure the job was secure, that they had safe accommodation, and people to contact on the other end. The importance of trusting your travel companions was frequently mentioned. However, none of the groups mentioned specific ways of ensuring or determining the trustworthiness of their travel partners.

A few mentioned learning a new language or taking self-defense classes prior to leaving. However, specific preventative actions were only mentioned in a handful of cases, and included: giving a phone number to family; taking appropriate documents and keeping your passport safe; only traveling through organized trips or agencies, and finally, checking on the internet. Checking with embassies, consulates, police, or other official government organs were never mentioned.

**Who would you go to for Advice if Taking a Job Abroad or in Another Town?**

Parents were most frequently mentioned—they were the first mentioned in almost every single focus group, barring the groups from the orphanages. However, their importance was given slightly less weight than in Albania, Moldova, and Romania. While parents were mentioned frequently, when asked if others they knew would listen to their parents advice, in at least half the cases, the children said no.

The younger the respondent, the more likely they were to say their parents were their primary advice givers. Older children mentioned friends and people who were already abroad as most likely to influence them.

Teachers were hardly ever mentioned, and religious leaders were never mentioned.

A small but significant minority said that they would not take advice from anyone, but that they would decide for themselves.

**Safety From Trafficking**

Overall, safety from trafficking was overwhelmingly identified as a problem—89% of the participants thought this issue was important, while only 6% thought it was somewhat important, and 5% thought it was not important at all.
The differences among ethnic communities were of note: 100% of Albanian children thought safety from trafficking was important, 91% of Macedonian children thought it was important, while only 50% of Roma children thought it was important. As mentioned above, Roma children tended to be less aware than the other ethnic groups, which could be why they considered safety a less important issue.

2. **Comparison of Child Perceptions of Dangers of Trafficking if Working Abroad or in another city**

**Perceived Dangers**

Children generally thought trafficking was something that happened to foreign women traveling through or to Macedonia, but did not identify it as an issue currently facing Macedonian women. However, most groups (71%) agreed that it could happen to Macedonian girls, and even often admitted it could happen in their community. Only 11% thought that it could not happen to Macedonians, but identified foreign nationalities, such as Ukrainian, Romanian, and Bulgarian as most at risk. Despite this high percentage of participants recognizing that Macedonians could be at risk of being trafficked, very few identified themselves as being at risk.

No focus group made the connection between taking unknown job offers, and trafficking. This is a well-known method of entrapping young women in other countries and enticing them to cross borders. This lack of connection is possibly due to the fact that external trafficking is not yet recognized as a problem for Macedonians, and young women are being lured into trafficking through other routes.

**Perception of Travel**

Overall perceptions of **good** things that can happen when you travel for work to another country or city included such things as, money, education, and jobs. Virtually every focus group mentioned money and improved job prospects, while over half mentioned improved education opportunities. There was distinction between responses from rural and provincial participants versus urban responses. The former appeared to have a more romanticized view of traveling in general, with the desire to meet new people, see new cultures and improve their standards of living was frequently mentioned. Urban participants appeared more practical and focused on improving their job prospects and earning more money. A significantly higher proportion of urban respondents mentioned education than did rural or provincial respondents.
The groups were quite forthcoming with ideas about the bad things that can happen to you when you travel for work. In most cases these were more general fears of crime, losing a job, and falling in with bad company. Overall the rural and provincial groups were more focused on general problems, where as the urban participants had more specific concerns, which were job related. Only four groups mentioned the possibility of becoming a prostitute and two mentioned forced prostitution or slavery. There was also a high level of concern about drugs and a fear of encountering drug dealers. This may be related to recent anti-drug campaigns in Macedonian schools. It was the general perception that Macedonians who traveled for work might be victims of trickery, poor working conditions or unfair wages. This was true for all regional types. Only a few connections were made to methods used by traffickers, however, one girl did mentioned a fear of having her passport taken away and forced to do something she did not want to do. Another raised a concern about an agency posing as a legitimate job provider by advertising baby-sitting jobs, while really sending girls into forced prostitution.

When asked about bad things that could happen to women many mentioned general security issues, such as crime, kidnapping, and exploitation. However, groups were more likely to mention sexual assault, such as rape, abuse, and sexual molestation. Becoming a prostitute was mentioned in seven groups, and these were distinct from the additional five groups that mentioned forced prostitution or trafficking. With the exception of one group, sexual exploitation was always linked to women as the victims. One group pointed out that boys could also be vulnerable to sexual predation, but this was not a commonly held opinion. There was very little difference among the responses in the provincial towns, rural areas, and the capital.

There was a strong contrast between answers given for ‘bad things that can happen’, as compared to ‘bad things that can happen to women’. Until asked specifically about women, groups rarely mentioned prostitution, and never mentioned rape, trafficking or sexual abuse. When issues around security and crime were mentioned, groups tended to feel that women were more vulnerable then men to all kinds of crime.

Mentions of Trafficking

“They promise them good jobs, and then force them into prostitution.”
–Teenage girl, Western Macedonia

“All this about trafficking—this is the thing that troubles me the most.”
–University student, Skopje

“Your passport can be taken away, and you can be forced to work as a slave or prostitute.”
–Teenager, Skopje

“We might be underpaid.”
–Rural Macedonian girl
Prevalence of Travel in Children’s Lives

TABLE M1: Children’s experience with, and knowledge of, travel

- Most Macedonian children either had traveled themselves, or knew someone who had traveled to another country. Only 20% of those surveyed had not traveled, or did not know another child who had traveled.
- Significantly, nearly half of the children knew of another child, or young adult under the age of 18, who had traveled for work. In comparison to other countries surveyed, 80% of Albanian children knew children who had traveled, 37% of Moldovans and 20% of Romanians. There is a common practice in Macedonia to spend one or more years abroad working as a babysitter, or au pair in Western European countries.
- For those with experience traveling, most frequent destinations were neighboring countries or the former Yugoslavia (45.1% of respondents). Nearly 18% had also been to Western European countries, and 21% had been to Greece. Only 1% had traveled to the United States.
- Most children wanted to travel again, and most desired destinations were Western European countries (64.8%), followed by the United States (31.1%).

Would children travel abroad for work?

Chart M2: Do children want to travel (travel again)
Nearly all the children, when asked if they would like to travel, or travel again, said yes. Most of
the children had very positive images of travel, and associated it with holidays, or working successfully abroad. With only a handful of exceptions, children had no direct connection with trafficking when traveling to another country, had heard very few negative stories, or were aware of any danger when traveling.

Table M3: If children had a chance to work abroad would they?

When asked a more detailed question about wanting to travel for work well over half (61.8%) replied affirmatively (probably yes, or absolutely). Only a small minority was against traveling for work (6.6%). The high percentage of children who were ‘absolutely’ willing to travel for work (20.5%), is considerably higher than in those countries where the dangers of traveling for work are better known: 10% in Albania, 6% in Moldova and 8% in Romania.

When asked about their motivations for wanting to work abroad (see Chart M4 below), most children cited adventure (40%), and independence (38%). Education and training accounted for 31% of the replies, and money accounted for only 16% of the replies. However, during the discussion, their answers differed slightly. Most children still cited adventure, independence or learning about a new culture, when asked about their own motivations. However, when asked why other children who traveled did so, the answers were almost entirely for money or for education. It is clear that the perception is that those who travel for work, do so mostly for money and better work opportunities elsewhere.

In contrast, children’s responses for not wanting to work abroad were also illuminating. Only 65% of the children answered this question.
Most children who did not want to travel for work were afraid of missing their family. Concerns about safety were only mentioned in 14% of the responses. Of note, only 7% of the children thought that the possibility of finding a job in their hometowns would be a compelling reason not to travel for work.

**Knowledge of specific NGO Initiatives**

Overall, particularly outside of the capital, children had low levels of knowledge about specific campaigns. Very few could recall any NGO initiative at all.

Posters were the most commonly recalled medium when focus group participants were describing NGO initiatives. Six focus groups mentioned seeing a poster in Skopje, often describing the IOM poster. Three other groups mentioned seeing posters, two groups in Bitola had seen the IOM poster, and one had seen a poster on the border with Bulgaria. Even those who were familiar with the IOM poster and easily described it were unable or unwilling to self identify as a potential victim of trafficking, not did they consider themselves in the target audience for the poster.

“Each one of us when we see this message, may think about it for half an hour or so, but then don’t think about it again, since it couldn’t happen to me.”

—Albanian high-school student, Skopje

“I feel safe, because it is not targeted at me.”

—Macedonian teenager, Skopje

“I heard an ad on the radio, talking about prevention campaigns that only include foreign countries, and don’t really tell you what to do.”

—Provincial Macedonian girl, Vicina
Other than posters, participants in focus groups identified brochures, a hotline, workshops, and a questionnaire about the issue of trafficking. In particular, three focus groups remembered seeing brochures about trafficking, either included in newspapers, or given to them directly. Only two groups had heard of a hotline, one in Bitola and one in Skopje, and both connected the hotline to more general issues of violence against women. Two groups had participated in a workshop specifically devoted to trafficking awareness, one in Strumica, and one orphanage in Skopje. Finally, the same group from an orphanage in Skopje also remembered participating in a questionnaire given by HOPS to urban youth in Skopje.

Two groups on the border with Albania in the provincial town of Debar knew of Television campaigns in Albania, and could recall anti-trafficking slogans, and messages promoting the safety of women and children. These campaigns were Albanian campaigns, which they saw because their town received broadcasts from over the border.
VI. POSTER ANALYSIS

Introduction
Posters are one of the most common media used in awareness raising campaigns, and often crystallize messages that may also be disseminated by radio or television spots. They are often used to condense a complex issue into an immediately understandable, succinct message. Analysis of reactions to posters provides a useful way of determining overall awareness levels and is a means of determining how an audience responds to different presentations of the same issue. The use of these posters in this research is intended to gain a broader understanding of Macedonian adolescents’ perspectives and to help determine how best to conduct prevention campaigns in the future. One further aspect of this research was to determine whether adolescents responded more to visual images, or to the text.

The anti-trafficking posters used in this research were gathered from numerous NGOs and IOs working on trafficking in the region. The posters varied in terms of their country of origin, the intent of the poster, and relative importance of the visual image or text of the poster. All posters were gathered from countries that are part of the SEE Pact. The chosen posters each approach trafficking in different ways. They present trafficking from different angles and attempt to elicit very different emotions. Four of the posters chosen have also been used in research conducted in Albania, Moldova and Romania and two other posters selected were specific to Macedonia. The posters presented the material either with the intention of shocking the audience on an emotional level, or providing the viewer with information.

The posters were presented to the focus group as a whole. Participants were asked to describe their initial reactions, and general thoughts provoked by the poster. They were then asked some specific questions regarding their impression of what the main message was, how effect it was, and who the target audience was. Finally they were asked if they would notice the poster in a day-to-day setting and pay attention to the message.

Children’s Overall Responses
The children’s overall responses divided into three different broad categories in order to be compared. First, the results were analyzed for differences within and between different regions and region types. Secondly, they were analyzed for differences between different characteristic groups, such as age, ethnicity, and gender. Finally, the third category was to examine the difference, if any, in the levels of sophistication of the response, and the empathy the children displayed.

Children’s familiarity with this type of medium
Children in the capital were much more familiar with posters as a medium to convey messages about social issues. However, it appears that most information campaigns are centered on the capital, and therefore, children living in other regions were not likely to have seen many awareness posters in general, and trafficking awareness posters specifically. Children outside the capital, who had seen posters, had either seen them while in Skopje, on the borders, or in one case, in Bitola.
Gender
On the whole, the boys did not give as thoughtful responses to the posters as the girls, and seemed to think the posters were not targeted at them. There was one group of boys, however, who were extremely engaged, and gave thoughtful nuanced responses. They were involved with an active youth center and appeared generally interested in social issues rather than trafficking specifically.

Ethnic Differences
There was very little difference in responses of Albanian and Macedonia children. The differences appeared to be more along regional type and location than ethnicity. However, there was a difference between the Albanian and Macedonian children’s responses versus the Roma children’s responses. The Roma children in Shutka and Stip were extremely uncomfortable discussing the posters and when asked if the images and the text made them uncomfortable they would readily say yes. When discussing the posters they were hesitant to share their opinions and thoughts. However, in one group, where we asked them to write down their responses to the posters before the discussion, their reactions were insightful and far more similar to responses gathered from other ethnic groups.

Age
It seemed that 15 was the age where children were being exposed to the issues of travel safety and trafficking. Therefore, there was a noticeable difference in responses to the posters at this age.

Children 15 years old, and older, were typically able to understand the general message of the poster even if they were unable to connect the text message with the message of the image.

Children under 12 were completely unaware and typically did not understand the posters’ messages. Even on the few occasions when they understood the text, they were unable to connect the text with the image. This was however, often a problem among all age groups and was simply magnified among the younger groups. Often the younger groups did not connect the posters with travel safety or trafficking even when the poster explicitly stated “trafficking” or attempted a simple anti-trafficking message. Because we did not want to frighten the youngest children, we refrained from showing the 8-12 year olds the “forced prostitution” story poster.

Levels of Sophistication in Their Answers
Some adolescents had very sophisticated responses and interpretations of the messages in the posters. The level of sophistication seemed to vary depending on level of education, or previous degree of intimacy with the issue. On some occasions, in the capital, respondents went beyond describing the message and lastly analyzed the design of the posters.
Empathy versus Blame
There did not seem to be a clear distinction between adolescents who responded to the posters with empathy for the victims portrayed, and those that tended to blame the victim for her actions. One girl in Stip, when discussing the “Didn’t She Know,” poster said it didn’t make her feel anything and suggested that, “there are some people that enjoy doing these things.” While another participant from a focus group conducted in the same region felt sad for those portrayed in the posters.

Conclusion
To date, only a few nationwide trafficking awareness campaigns have taken place in Macedonia. Public discussion of the issue of trafficking is new, and restricted to concerned parties, rather than the public at large.

Participants were fairly responsive to the posters as a medium to convey messages about trafficking. In particular, youth from smaller provincial towns and rural areas noted that posters were not often displayed in their communities, and for that reason would receive more attention. Interestingly, in rural areas where children’s exposure to posters as a medium for information dissemination and awareness raising was limited, the responses were very thoughtful. The children seemed to take more time to think through the content of the posters and were not inclined to comment on the design of the poster.

Further, participants in Albanian and Roma communities observed that posters were not often available in their own languages, which might contribute to lower levels of awareness in these communities.

The messages conveyed by posters should be kept simple: the complicated messages tended to confuse the children, or give them mixed messages. Complex ideas only worked for those participants with already high levels of awareness and were more educated. These audiences had more complex level of analysis of messages about anti-trafficking.

The perceived targets of anti-trafficking seemed almost entirely young women or women in general. Almost, no one thought that the posters were, or indeed, should be, targeted at men.

Levels of self-identification with victims of trafficking were very low, even amongst vulnerable populations. It appeared that almost all participants thought other groups were more at risk—poorer, less-educated, less-informed young women, or women from other countries.
Individual Poster Analysis

Barbie
This is an example of a poster intended to elicit shock and an emotional response from the viewer. Other posters exist which also aim to raise the viewer’s awareness through more shocking, and even brutal images; however, given the target age group of our research subjects, we chose to refrain from using posters which would be inappropriate for that age group. The poster’s striking image shows a woman presented as a commodity. Physically, she appears to be trapped; however, her facial expression is somewhat ambiguous. This poster was frequently used throughout the region to initiate awareness campaigns, and highlights the forced aspect of trafficking.

Initial Physical Response
Many participants had a strong initial physical reaction to this poster, partly due to the strength of the image of the woman in a box, but also partly due to the fact that it was always the first poster shown. The image of a woman in a box was clear to all but the youngest participants, who were often confused by the doll imagery. (One 12 year old thought, “this is a Barbie doll. She wants to show that she is very pretty.”) Roma girls became physically uncomfortable when viewing this poster, and had a hard time discussing it.

General Comments
The poster prompted discussion in all but a few of the groups, and it seemed that even if the groups were not familiar with trafficking, they understood the message that portraying women as for sale like dolls was a bad thing. In some groups, the poster initiated a discussion of the phenomenon of trafficking for the first time in the focus group.

Many participants described feelings of anger and sadness when viewing the poster. Some groups were very uncomfortable, in particular the Roma participants. Urban girls (from Skopje), were more likely not to find the image scary, and in fact they thought it was too sweet and did not show the real side of prostitution.

Participants from rural areas seemed to have more simplistic perceptions of the poster, and were more likely to feel uncomfortable when asked to discuss their feelings about the
poster. Most had not seen posters like this before, and the glossy image of a woman or a
doll in a box seemed contradictory to some.

Some groups identified with the girl in the box, while other groups blamed the girl for her
situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empathy versus Blame</th>
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<tr>
<td>“I really hate such people, these prostitutes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–Girl in orphanage, Skopje</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| “If somebody has a good strong personality, she will not be forced
to do this.” |
| –Teenage girl, Kochani |
| “This woman here is not really to blame. She was not informed.” |
| –Girl, Skopje |

Perceived Target
Most groups thought the target audience for this poster was women—in particular young
women. Some groups, however, thought everyone should read it. Only three groups, one
of which was a group of boys, included men as a separate category in their perceived
target audience. Some groups clearly did not perceive themselves as the target audience
or vulnerable to being sold or becoming involved in trafficking—rather, the target
audience was thought to be those who were already involved in trafficking or
prostitution. This response was likely to be in or near communities where prostitution
was highly visible, or among groups in the capital, Skopje. One teenager from the South
(Struga) thought: “this poster is for women who sell their body.”

Perceived Message
Almost all of the older groups perceived this poster to be a poster against the selling of
women, although the concept that the woman in the poster might be there by force was
not frequently mentioned. As mentioned above, however, younger children often
did not make the connection between the woman and the doll being in the box,
and why she might be there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clear Message</th>
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| “Women are not to be sold for money.  
Women should not be dolls for men. They
are supposed to be their own persons.” |
| –Teenage girl, Sveti Nikola |

While some groups thought the message was clear, even within those groups there was
some uncertainty about the essence of the message. This poster was most confusing for
younger adolescents.

The more sophisticated media consumers, the urban girls, thought the message was
unclear—the image without the text didn’t work as an anti-trafficking message, and not
everyone stops to read the text of posters.
Effective
Some groups thought the message was very effective. Groups in smaller provincial towns and rural areas thought it would be effective because there were no posters on social issues in their town, so this one would stand out.

Would they Notice it?
The design of the poster, with the glossy image of the doll made it attractive to younger children, but the older girls were less inclined to notice the poster. Some thought if they saw it in passing, they would think it was an advertisement for a new product.

Overall, only a small minority of the participants thought the Barbie poster was the most effective. However, a number of rural focus groups thought it was most effective, because of its shocking quality, and its powerful message. A number also said they liked it least for exactly those reasons. A majority of the urban focus groups thought the Barbie poster was the least effective poster shown—it was thought that no one would stop to look properly, and the message of the poster would be hard to determine after only a quick glance.

“I’d walk by, I wouldn’t stop.”

The human rights message in this poster made it distinct. This poster strives to be informative and empowering, by sharing information about children’s rights. This poster is heavy on text, and was designed for use as an educational tool. The poster was chosen for this research because of its theoretical presentation of information and its use of a rights-based approach. However, the image used was not very striking, and the text was too dense to be read at a distance.

Initial Physical Response
This poster, being very text heavy, often required two readings of the taglines before any response from the focus groups was generated. The participants were, on the whole, fairly slow to respond to this poster, and, when they did respond, often simply quoted back the text, rather than interpreting it, or saying what the poster meant to them. There was little to no physical response to this poster.
General Comments
Overall, children were not particularly drawn to this poster. However, on the whole, they did like the message it was conveying, just not the manner in which it was being presented. There were often lengthy discussions about the design, which was perceived to be confusing. Those who did like the poster liked it for the message of the poster only, despite the design. A student in Skopje, who liked the message of the poster, said that the poster was good, because “if the children know their rights they can fight for them,” and an Albanian girl in a village called Slatino, in Western Macedonia said that, “children should know that trafficking happens to children too.”

The blurred image in the background and its meaning were almost universally considered unclear, and the text was considered to be too small. A handful of children said that they would stop and notice this poster if they saw it displayed, but most said they would not.

A handful of the children remembered the ‘Rights of the Child’ from school, or other information seminars, but most did not. Those that did recognize the information being conveyed were more likely to be receptive to the content of the poster. However, the idea that children hold ‘rights’, and why this might be important did not appear to resonate as a concept. Although the intention of the poster would be to empower the children by alerting them to the rights that they possess, most saw the poster as an affirmation that it was someone else’s responsibility to look after them. One group of older girls in Skopje, however, did feel the poster as empowering.

The groups did responded with their own thoughts rather than repeating the text often related the poster directly to trafficking, and the importance of the involvement of the state in the effort to prevent trafficking. One concerned girl in Bitola suggested that, “girls go into trafficking because their economic situation is not so good, and maybe the financial situation of the state can influence them.”

Perceived Target
The vast majority of the children felt the poster was targeted at children or young people like themselves. A minority also included parents, other adults, single mothers or bad people as the intended audience.

Perceived Message
The main message from the poster was taken to be that children have rights, and should not be abused. One teenager in Kochani, said they felt the message was, “Don’t abuse children, children have rights.” The message was also interpreted as a warning, to take care and not be tricked. It is interesting to note that a few focus groups felt the message of the poster was that the state and parents had the responsibility to look after the children and young people, and did not see the message as rights based, but rather as a reminder of
responsibilities. For example, a girl from Stuga said, “the state must take care of the children. Parents must protect them, must protect their children.” There were also some darker response to the poster’s message, such as one suggested by a 15 year-old from Gevgelija, who said, “the message is that there is someone to take care of us, but in fact, no one really cares. Everybody cares only for their own children.”

Clear Message
The message was clear for the older children, but for the very youngest (8 – 12 year olds), the concepts were complex, and not easy to analyze. When asked if the message was clear, they would often respond yes, but clearly did not understand the message or would simply repeat a line from the poster. An example of this confusion was a response of a younger girl in Debar who said, “the poster means we don’t go anywhere without asking our parents.”

Effective
Most focus groups felt the message of this poster was effective, and important, but that the poster itself was not effective as a means to convey the message. They often said it was text heavy and would not stop and see an unattractive poster or that it was similar would therefore be ignored.

“Human Beings Are Beyond Price”
This poster was chosen for testing because of its warning message and striking image. Rather than using shock as the main tool to engage the viewer, this poster requires an interpretation of the seemingly simple text, combined with a complex image that can be interpreted in several ways. The girl is trapped behind a barcode as if in prison. The intended interpretation is to see the girl as trapped because she has become a commodity. This poster does not seek to impart information. This poster has also been used in regional campaigns, and a smaller version of the image has been used as the trademark of a regional trafficking campaign.

Initial Physical Responses
This poster elicited only a few physical or immediate responses. However, on occasion the girls would cover their mouths and faintly gasp. This was particularly true among the two Roma communities in which focus groups were conducted. In these groups the girls admitted that the poster made them uncomfortable, but were not

In Ohrid a teenage girls suggested that, “Prostitution stigmatizes her and then she can’t make other people change their opinion.”
–Teenage girl, Ohrid

“Sometimes women who prostitute themselves go to prison and are abused.”
–Teenage girl, Struga
forthcoming as to why. Others admitted that the poster frightened them, “Her face shows what happened to her, its very frightening.” (Bitola) Their facial expressions were often questioning as if they were trying to figure out the picture.

General Comments
There was a lot of confusion about the barcode poster. Often the responses would begin with questions such as: “Is it a boy or a girl?” and “Is she crying?” The younger children were very often concerned with whether or not it was a girl or a boy and were not connecting the poster to issues concerning travel safety. One group in the capital even suggested she may have stolen something and that was why she was in prison, “It will teach you not to steal or do bad things so you don’t go to prison.” In the orphanages in Skopje girls asked if, “she had done something bad.” In only one group did the girls place blame on the girl in the poster. In Gevgalia the girls commented that they thought “this woman should be in prison,” and that she was “an object.” A small number of groups also suggested she was in jail because she was a prostitute.

All of the groups recognized she was behind bars, “Looks like bars from a prison,” (Struga) and they were often concerned with her lack of freedom, as a teenage girl in Sveti Nikola said, “It seems this woman is imprisoned and doesn’t have her own freedom.”

Children responded separately to the image and to the text. This image of the girl behind a barcode or behind bars often elicited strong feelings of fear and pity. In Nerashte, a girl said, “People should be treated equally, and not divided by social class. I feel sorry for her.” The children often mentioned her being trapped, “She can’t do anything about it,” unable to escape and without freedom. And almost always identified the girl in the image as a victim. In two groups in eastern Macedonia the girls felt she had no future. One suggested the girl was trying to warn people not to end up like her, she said that “the physical pain may be over but she’ll always be trapped.” In another town in the same region a participant said, “it is as if she was abused and now she is not necessary anymore. Now she is just thrown in prison.”

Very few of the focus groups were able to identify a dual meaning in the poster. However those that did were able to connect the text with the message. The groups that did identify that it was a barcode were more likely to comment on her being a product, “it looks like a barcode, every product has a barcode.”(Bitola). Groups in the Skopje in particular were more likely to make this connection and their interpretation of the posters message was correspondingly more sophisticated. “She is treated like a commodity to be transferred from one owner to another. She is being induced into working for someone else and she is just a means for making money for them.” (Skopje). While several focus groups in Skopje recognized the dual meaning of the barcode as both the price tag and bars of a jail cell, only six focus groups from outside of the capital recognized that it was also a barcode.
Perceived Target
There was an overall sense among focus groups in rural and provincial areas that this poster was targeted at everyone or at least all women, but some groups felt it was for “18 and on” (Gevgalia, Strumica). Only one focus group, which was in the west, mentioned that this poster was targeting boys. (Slatino) This was especially notable because it was the only mention in any focus group of a poster targeting males. However, in the capital there was a very different understanding of exactly who this poster is targeting. It ranged from the “the ones who are trafficking,” “prostitutes and young girls,” “heads of state,” and “parents who should protect this from happening to their children” to “those who are finding themselves in this situation”. This broad range of target audience perceived by the children in the capital may indicate a lack of identification with trafficking as an issue affecting their community, but could also be due to their higher levels of sophistication since growing up in an urban setting, they are exposed to a wider range of messages and posters.

Perceived Message
In several focus groups in the capital participants commented that the text did not adequately fit the image. They often felt the message was telling traffickers that they should not sell people or was a warning to parents that they should be careful to protect their children from being trafficked.

In Bitola, one group said that the message was “Women are not for sale. Commodities are for sale but not women even though they are sold.” In the provincial towns they felt that the message was that trafficking should not be happening; “Human beings should not be sold,” (Probistip) “Women are being abused and they are not to be.” (Kochani)

Clarity of Message
Overall the focus group participants said that the message was not clear: “I’m not sure of the main message.” (Debar) There was some variation to this trend along regional lines, however, in provincial and rural towns the groups were split fairly evenly on whether the message was clear, but even when they said it was clear, they had had difficulty actually explaining the message in their own words. In Skopje where more children understood the connection between the image and the text several girls still did not feel that the message was clear, “I don’t get a clear message.”(Skopje) Some, though, felt that the message was clear because they were able to make the connection, “I like this poster. It is clearer, the person behind bars and the barcode is good.” (Skopje) This same group felt that the message was clear, “only together with the words.”

Effective
Half the children thought this poster was effective. This judgment had a direct correlation to levels of understanding the barcode image. Groups that did not recognize the bar code as such were unable to link the text to the image and were often confused by the message, and did not consider this poster to be effective.

Would they Notice it?
All of the groups responded positively when asked if they would notice the poster.
“Forced Prostitution”
This poster was chosen for testing because it shares a victim’s story, and gives her a human face. It warns the target audience, rather than frightening the viewer with the threat of trafficking and demystifies the process of trafficking, making it seem as if it could happen to anyone. The audience is asked to identify with the victim, either directly as women, or for those who might use prostitutes, for them to see her as human being. The depiction of the woman as a mother, daughter and sister breaks through her objectification as a prostitute.

Initial Physical Responses
There was very little physical response to this poster, however, it was typically shown fourth in the order of posters. In one group the participants made faces and pulled back from the poster. In an older group of university students in Skopje, the girls mentioned having goose-bumps after reading the story. However, children frequently mentioned their emotional responses before being able to discuss the message or the poster in general. Children typically mentioned feeling scared, sad, bad, unpleasant, and in particular, uncomfortable. This discomfort, however, did not affect their willingness to respond. In fact, this poster often received more reactions than the others.

General Comments
When responding to this poster, children came the closest to self-identifying themselves as at risk. Some mentioned how they would not like to be in her situation, and that this could happen to anyone, married and unmarried, “it is scary because this can happen to many girls,” (Ohrid) and a teenage girl in Bitola said “we also might be in her spot.” They also mentioned a need to be careful in order to protect themselves from having this happen to them. In Debar, a young Albanian girl said, “we should be careful who we listen to or hang around with so it doesn’t happen to us,” and in Gevgalia in a Macedonian focus group they said that “it could happen anywhere…it is frightening, we can also become this.”

This poster, more than the other posters used in this research, elicited compassion for the victims. In Skopje an Albanian teenage girl said, “it makes me hate the people who do this, the people who lie, and it gives me compassion for the girl.”

There may be a relationship between the sophistication of responses to this poster and the respondent’s level of proximity to the issue. A group of Albanian high-school children in
Skopje, who had indirect, but real exposure to the issue were very analytical of the poster’s message. When asked about the poster, one said she was struck by the mirror image on the poster and that “maybe one is the mother and the other is the prostitute, the darker image.” In Probistip, where the girls felt their community was at risk and had very personal stories about the issue, the girls’ responses were extremely sophisticated. They suggested that the father and brother mentioned in the poster might be artificial ones, “maybe the father is the pimp and the brother is those that she has to sleep with.” They also suggested that the scars on her body that are mentioned in the text of the poster might be figurative and that they really represent “the unwanted pregnancies and the children she will receive.” This set of responses was far more sophisticated than any other, and this group was made up of four girls who each had a story of forced prostitution involving close friends.

**Perceived Target**
The children frequently said the intended target of this poster was women in general. Often they said the target was more younger women, uneducated women, or children. However, on three occasions respondents answered this question quite differently, the specifically mentioned those seeking jobs away from home. In Bitola, a provincial city in the south, one group said that the target was “ones that are foreign, for women and girls who are offered jobs, but not well informed,” and in Probistip they said it is for, “ones who seek jobs abroad, for ones who were sold and didn’t listen to the advice of their parents and those unsure about what can happen on a trip.” In Struga one group felt that the target of the poster was prostitutes, “it is for prostitutes, girls 18-19 [years old] and above to take care and not trust everyone.”

**Perceived Message**
The message most often mentioned by the children involved trust and the need for security when traveling. Almost all of the focus groups felt it was a warning not to trust people and to be more careful. On several occasions they also specifically mentioned that this poster was reminding them to be careful when taking a job in another country, “before taking a job we need to phone and see whom we are dealing with,” said a boy in Skopje.

**Clarity of Message**
The overall message of this poster seemed to be very clear to the children. They almost always immediately recognized the poster as a warning to be more careful and not so trusting. When asked if they felt the message was clear they responded “yes” 100% of the time even if they had mentioned that the text was a little long for a poster and might be better used on television.
Effective
Overall the children felt that the message was effective. In the capital, where focus
groups were more familiar with posters and awareness raising campaigns in general, a
girl said it was not an effective poster and instead it should be used as “a media clip.”

Would they Notice it?
All of the groups said that they would notice this poster if they saw it on the street.
However, unlike the other posters, they said they would notice this one because of the
text.

Several groups mentioned that the image was not catchy and though they liked that the
poster was dark, they felt that in order for people to really notice it, the poster needed to
have a sharper or larger image. However, even without this they felt they would notice
this poster and take the time to read it.

“S.O.S.”
This poster was chosen for testing for two reasons. It was part of a current campaign in
Macedonia and this research could provide useful feedback. Further, more participants were likely
to have higher levels of recognition. Second, this is an example of an informative poster, which
gives the viewer a potential course of action. The poster seeks to get the attention of the viewer by
using “SOS”, the internationally recognized cry for help. This poster also has both a simple
image, as well as a simple message. The poster is not specifically targeted at victims of trafficking,
but is targeted at female victims of violence in general.

Initial Physical Responses
The reaction to this poster was, on the whole, very positive. The reasons given were mainly because
it offered an action to take, someone to call, and gave the viewer some hope. Some commented that the poster was empowering: it made
the viewer stronger, not weaker, and offered a way forward. Some respondents (notably
those in the orphanage), however, did not feel that the poster was clear about what kind
of help it offered.

General Comments
Some mentioned that people don’t really trust the help offered by these help lines. They
thought it was difficult to help and protect people who might call to give information.
Only a minority thought that the number could be called if you were not in trouble yet, or
that it could be used as a source of advice.
Perceived Target
The answers on who was the perceived target audience were split between all women, or young women, and women already involved in prostitution. Interestingly, about half of the respondents did not identify themselves as part of the target audience, and therefore were less likely to remember that there was a number they could call. The other half thought it was good to know about a number, should they need help in the future. A teenager in Skopje said, “I would think ‘it’s not for me’. It is for easy girls.” One seemingly engaged boy in Stumica felt that it was not targeted at those in prostitution or those who were already victims of trafficking. He said that the poster was: “Only for those that haven’t entered the circles of trafficking. Those won’t have access to a phone.” However, a small minority appeared to feel the poster was also applicable to them, and a number of girls wrote down the phone number, although within the same focus groups others felt it as not targeted at them.

Perceived Message
Some from provincial towns also saw it as a warning, or a message to take precautions, while participants from urban areas felt it did not have enough of a prevention message. Several Roma adolescents linked the poster to domestic violence, suggesting the woman had been beaten, or that they needed to call because they had been beaten badly. They were the only groups to mention domestic violence in relation to this poster. The mixed gender groups had more difficulty seeing a clear message in this poster—one boy thought it was a number where the caller could find women. However, it should also be noted that the focus groups with both boys and girls were also younger groups, between the ages of 8 and 12.

Several groups admitted they would not know what the poster was about if they just saw the poster, out of the context of this focus group. They said they would need more information, or a discussion group to really determine for whom the poster might be targeted.

Clear Message
This message was clear to most participants—that there was someone you can call if you’re in trouble. It also had a message of hope. A girl living in an orphanage in Skopje said: “I think this is the best poster. It has a number for people in trouble. Somebody can call it if they are in trouble.”

Effective
Groups consistently considered this poster to be very effective. The only negative comments were on the design of the poster, and the unclear image of the woman in the
background. One group noted that the ‘Open Gate’ logo was very good. They felt it was welcoming, and the viewer would feel encouraged, and that she could ask anything.

**Would they Notice it?**
Yes, on the whole most adolescents said they would notice this poster, but about half felt the poster was not really for them. Only three groups had seen this poster before—one group of engaged older teenage girls in Debar, Southwestern Macedonia, one group of students in Skopje, who had seen the poster on TV, and a group of socially concerned boys in Strumica. A number of other groups, however, mentioned that they knew of other SOS numbers they could call.

**“Didn’t she know?”**
This poster was also selected because it was specific to Macedonia and is one of the few domestic posters targeted specifically at raising awareness about trafficking. It is important to note that this poster had been used within the last twelve months. While the poster is text heavy, the image is prominent. The barcode theme was used on this poster as well. However, it was smaller and not the feature of the poster. It is placed on the shoulder of an attractive girl viewed from behind. The text serves to alert the viewer of trafficking as an important problem in Macedonia. However, it does not ask the viewer to engage with the girl on the poster, or provide information about actions to be taken. The poster is intended to alert the viewer to the problem of trafficking as an issue within Macedonia than rather than providing information about preventative actions to be taken.

**Children’s responses**
Unfortunately we received this poster two-thirds through our research and were only able to test it in eight focus groups. This also means we were only able to test it in provincial and urban settings. However, participants from five of the eight focus groups had seen the poster before and some were even able to describe it before we showed it to them.

**Initial Physical Responses**
In many of the groups they had strong physical reactions. Before discussing the poster they visibly demonstrated recognition and were frequently shaking their heads.

**General Comments**
Five of the eight focus groups recognized the posters. However, it is important to note that the poster was only tested in provincial and urban settings. The three groups that had not seen the poster before were conducted in provincial towns. One focus group in a
provincial town where one participant had seen the poster before said they had only seen it in Skopje.

Those that had seen it before had particularly positive reactions to the poster. It seemed as if they were more comfortable with this poster because they were familiar with it and recognized it from having seen it before. However, their comments also suggested that they had taken notice of it when they had seen it on their own. One girl said, when asked what her initial reaction was, that she “immediately stopped and read it. It was in our town library,” (female from Vicina). Others said that they thought they recognized the image from television and on billboards.

Prior to us showing this poster in focus groups for reactions a small number of groups described the IOM poster in limited detail. However, in Debar one girl mentioned having seen this IOM poster in particular.

**Perceived Target**
There was an overwhelming sense from the girls that the poster was targeted at everyone, particularly women and younger girls. It is important to note that focus groups mentioned everyone and not just women, as was the case with all of the other posters. In Skopje one focus group participant said that it was for “all people, because there are a lot of people involved in trafficking.” Another girl from the same group said, “this is for everybody who sells people into prostitution.” They seemed to feel the poster was for those involved in prostitution rather than those at risk. Only two focus groups suggested other targets of the poster. In Probistip the girls thought the poster was for “those forced into Prostitution themselves and for young people, or people who are victims.” In a focus group in Stip within a Roma community, one girl said, “This poster tells us that we shouldn’t do such things and if we do, we should be imprisoned.”

There was also one adult group that suggested the target audience was everyone, but primarily teenagers, because “this is the time when it starts and you must talk about it then” (Adults in Kochani).

**Perceived Message**
Overall the girls were attracted to this poster and felt it had a very positive message. The messages they suggested fell under two categories. Either they felt the message was saying “trafficking is a horrible thing,” (girl in Kochani) or that the poster’s message was about the sale of women. There was some confusion about what this meant. Some seemed to think it was a warning that you should not sell yourself. “Don’t sell yourself, selling will lead to bad consequences,” (Probistip).

**Clear Message**
All focus groups felt that the message was clear. In Kochani they said that “it is clear and it could happen here.” It was unclear, however, whether they felt the message was clear
because they had seen it before and therefore were familiar with it or whether they may have been able to understand it to a greater degree because the poster was in Macedonian while many of the others were shown with translations attached. The focus groups also tended to respond to the poster as a whole rather than divide their reactions for the image from that of the text. This may suggest that this poster provided a clearer more holistic message. However, their interpretations of the messages meaning were somewhat inconsistent.

Effective
When asked if the poster was effective, their responses were uniformly yes. A female participant in Probistip said that, while it was effective, “it depends on how people react to it.” She was from the same group that suggested the target audience was those forced into prostitution.

Would they Notice it?
This question was very easy for them to answer because five of the eight focus groups had participants within them that remembered seeing the poster before and therefore had already noticed it. When asked why they would notice it, a girl in Kochani, Eastern Macedonia said, “it provides preventative measures.”
VII. NON-GOVERNMENTAL INITIATIVES

Macedonian NGO/IO Analysis
Trafficking has recently become a social issue within Macedonia by NGOs and the government. Until recently there were modest efforts at raising public awareness about trafficking, such as trainings, a handful of seminars and a few awareness raising campaigns. As the profile of trafficking as a problem has heightened, a large number of NGOs are making an effort to become involved in the issue. However, there is confusion and much discussion about the nature of trafficking in Macedonia. Two main inter-related issues are currently facing those working on the issue in Macedonia. The first is whether efforts should focus solely on foreign victims, or include Macedonian victims. The second is whether trafficking prevention measures should address Macedonia as a transit and destination country, or also as a source country for internal trafficking.

It appears that NGO interest in the area intensified around the summer of 2001. Prior to this time only three international organizations, one network of local NGOs and one nascent organization were directly addressing the issue.

To date the sole target audience of these awareness-raising campaigns appears to be women, specifically younger women. Campaigns and efforts appear to have been tied to larger issues of violence against women.

In general, current efforts include: a shelter for foreign victims of trafficking; a capital focused poster campaign; an SOS hotline targeting victims of violence in general; outreach to specific vulnerable populations in Skopje; limited training of police and media and legislation reform and legal assistance to victims.

Looking towards the future, NGOs have a lot of ideas, but often lack the financial resources to realize them. At present, NGOs are not working in a coordinated fashion and their projects often seem sporadic. There does not appear to be any understanding of how to unify the message and prevent the duplication of some efforts and glaring omissions of others. Another factor inhibiting coordination is that NGOs often have varying levels of understanding of the issue of trafficking and frequently lack capacity and appropriate communication channels.

Main Interventions
The interventions in Macedonia to date include a broad range of initiatives in multiple sectors. However, none of the sectors have been fully saturated and in many of the areas, efforts are either just beginning or are limited in their approach. Given the extensive list of desired future plans and directions offered by the NGO community in Macedonia and

| Ezerka, Stuga                  |
| Forum of Albanian Women, Tetovo |
| Happy Childhood, Skopje        |
| Healthy Option Project Skopje  |
| Hera, Skopje                  |
| Institute for Sustainable Communities |
| IOM                           |
| Kvinna Till Kvinna             |
| Open Gate, La Strada Network   |
| OSCE                          |
| OSI                           |
| Semper-Bitola                 |
| SOZM, Headquarters Skopje      |
| UNICEF                        |
| U.S. Department of Justice     |
| Youth Council, Ohrid           |
| ZSMM, Sveti Nikola            |
the government, they appear aware of the gulf between what needs to be done and what is currently under way. The main interventions are in the areas of legislation, the media, education, public awareness, post-trafficking initiatives and services, training, information, coordination and institutional assistance.

**Legislation**

Trafficking legislation (Article 418 a) has been added as an amendment to the criminal code. This came into effect in January of 2002, and carries a sentence of 3 months to 5 years. However, despite these changes in legislation, most of those charged to date are charged with “mediation and prostitution” which caries a limited six-month sentence as a penalty. It appears that the judicial system has not kept pace with the changes in the legislation, and has yet to fully implement the law.

**Media**

The media is considered to be a very powerful source for information dissemination on the subject of trafficking. There is concern that the issue is not being portrayed appropriately, or accurately. A network has been established to monitor and archive all media articles, and news clips that have covered trafficking. The aim of the network is to have both national and regional coverage. This network will provide a more accurate understanding of exactly how trafficking and those involved are portrayed, leading to a better understanding of how NGOs may work with the media.

**Education**

Preventative education activities are just beginning in Macedonia, and seem to be very localized. They often work with different methods, messages, and apparently achieve different results.

In the capital of Skopje, there are three main education initiatives being implemented. One NGO is targeting the high-risk population of street-walkers by reaching out and engaging in one-on-one discussions. Prostitutes have been identified as being at risk of being trafficked by engaging in risky behaviors. The number of street-walkers in Skopje is limited. This effort does not reach those involved in more informal types of prostitution who may be equally at risk. A second initiative aims at educating future counselors by offering a course in the Sociology Department at the University of Skopje. The course teaches advocacy and counseling skills: skills that would be particularly relevant for those working on the issue of trafficking. This is a long-term initiative, and its impact is yet to be determined. A third initiative has been launched by an NGO based in the capital. Workshop moderators have been trained to run discussion groups on the issue of trafficking, in the capital, and a number of provincial towns. It appears that one of the primary foci is to clarify the distinction between trafficking and prostitution, rather than providing information and skills that will help at-risk women and children avoid being trafficked. Another point of concern is that the targets of these discussions were primarily women 22 years old or older, which omits the majority of those at risk.

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18 Please note, the section below provides a broad picture of NGO initiatives, but for reasons of confidentiality, names of organizations have not been connected to their specific activities.
Throughout the country, a number of NGOs launched specific localized initiatives targeting youth, either through schools, youth clubs, or other organizations concerned with social issues. While these initiatives were limited to a small numbers of individuals, some of these programs included interactive discussion groups, which seemed to be a very effective way to target young people on this issue. In one large provincial town (Bitola), there appeared to be a great deal of cooperation with the local authorities.

**Public Awareness**
National public awareness campaigns have been limited, and are frequently confined to Skopje and its environs, and other major urban centers such as Bitola and Tetovo. One national campaign specifically addressed the issue of trafficking. The poster used in the campaign appeared to only have high levels of recognition in Skopje, but this was due to the fact that it was hung almost exclusively in the capital. Other national campaigns have addressed trafficking in conjunction with more general anti-violence campaigns.

There have also been a small number of local awareness initiatives in specific towns, where trafficking has been identified as an issue of community concern. These have included round-table discussions and panels, but printed materials have been limited, due to the prohibitive costs of such materials.

**Post-Trafficking Initiatives and Services**
Post-trafficking initiatives are restricted to victims of international trafficking, rather than victims of internal trafficking. It appears that police officers are the individuals who identify who is a victim of trafficking, and who is not. This method has resulted in only international victims being identified, and offered services.

In Skopje, there is one transit center, or shelter for foreign victims of international trafficking. It provides help for these victims and assists them in repatriating to their home country. When possible, the NGO running the transit center coordinates with the organization’s sister office in the victim’s country of origin. While there are efforts to coordinate post-trafficking victims assistance on a regional level, information sharing across borders is often very complicated due to local conditions. A local NGO partner has provided psychosocial assistance, and limited job training at the transit center since July 2002.

This only provides psychosocial assistance and does not provide victims with means for dealing with their economic conditions. Their stay at the transit center is too short to hone skills that would provide a livelihood. By not helping them address their economic situation, coupled with the fact that they may not be accepted back into their community these young women after being placed may be vulnerable to being re-trafficked.

Also in Skopje, at least two organizations run SOS lines for women. They seem to deal primarily with victims of domestic violence, but also accept calls from girls who are victims of trafficking. It is unclear what specific assistance can be offered to victims of trafficking, particularly Macedonian nationals. It also appears that there is some confusion about their hours of operation.
Another local NGO is working to offer legal assistance to victims of trafficking.

Training
There have been trainings held in a variety of fields from policemen, prosecutors and investigators, to journalists, and ‘anti-trafficking’ trainers. Most NGOs candidly questioned the effectiveness of these trainings. Trainings are thought to be ineffective by some NGOs because they are so short, often conducted with large groups of people, and giving individuals the false impression that they are experts after a 1 or 2 day training workshop. A further criticism was that the selection of individuals for trainings often only included senior members of their respective organizations (as trainings are seen as perks), and not members of the organization that are directly involved in the work of trafficking prevention. There appears to be little or no trickle down of knowledge resulting from these trainings. While most NGOs felt that trainings were a critical component of anti-trafficking prevention measures, they seemed to question the effectiveness of the trainings held to date.

In the capital, one organization is beginning a peer-to-peer education program, targeting at risk adolescents. The first training session for the peer-educators was run in May 2003, providing training for sixty 13 – 18 year olds. It is too early to determine the effectiveness of this particular program. However, the format of this type of program appears to have been effective in AIDS awareness-raising, and peer-to-peer discussion groups were frequently requested by young people in the field.

Information
One stumbling block for organizations wanting to address trafficking in Macedonia, is the lack of information available about the topic. This lack of information extends to both details about other NGOs programming (inside and outside the country), and lack of research and statistics available. To help address this, a research center for gender studies is being established in Skopje. This center will be researching trafficking as part of the larger focus on violence against women, and will be located in the existing media center in Skopje. In addition, an NGO has completed a survey of and administered by adolescents in Skopje to determine their knowledge of trafficking, more informal forms of forced prostitution, and associated risky behaviors. However, neither of these efforts will directly address the lack of information available, nor create a true picture of trafficking in Macedonia today. Without the assistance of the police, border guards, and other arms of the government, it is impossible to fill this gap.

Coordination Internally/Externally
At present, there appears to be limited coordination among organizations, although three international organizations are beginning regular meetings in Skopje. Further, local NGOs in specific regions are trying to establish groups to deal collectively with the issue, although to date, with limited success.

Most NGOs were only aware of one or two anti-trafficking efforts made by other organizations. NGOs based in Skopje were typically familiar with the IOM “Didn’t You
Know” poster campaign. NGOs in rural or more remote provincial towns were not aware of other awareness campaigns, or measures taken by other NGOs.

On the international level, there is limited contact between organizations, and within umbrella organizations.

_Institutional Assistance_  
Assistance to government institutions is provided in the form of policy recommendations. These include: training initiatives, improving the legal procedures and helping create a whole picture of how the government institutions interact with the victim throughout his or her experience, and how the various government actors, individually and collectively address the problem.

_Impact_  
The impact of the programs to date is difficult to determine because trafficking, and anti-trafficking campaigns and measures, are relatively new to Macedonia. Despite the efforts in different sectors outlined above, there has been very little real impact on public awareness, and attitude, as well as Macedonia’s ability to successfully address the issue.

_Challenges_  
The NGOs mentioned several challenges facing future work against trafficking in Macedonia. The stability pact plan of action lacks local implementation measures and any concrete strategy. The challenges mentioned by NGOs included; lack of financial resources, the media, the public’s perception of trafficking and/or forced prostitution, government involvement, legal issues, the NGOs themselves and dangers inherent to working on the issue.

_Lack of Financial Resources_  
Lack of funds is cited across the board, as one of the largest challenges hampering the launching of effective prevention campaigns. This was particularly the case among local NGOs, who have little or no funding to tackle new initiatives. A number of local NGOs said the application process for grants from international NGOs was complex, arduous and not widely publicized.

_Media_  
The media was cited most frequently as the source of information about trafficking. Stories appear in the newspapers and on television programs about trafficking, which are often sensationalized. These stories can refer to victims by name, or even publish their photographs. The media has not had adequate training on how to deal with this issue and information is frequently disseminated in an insensitive and counter-productive manner. This presentation of trafficking is often contradictory to the messages of the NGOs.

_Perception of Trafficking and/or Forced Prostitution_  
The definition of trafficking is very important. Since prostitution in Macedonia is often seen as voluntary, this complicates how victims of trafficking and forced prostitution are perceived. The majority of NGOs are trying to establish a distinction between trafficking
and prostitution. A related problem is that because of these perceptions young people believe this could not happen to them.

The effort to make a black and white distinction between trafficking and prostitution can be detrimental. There is a large gray area between ‘willing’ prostitution (if indeed that exists at all), and trafficking, with a slippery slope between prostitution, forced prostitution and trafficking. This is particularly true given that much of the risks of trafficking in Macedonia seem to be currently springing from domestic or internal trafficking. This artificial distinction will harm many women who find themselves in that large gray area.

There are different types of prostitution that may make girls more susceptible to being trafficked within Macedonia—among them, the girl who goes from one town to the next to prostitute herself; the girl who gets involved to support her drug habit and university students who use prostitution to pay for their education. For example, the names and numbers on lists at hotels in Skopje; willingness on the part of young women to use sex as a legitimate way to improve their economic and social position. Another example of this is the recent term ‘Five-star boy’ used among girls and young women, to indicate a man with an apartment, his own business, and an income, for whom they would ‘do anything.’

Some NGOs, while discussing the need for anti-trafficking measures, and support for victims of trafficking in general, talked disparagingly about local women involved in prostitution, either by force or otherwise, and seemed dismissive and unresponsive to the manifestation of the problem on their doorstep. This speaks to the larger issue of the perception of the victims of trafficking—if domestic victims are not seen as victims, even by the NGOs who purport to be anxious to work on their behalf, changing the perception of these victims within society as a whole will be an incredible challenge.

One major challenge is the lack of programming addressing the demand side of prostitution, forced prostitution and trafficking. Campaigns are not aimed at changing public perceptions of the men involved nor are they targeted at educating potential clients. Further, the perception of the lack of connection between men using victims of forced prostitution and their direct involvement in a crime is illustrated by the weak legislation in this area.

As well as an overall issue of perception, specific communities also present particular challenges. In more traditional communities there is resistance to education initiatives aimed at young adults on sensitive topics. The Roma communities in Bitola seemed offended when NGOs or others raise the issue of trafficking in their communities. Also, eastern Macedonia is often neglected when dealing with the issue of trafficking. It is currently perceived as more of an issue in Western Macedonia. One NGO in the East felt they had the same problems and therefore required more adequate levels of attention that targeted their particular circumstances.


**Government Involvement**

The government has made some efforts at addressing the issue of trafficking within Macedonia, and a number of NGOs commented on their efforts to date. It has established a national commission, which drew up a national plan of action. However, several NGOs suggested that this commission has perhaps not been as active as it could have been because all of its members have other full time jobs.

While trafficking prevention and awareness initiatives are perceived as a gender issue, and handled by the Department of Gender within the government, currently victims of trafficking handled by Ministry of the Interior. This may have led to it being given lower priority, than other issues or policies within the government. Some mentioned that victims would be better serviced by the Ministry of Social Work. However, having numerous ministries handling trafficking could lead to complications.

The government is reluctant to admit cases of internal trafficking, and is only now beginning to take steps to recognizing that Macedonian women can be victims of internal trafficking. Without this recognition, these women are treated as prostitutes and common criminals, and have no access to the limited services currently available to victims of trafficking.

Another issue that is frequently raised throughout the region is corruption. It is felt that police and other members of the government may be involved in trafficking and there may be some level of cooperating with local traffickers.

**Legal Issues**

Several NGOs felt that the judiciary system is not competent enough to deal with the complicated issue of trafficking. One challenge when bringing traffickers to trial is the issue of witness protection and the difficulty in bringing witnesses (foreign victims of international trafficking) from outside the country, who, understandably, would be reluctant to return and face the traffickers in a courtroom. There are many ambiguities in the laws surrounding trafficking and the way in which victims are dealt with as witnesses in the courts.

Prosecutors are also reluctant to charge individuals under the trafficking laws. This may be because these are new laws—to date only 10 cases have been tried under the trafficking laws. Further, it is difficult to build a case against traffickers since it is currently illegal to do electronic surveillance, or to use under-cover policemen. Article 17 of the Constitution would have to be amended by parliament, in order to allow this kind of police activity.

Also, disturbingly it is the police who currently decide who is a victim of trafficking and who should be charged as a prostitute. Since the transit center/shelter is for non-national victims of trafficking only, Macedonian women who are found or apply to the police for help, cannot receive services through the shelter. They are therefore either released or charged with prostitution. This may be a contributing factor to why it has been so difficult to identify the phenomenon of internal trafficking in Macedonia. Further, certain nationalities are recognized as victims of trafficking while others are not. There have
been no documented cases of Albanians being trafficked in Macedonia, which is surprising because of the high levels of documentation of Albanian cases throughout the region.

NGOs
The lack of coordination amongst the NGO community is making the anti trafficking movement chaotic and the future of prevention depends on the NGOs establishing and following through on a national strategy. There is not much sharing of information between organizations and across fields. A sharing mechanism should be created within the network to assist with communication. An example of an effective coordinating mechanism has been the UN technical group for UNAIDS which handles that issue, and coordinates all activities. Fragmentation of national NGOs, is making it very difficult to initiate programs with national reach and coherent consistent messages.

A significant problem is that local NGOs working on trafficking are divided by ethnicity—there are Albanian, Macedonia, Roman and Turkish organizations, but they fail to communicate with each other, splintering responses.

Capacity is also a challenge facing the NGO community. They currently lack true or specific knowledge about the issue. Further, many NGOs are donor driven and do not have the skills, capabilities or experience to deal with these issues. Several NGOs mentioned that recent proliferation of local NGOs has diluted the impact that they can have in a community. One criticism was that there is an ever-increasing number of NGOs competing for funds.

Local NGOs criticized the involvement of IOs and INGOs, which has changed the landscape of civil society in Macedonia. The structures of their programs and their lack of imbeddedness in the local community means that their programs may be less effective and their reports do not reflect an accurate picture of the actual work accomplished. The involvement of international NGOs with their own agendas has tended to contribute to overall incoherence in policy on a nation-wide basis.

On the international level, there appears to be not enough cooperation between destination countries and source countries. A number of NGOs felt that it was unfair to make trafficking a Balkan problem, when the impact is felt in many other countries as well.

Danger
Trafficking of women is also linked to other illegal trafficking networks, such as drugs, small arms, and weapons. They are using their already-established networks. The original purposes of these networks were for the distribution of weapons, and transits or gateways for drugs and other illegal items, and these may be contributing to the patterns of trafficking of women. In part trafficking is considered dangerous because of these connections to organized crime. This hampers research into cases of Macedonian women and the mapping the situation of internal trafficking of Macedonian women.
**Future Focus**

**Plans**
A number of NGOs had concrete plans for future programs to tackle trafficking, and approached the issue from a number of different angles. However these plans are dependent on potential funding which in most cases had yet to be identified.

**Public Awareness**
One NGO in Skopje is currently working on a television spot to promote a health line and developing a film of victims’ stories to be used at workshops for youths and to air on television with translations for various minority communities within the country. At least four other NGOs had plans for local public awareness campaigns in the west and the south of the country, but had not yet found funding.

**Post-Trafficking Initiatives**
A need for a shelter dedicated to working with victims of internal trafficking was identified. However, to do so internal trafficking would need to become a more publicly recognized problem.

**Training**
One NGO received funding for a training project for national anti-trafficking teams. These teams will be interdisciplinary and inter-institutional, and each team will be made up of a social worker, law enforcement officer, NGO representative and legal advocate. The teams will work in nine cities and be trained to inform interested parties about trafficking trends within their area or region.

In addition, the Center for Media Communication is conducting a survey on the perceptions of trafficking. They will be using this information in two, five-day trainings for the media and will in particular be covering the border regions.

**Suggestions**
Beyond concrete plans, NGOs also had a wish list and made a number of suggestions.

**Coherence and Partnerships**
One NGO felt that an effort should be made to transform the recommendations from stability pact and current programs into a concrete program. The program would ideally be made up of teams of trainers to work at the local level to increase partnerships. The teams would also create a more coherent national and regional message about trafficking. In order to assess internal trafficking, there needs to be a strong initiative to map initiatives at the local level, which would only be possible after coordination mechanisms are put in place.

**Targeted Awareness Programs**
Local NGOs had a number of ideas about targeting specific communities and regions with awareness messages. In particular they wanted to target street children left out of other education initiatives, school drop-outs, university students, traditional communities,
and Roma communities. Region specific programs were also mentioned, such as the need to distinguish targeting of campaigns between eastern and western Macedonia.

More General Awareness Programs
Other more general awareness program suggestions included regular television talk show debates, open discussions in towns, use of alternative promotional materials, such as hats and t-shirts. Further, a number of NGOs were interested in addressing the root cause of trafficking by working to provide more working opportunities for young people.

Connections
It appears that NGOs need to become more connected to each other on a number of levels: on the regional level, particularly with the issue of repatriation; and on the national level through the establishment of networks and on the level of specific campaigns. There should also be enhanced communication and cooperation between organizations based in the capital, and those in other areas.

Role of Government
It was felt that the government should play a stronger role in providing victim assistance and work more closely with law enforcement, and prevent corruption at the border, through training and harsher penalties for police involvement.

Education
A number of NGOs thought that trafficking awareness should be part of the school curriculum, while others thought the best educational approach was the use of peer-to-peer sessions. However, all agreed that educating school age children is of major importance.

Victim Services
Many felt that more services should be made available for victims, but few had concrete suggestions for implementation. Some concrete suggestions included job training, a more effective and accessible hotline, and a shelter for internal victims of trafficking.
VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

In general, awareness levels and levels of understanding about trafficking are low in Macedonia. In the report about awareness levels of trafficking in Albania, Moldova and Romania, recommendations included less of a focus on awareness raising and more on information about services provided and advice on how to prevent yourself from being trafficked. However, because awareness levels remain low among certain ethnic groups, certain segments of the population and in several regions of Macedonia, it seems that concerted awareness raising efforts are still necessary. We recommend that particular attention be paid to developing and disseminating awareness campaigns that are targeted at specific segments of the population, but are diverse enough to reach the wider population of Macedonia, while maintaining a singular coherent message.

While these campaigns are essential for Macedonia to successfully address the issue of trafficking, there are also several other components that need to be developed simultaneously, such as: services for victims and potential victims, which should be further developed and made more available; higher levels of coordination among NGOs, IOs and the government; trainings for the police and media; and enforcement of existing anti-trafficking laws.

Awareness Campaigns

In general, most information about trafficking in Macedonia today is disseminated to the public via news reportage, and, often inflammatory, newspaper articles. Awareness campaigns have had limited reach outside the capital, and seem to be struggling with how to present the issue in a way that separates trafficking from prostitution. Very few campaigns currently exist and only the IOM poster campaign was recognized and recalled in focus groups.

One large challenge is the attitude of the general public towards forced prostitution and trafficking. On the whole, the victims of trafficking are not seen as blameless, even by NGOs purporting to be interested in promoting greater awareness in this area. A priority should be addressing this issue of how the victims are perceived, and portrayed.

Further, hardly any mention was made of educating men who use brothels or of targeting men and boys to better educate them on the issue. Until responsibility for trafficking is shared by the men in communities and the public at large, targeting awareness-raising campaigns only at women will not bear fruit. While adolescents and young women certainly need to be made aware of the dangers of trafficking, it is an issue that society as a whole needs to be educated about. One way of educating society is to work through parents to help change community perceptions of trafficking and its victims and also as a means of educating both men and women.

Awareness programming to date appears to have raised awareness within a small group (mainly older urban youth), without transmitting a sense of who might be vulnerable, or providing useful information about prevention. The youth who were most aware of trafficking, and had a better understanding of who might be vulnerable, and what
trafficking actually was, had attended workshops, or discussion groups, rather than simply having seen posters, brochures, or ads in newspapers. There is a place for more awareness raising, especially in smaller provincial towns, and rural areas, but it should be carefully targeted, provide useful information, and be supplemented with discussion groups, either in school, youth centers, or through other social organizations. As demonstrated by the research in this report, awareness levels were highest amongst groups that had participated in interactive discussion groups.

**Awareness-Raising for Parents**

More should be done to build awareness among parents. Informing parents and getting them involved will enable them to communicate more effectively with their children about trafficking and enable them to answer questions and address their concerns. They could also be mobilized as a voice to prevent trafficking of youth in their communities. Education and information campaigns for parents could be conducted through schools and community groups.

**Encourage Parents to Talk with their Children**

Trafficking is a very sensitive issue, one that parents and children may feel uncomfortable discussing together. However, when asked who influenced them the most children mentioned parents and family. Parents, particularly informed parents, should be encouraged to discuss trafficking and different ways for young people to protect themselves.

**Awareness-Raising through Workshops and Discussion Groups**

The results of this study and other similar studies in other countries,\(^{19}\) show that awareness raising through posters, and other mass-media techniques are only successful up to a point. They should be followed up with a more direct campaign or series of campaigns that provide more detailed information about this issue and give information about assistance available through other NGOs or through municipal structures. Most youth and young women showed a preference for interactive workshops in which open discussions could take place, and questions could be asked. These are most effective when the methods used are not traditional pedagogical techniques, but more informal, open, and free discussions.

**Regional Differences**

Given that trafficking appears in different guises in Macedonia, the public should be aware of both internal and external trafficking. NGOs planning awareness campaigns should be aware that these two issues have slightly different focuses, in terms of how trafficking functions, and who are potential victims. Further, we would recommend considering Macedonia by its different regional areas, and tailoring approaches according to awareness levels, specific regional characteristics and specific needs.

Eastern Macedonia, as a poor region, is more of a potential source of women and children for traffickers. Focus group participants suggested that the route into trafficking from this region was more likely to be through increased vulnerability due to risky behaviors,

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\(^{19}\) See “Not for Sale: Child Trafficking Prevention in Eastern Europe,” May 2003.
such as ‘informal prostitution.’ These behavioral patterns may be brought on by lack of opportunity in home communities. Suggestions for programs in this region include:

- Prevention campaigns;
- Information campaigns for youth, parents and the general public;
- Discussion groups for youth and young women;
- Reintegration services for possible returning victims;
- Training for alternative means of employment for young women; and
- Support for NGOs dealing with women’s issues.

Western Macedonia currently appears to have a higher concentration of brothels (and networks of forced prostitution functioning through apartments and hotels), and is therefore a destination for trafficking victims, although brothels also exist in other parts of the country, especially the capital. Transit of victims through this region into Albania (for further trafficking into Italy and beyond), and Kosovo also seems to be a major issue. Awareness here should also focus on recognizing and helping victims of both internal and external trafficking.

We recommend:

- General prevention campaigns;
- Focus more on SOS information, help for victims;
- Collaboration between NGOs, government, and police to help prevent trafficking from occurring;
- Campaigns targeted at men;
- Education in schools to increase overall awareness in the community; and
- Education and training of police and border guards.

Southern Macedonia is also both a destination and transit area. Tourists in the south provide the market for the destination. Further, traffickers use routes across the southern border into Greece, and across Lake Ohrid into Albania.

We recommend:

- Education in schools to increase overall awareness in the community;
- Education and training of police and border guards;
- Prevention campaigns focused more on SOS information and help for victims;
- Collaboration between NGOs, government, and police, to help prevent trafficking from occurring; and
- Campaigns targeted at men;

In Skopje, overall awareness is higher than in other regions, due to the recent awareness campaigns. However, knowledge of what trafficking is and who is at risk, is uneven, and even those in vulnerable situations dismiss the idea that they themselves might be at risk.
We recommend:

- Information campaigns, rather than general awareness raising campaigns;
- Focus on providing good SOS hotline services, and links between the hotline and other NGOs, and government services;
- Collaboration between NGOs, government, police, to help prevent trafficking from occurring;
- Campaigns targeted at men;
- Campaigns targeted specifically at at-risk groups to supplement overall awareness;
- Education in schools to increase overall awareness in the community; and
- Education through universities.

**Distribution of Campaign Materials**

It is unclear how posters and material for current campaigns are distributed. There is very little material available outside of Skopje and Bitola. Posters from other social issue campaigns were seen in provincial NGO offices, but none were visible around the towns. This lack of distribution of materials was directly reflected in the lack of awareness of some populations. In some towns and villages, participants said they would read any poster or brochure that was made available to them, as they never received any such information.

There is a real need to establish more effective distribution mechanism, either through related NGOs, schools, or local municipal structures. Beyond campaigns targeting the overall population, with more specialized messages, there is also a need to target specific most at risk communities.

**Gaining Access to At-Risk-Communities**

*Young Women Engaging in High-Risk Activities*

A number of NGOs identified a route for girls in Macedonia into trafficking as being through high-risk activities, leading to both informal and formal prostitution, and potentially to trafficking. By high-risk activities we mean offering sexual favors for money or gifts, prostitution on the weekends, or offering sexual services to guests of expensive local hotels. This issue was raised by both NGOs and certain focus groups with higher levels of awareness. The girls described are typically from poorer rural and provincial communities, and have moved to larger cities seeking education or work, or come from poorer families in the cities themselves. Money earned in this fashion was a necessary supplement to their income.

These girls, however, do not consider themselves prostitutes and may not be aware of the risks of their behavior. Since they are typically university students, recent arrivals in the city from provincial and rural areas, or may even be high school students, they are unlikely to view themselves as part of an at-risk-community. Therefore, they will require a specialized approach and are unlikely to be responsive to other more conventional or judgmental techniques.
Outreach to these girls could be conducted in a number of ways. They often live in cheaper student accommodations near schools and universities, and some publish their name and phone-number with call-girl services at local hotels, restaurants and nightclubs. While these girls could potentially be reached through conventional, broader methods targeting the public at large, specific efforts should be made to target this population in particular, given that they may be participating in high-risk activities and/or may be living in high-risk communities. HOPS’ outreach program to streetwalkers reaches a different at-risk community, but could provide a good model of how this type of counseling could be offered.

We recommend:

- Awareness-raising and information sessions in dormitories (which should include both official and unofficial university and school housing, both on and off-campus). These should be given by young people, with whom girls identify, and whom they would probably be more comfortable, and more willing to engage in discussion;
- One-on-one, peer to peer counseling sessions, to address specific topics, and to offer a safe, confidential setting for questions and answers. (Obviously, these counselors must be equipped with similar training and information as the SOS phone operators);
- Incorporate prevention and awareness sessions in any pre-college orientation sessions already offered by universities and schools; and
- Phone calls to existing lists of call-girls (which are currently available and on offer at many expensive hotels, restaurants and nightclubs) offering information, counseling sessions, and support.

**Roma Communities**

Awareness campaigns typically do not enter into Roma communities effectively. This fact combined with their marginalization from mainstream society, and higher levels of poverty makes it essential to design culturally- and linguistically-sensitive awareness programs and assistance specifically targeted at their communities. This is particularly important given the cultural taboos around female sexuality within these communities, which make these issues hard to address and particularly damaging for the women involved. Literacy rates remain low among women and girls, so use should be made of Television, and radio, coupled with women-only discussion groups and other oral forms of communication.

As noted in the awareness section above, awareness in Roma communities of trafficking was much lower than surrounding communities. This may be a further indication that news and awareness campaigns have not penetrated the Roma communities.

We recommend:

- Culturally and linguistically-sensitive campaigns targeted at Roma communities;
- Where possible, use should be made of Roma media, such as Roma radio and television stations;
• Efforts should be made to include local Roma community groups and NGOs. This participatory approach will help design campaigns, with the right tone and emphasis for the community; and
• Alternative methods of providing information, such as street theater performances, have proved to be successful in other remote, rural, or less educated communities around the region, particularly in Moldova.

Orphanages
Children in orphanages are easy targets for exploitation, and vulnerable to at-risk behavior. However, in general, the older children in the orphanages in Skopje had extremely high levels of awareness of previous campaigns and of dangers they might face. They seem to be particularly included in a number of NGO awareness activities, and had high recall levels of these activities. This focus on children in the orphanages seems to be well-founded, as many of the children mentioned prostitution occurring on streets near them, by other children from the other orphanages.

Even though their awareness levels are high, because they are at high risk, efforts should continue to target these groups as a priority. These children in particular would be well-served with a campaign offering specific information and actions to be taken. These groups were particularly responsive to discussion sessions.

We recommend:
• Continued focus on children in orphanages;
• Ongoing curriculum dealing with issues like trafficking;
• Hands-on discussion groups;
• Information and actions to be taken to reduce their risks of being trafficked; and
• Special programs targeted at orphans with special needs (mental/physical disabilities), who are at higher risk of exploitation.

Girls from Poverty-Stricken Areas
The factors that may pull adolescents and young women into potentially risky activities are particularly strong in towns and regions with high poverty and unemployment rates. There are pockets, particularly in Eastern Macedonia, where unemployment is very high, around failed factories and mines, and there is currently little hope of employment rates improving. As mentioned above in the awareness section, adolescents from this region had higher levels of awareness than in other parts of non-urban Macedonia, and the awareness was not based on campaigns or items in the news, but on personal experience, and connection with the phenomena of risky behavior, and forced prostitution. A special effort should be made in this region to raise awareness of the risks of trafficking, and should highlight specific actions to be taken.

We recommend:
• Outreach to these communities—most had little or no knowledge of previous campaigns;
• Education of the community at large about the issues of forced prostitution and trafficking, and why members of their own community might be at risk;
• Efforts to educate adolescents on the dangers of risky behavior and of non-traditional forms of prostitution; and
• Programs for alternative means of economic gain.

Post-trafficking Initiatives and Victim Services

SOS Hotline
There appear to be at least three SOS hotlines for women and children victims of violence. However, they all seem to be periodically staffed, and the full menus of services provided were not clear. In addition, services and languages spoken varied from hotline to hotline. By maintaining multiple hotlines for similar services, victims may be unsure of where to call. This may also undermine the confidence in an emergency line. In considering these hotlines, we have taken into account the fact that they also assist victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as victims of trafficking.

In order for a hotline to function at its optimum level, it should be able to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Studies conducted in other countries suggest that a significant percentage of sexual violence cases take place and are reported in the evenings and particularly on the weekends. If victims are going to seek assistance, they typically do so as soon as they can after the traumatic event. Keeping inconsistent hours confuses callers in need, and limits the efficacy of the hotline. It is also important for assistance providers to gain the trust of victims through their availability and their constancy. This is particularly true of hotlines or emergency assistance, where a victim of trafficking may have gone to great lengths in order to reach out for assistance.

Languages available to be spoken by hotline staff is another essential issue. As Macedonia is multi-lingual, at a minimum, the SOS line should be operated by speakers of Macedonian, Albanian, and Roma. Further, Macedonia appears to be both a transit and a destination country, therefore it would be useful for there to be individuals familiar with regional languages of potential victims of trafficking from other countries.

It is essential for the SOS line not to only offer services provided by the NGO running the hotline, but also serve as the connection point to all other services available for victims. This should include such things as access to medical practitioners and facilities familiar with the intricacies of the issues at hand; mental health guidance; legal assistance; assistance from police sensitized to trafficking issues; and shelter options.

Since the SOS line could be used as the communication node between the different services provided, it is important that the phone operators be properly and extensively trained in how to respond to callers, and in determining where they will be directed.

Many of the inconsistencies in the current SOS hotline system, are due to limited financial resources. However, given that there are multiple hotlines, it would be more
effective for organizations to pool their resources, and create one full-time multi-lingual multi-service hotline number.

Another problem we found with the hotlines is that they are based in Skopje. This seemed to be both a financial and an emotional obstacle. A number of women from provincial and rural communities said that it was not only expensive to call Skopje, but that they weren’t sure how someone working in Skopje could help them with their problems. However, the same groups who saw the distance to Skopje as an obstacle also expressed hesitance about calling a local number because of the possibility that they would know the person answering the phone. One solution might be to negotiate with the government and phone company to produce a toll-free line that could be accessed anywhere in the country. It would also be important to find out if the phone company could agree to not list the SOS number on phone bills and lists of numbers dialed.

A fully-functioning SOS hotline could provide the essential connection between victims and the array of current and future services and agencies to support them. Without an effective means of connecting the services and service providers, they will remain disconnected, and it will remain difficult for those most in need to gain access.

We recommend:
- 24 hour operation;
- Multi-lingual;
- Multiple services;
- Extensive training for phone operators;
- Toll-free number;
- Call-back service from mental health specialists;
- Call-back service from legal advocates;
- Connections and referrals to local hospitals;
- Connections with ‘trafficking sensitized’ local police departments; and
- Connections with both domestic violence and trafficking victims shelters.

Victims Shelter
There is currently one shelter in Macedonia providing services and shelter to victims of trafficking. However, the shelter only provides services to victims coming from other countries. Victims of internal trafficking are not permitted to enter this shelter and do not have another option. In addition, if found by the police victims of internal trafficking are often treated as criminals. This is in part due to the wider problem that internal trafficking has not been fully recognized as an issue in Macedonia.

Young women who return to towns and villages after absences, or if they are suspected of engaging in any form of prostitution, including trafficking, are often shunned by their families and their communities. This attitude serves to isolate young women, and without alternatives, they may find themselves becoming vulnerable to being re-trafficked. Services for these victims of internal trafficking could be in the form of reintegration services in their home communities. Further, a shelter for victims of
internal trafficking should be established in Skopje for those young women for whom reintegration into their home communities is not possible or desirable.

This shelter can also provide services for returning Macedonian victims of external trafficking. Both of these categories of women need a safe environment from which they can begin their reintegration into society. This shelter could provide a safe haven for young women to stay in for a brief period, and offer psychosocial programs, health care, mental health care, and basic job training. This shelter need not start as a large enterprise, but can follow models in other countries, such as Romania, where young girls are offered bed and board in a safe, protected apartment, and offered services through associated NGOs. By starting small, this model can expand and respond to needs as necessary.

We recommend:
- A study of the strengths and weaknesses of shelters across the region;
- Founding of shelter for domestic victims of internal trafficking and returning victims of external trafficking;
- Shelter to provide services such as mental health, and health services, and basic job training; and
- Reintegration programs in communities for returning victims, which would include awareness raising of parent groups, community groups, and offer basic support for returning victims.

**Government Initiatives**

It was frequently mentioned that there are several weaknesses in the judiciary system that need to be addressed by the government. If the judiciary system remains weak, the new law on the books and laws currently being developed to combat trafficking will remain unenforceable.

In order for police to effectively deal with the issue of trafficking, there needs to be the establishment of a Trafficking Task Force within the police department that not only includes senior members of the department, but primarily those involved with daily operations. Further, an individual or individuals within each police department in each city needs to be designated as the focal point on trafficking.

**Training**

Several NGOs critiqued the current plethora of trainings and complained about their brevity and lack of focus, particularly with regard to police officers and the media. In order for trainings to be more effective, they need to be far more comprehensive and given to those working closely with the issue and in direct contact with those involved in trafficking.

This is particularly important in relation to the police department. The police are currently determining which women are victims and which are charged with prostitution. This appears to be the case both on the border and in raids on brothels. Due to individual officers proximity to victims and perpetrators it is important that efforts be made to
continue to train the police. Comprehensive training for the police should include, but not be limited to:

- Specific trainings for border guards;
- Education on the legal specifics about trafficking; and
- Sensitivity training.

The media in Macedonia is currently one of the main sources of information for the general public about trafficking. The articles in the papers and the news stories on television are skewing Macedonians’ perceptions of trafficking and those involved in trafficking. Often, these stories are sensationalized, portraying the victims in lurid ways and reveal personal information, including the identity of victims. To date, the media appears not to have been receptive to media trainings. They argue that the rights of the press trump the rights of the victim.

We recommend:
- Concerted efforts to encourage the media to participate in trainings about journalistic principles and the responsibilities of the press;
- Trainings should be smaller and use a discussion format so that both sides are able to air their opinions; and
- Sensitivity training and legal trainings on the rights of victims.

Many NGOs are interested in becoming involved in work on trafficking, but lack a deep understanding of the issue and the role for NGOs to play. We recommend a training specifically targeted at building capacity in this area for NGOs. It would be beneficial for NGOs to build on their strengths rather than branching out into entirely unfamiliar areas and focus on issues such as: counseling for victims; reintegration efforts; and community awareness raising.

**Reintegration**

As the problem of trafficking increasingly involves Macedonian women, services need to be developed to help to these women reintegrate into their home communities, or, if that is not possible, into other communities in another location. Without reintegration efforts, these women run the risk of being marginalized, and would be at risk of being re-trafficked.

We recommend:
- Services for the victims in their home communities, which might include help becoming reestablished, psychosocial help, discussion groups, and should also offer training for new careers; and
- Community awareness and sensitivity raising efforts in regions where victims are from.

**Coordination/Cooperation**

Cooperation and coordination in anti-trafficking efforts should be enhanced on many levels and further developed between key partners in the region. In particular, we
recommend greater cooperation between governments, NGO offices operating in different countries, NGOs and governments within the same country and between different NGOs within the same country.

**Coordination between NGOs and Governments**
The fight against human trafficking cannot be driven solely by civil society. Government should and must be involved to a greater extent than they are today. NGOs are seeking greater engagement from their counterparts in the government for more effective enforceable legislation, government initiatives, curriculum changes and greater awareness on the part of those working for various arms of the government.

**Coordination Among NGOs**
Several NGOs have connections to regional networks. These connections should be enhanced for a number of reasons. As Macedonian NGOs are coming to the issue of trafficking behind NGOs in other countries where trafficking has been more prevalent for longer, they can learn a great deal from how NGOs in these countries have tackled the issue of trafficking, and can take on board best practices, lessons learned, and avoid pitfalls in their own programming. Secondly, the problems of trafficking across borders, and solutions to the problem can be found through cooperation, particularly in the area of victim services, across borders.

NGOs within Macedonia also need to enhance their coordination and cooperation efforts with each other. Without coordination, there is a very real risk of duplicating efforts, as well as neglecting other necessary areas of the problem. These are equally important reasons for coordination and cooperation. A number of NGOs recommended some kind of semi-official coordinating body, which could serve to help NGOs divide up tasks and focus on certain elements of programming.

**Unity of Message**
There needs to be a unity of message that incorporates an overall vision of the issue of trafficking and how to address it from awareness raising, prevention and through the provision of services for victims. A successful anti-trafficking effort would need to consider different elements of programs offered, which elements are needed, and how different programs and campaigns fit together. Current activities are localized, and do not address the totality of the problem. Trafficking is not localized phenomenon, and cannot simply be approached in this manner. Rather than just tackling small aspects of problem, there is a need to address whole issue at a governmental level, and at a nationwide level.

- A national strategy is needed, with specific organizations or groups of organizations responsible for certain areas, within an overall coherent strategy.

**Children’s Recommendation Section**

Children and young adults were asked during the course of the focus groups what kinds of messages they were most likely to respond to, and what their specific recommendations might be.
Education:
It is clear that children prefer to be educated through discussion groups, although not necessarily through schools. They expressed a preference for interactive seminar type settings where they could ask questions and interact with the seminar giver. Many stressed the importance of being able to ask questions, not just passively receive the information.

Peer-to-Peer
Many expressed a preference for learning from someone their own age or slightly older, rather than officials, teachers, or experts. Trafficking is perceived as a topic that might be hard to talk about with older people, or in a very formal setting. Peer-to-peer awareness training was mentioned as an effective way to reach younger audiences (see Hera peer-to-peer HIV awareness training as a model.)

Alternative Targeted Media

Youth Magazines and Radio Stations
Adolescents and young adults discussed the fact that few of them read newspapers regularly. Currently, most news about trafficking appears in newspapers, and also, some of the awareness campaigns rely on ads or fliers in newspapers. These efforts are not reaching the younger intended audience. Adolescents cited a number of magazines they read frequently, and many voiced an interest in reading about trafficking in these outlets. They included: Taa Magazine, (Macedonian) Tinis Tin Sema, Girl (Serbian), Bravo (Serbian), OK (Serbian) and TEEN (Croatian).

We recommend:
Since many of these magazines are not published in Macedonia, but in countries in the region, where trafficking is also a problem, we recommend that efforts are made throughout the region to promote the use of these magazines to target youth about trafficking. UNICEF country offices or branches of La Strada or other regional organizations can come together, combine resources and use ads and articles that would be relevant to readers in all countries. For example they could design an ad for SOS hotlines, which lists all of the SOS hotline numbers in different countries where the magazine is read.

Targeted informative website
Some adolescents mentioned their frequent use of the internet as a source of information, and said there was no trafficking information website. They suggested there be a website where they could go and get information
IX: CONCLUSIONS

General awareness appears to be fairly low in Macedonia. Awareness of trafficking typically came from stories heard on television, in the newspapers, or through rumors. A very small minority of participants had been exposed to awareness campaigns or education initiatives. There were very few stories about people with whom they had direct contact, although these did exist. Even within groups where there were higher levels of awareness, responses varied significantly from person to person.

On the whole, even among those with high levels of awareness, they described trafficking in very general terms, and appeared to lack a specific understanding of how trafficking might operate, or even who would be at risk. There appear to be three factors which contributed to these higher levels of awareness: active youth centers or connection to an engaged social organization, proximity to borders, or being from the capital.

Few groups had moderate levels of awareness and it appeared that these groups had not had direct contact with the issue of trafficking, and knew virtually nothing about it. Over half of the focus groups conducted had low or almost no awareness of trafficking.

Groups were fairly comfortable discussing trafficking and responding to the posters, which had very clear anti-trafficking messages. However, in nearly every group, at least one participant, but up to ten, appeared embarrassed and reluctant to discuss the issue. The term ‘trafficking’ was not widely used and there appeared to be no clear regional pattern or commonalities between towns in the groups that described trafficking, but did not specifically mention ‘trafficking.’ However, a majority of groups neither used the term nor described it.

Broad awareness raising campaigns may not be the most effective means of addressing disparities in awareness levels. Because, awareness levels remain low among certain ethnic groups, certain segments of the population and in several regions of Macedonia, targeted awareness raising efforts are still necessary. Particular attention should be paid to developing and disseminating awareness campaigns that both target specific segments of the population though not neglecting the wider population, while maintaining a singular coherent message.

The attitude of the general public towards forced prostitution and trafficking is that victims of trafficking are not blameless. This is even true among NGOs. A priority should be to address this issue of how the victims are perceived, and portrayed. Very little mention was made of educating men who use brothels or of targeting men and boys to better educate them on the issue. Until responsibility for trafficking is shared by the men in the communities and the public at large, targeting awareness-raising campaigns only at women will not be fully successful.

Differences in approaches between regions are also important. The face of trafficking is not uniform throughout Macedonia. The evolving pattern of trafficking in Macedonia is changing and impacting regions in different ways. Internal trafficking is emerging as a relatively new phenomenon within Macedonia, which complicates the issue, because
campaigns and other programming can no longer focus solely on to where women are being trafficked, but must also address from where they are coming and why. Therefore, region-specific campaigns with tailored approaches according to awareness levels, specific regional characteristics and needs should be developed.

In addition, awareness programs should be adapted for specific groups with higher potential vulnerabilities. These groups include: young women engaging in high risk activities, Roma communities, children living in orphanages, children with special needs and girls from poverty stricken areas. Adolescents from poverty stricken areas had higher levels of awareness than in other parts of non-urban Macedonia. These were not based on campaigns or items in the news, but on personal experience, and connection with the phenomena of risky behavior, and forced prostitution. A special effort should be made in these areas to raise awareness of the risks of trafficking, and should highlight specific actions to be taken.

In general, it would be important to combine a more direct campaign or series of campaigns that provides more detailed information about trafficking with a series of interactive workshops in which open discussions could take place and questions be asked. These workshops would be most effective if conducted on a grass-roots level, throughout the country.

Awareness campaigns and workshops are central to successfully addressing the issue of trafficking. However, to truly tackle the problem in a holistic manner, there are several other components that need to be simultaneously developed, such as: services for victims and potential victims, which should be further developed and made more available; higher levels of coordination among NGOs, IOs and the government; trainings for the police and media; and enforcement of existing anti-trafficking laws.

Until recently, Macedonia was seen as primarily a transit and destination country for trafficking. However, it appears that a new trend is emerging, and that Macedonian women are increasingly becoming at risk of being trafficked themselves. With the worsening economy in Macedonia and in the region as a whole, trafficking could be poised to become an even more pervasive problem in the country. Specific preventative actions must be taken now to raise awareness and combat trafficking, before the problem explodes, as has been the case in countries throughout the region such as Moldova.
Annex 1.1
METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH

The increasing prominence of trafficking in South Eastern Europe, since the end of the Balkan conflicts, has led to a corresponding heightened awareness within non-governmental organizations. An increasing number of organizations are active in this field, but it is not yet clear how the awareness within these organizations and the awareness campaigns have translated to awareness with children and young adults—the vulnerable populations.

The problem of trafficking is relatively new to this region, and efforts to date have focused on media campaigns, victims’ assistance, school programs and legislative reform. This research focuses on children’s awareness of trafficking and their response to selected awareness materials as well as on NGO initiatives in the region.

This research report was piloted in three South Eastern European countries: Albania, Moldova and Romania. While the aim is to conduct this research throughout all SEE Pact countries, these three were selected because they are source countries for child trafficking. Awareness campaigns in these countries are, therefore, aimed at the children who are among the most vulnerable to being trafficked. After the pilot research and report were completed, further research for UNICEF was conducted in Macedonia.

The primary focus of this research project is to determine children’s awareness levels, and how they have been affected by campaigns in their regions, as well as discovering how best they feel these messages can be conveyed. To add to our understanding of the issue, where possible, we sought the perceptions of adults in the community.

METHODOLOGY

I. Main Research Questions

In South Eastern Europe, what are at-risk children’s awareness levels and perception of trafficking? What factors influence their perceptions and behavior? What are their reactions to a selection of anti-trafficking materials and their suggestions for future anti-trafficking initiatives?

Listed below are the ways in which this research addresses these questions:

6. Analysis of children’s current awareness levels and perceptions;
7. Comparison of child perceptions of dangers of trafficking if working abroad;
8. Collection of children’s suggestions for future initiatives;
9. Comparison of children’s responses to a selection of current regional anti-trafficking materials (posters, fliers, etc.);
10. Collection of anti-trafficking materials and examination of existing campaigns in South Eastern Europe; and
II. Three research methods

The primary purpose of our research is to uncover factors affecting children’s behavior. With this goal in mind, focus groups yield the most significant and helpful results. Focus group discussions allow access to a wider selection of opinions and offer more textured perspectives from our target audience than is possible with a purely quantitative survey. The focus groups also allow for the exploration of issues in more depth and provide more room for the participants to express themselves. To conduct statistically valid quantitative surveys in each country is beyond the resources of this research project and may not reveal the same depth of information that focus groups provide.

A questionnaire, given to each focus group participant, provides specific information for use in statistical analysis. It also introduces the participants to the issues to be covered in the focus group, and starts them thinking about travel safety and work abroad. Slightly different questionnaires are administered to the children and the adult groups.

In addition to focus groups and questionnaires, an essential component of this research, is in-depth interviews with key personnel in NGOs working on trafficking within each country. The purpose of the NGO interviews is to gain an understanding of anti-trafficking initiatives throughout the region. Of interest are their specific programming, program development, and use of terminology and if evaluations of the effectiveness of the programs are conducted. Any evaluations should be collected and analyzed.

III. The Three Targeted Groups for Research

1. Anti Trafficking campaigns Target group (Children):
Our primary research group is children between the ages of 8 and 18, the target audience of the campaigns. The method of research used with this group is primarily focus groups. A short questionnaire should be administered to focus group participants and other children with whom the researchers come into contact during their field research.
Our main research questions for this group are:

What is the target group’s awareness levels and perception of trafficking? What factors influence their perceptions and behavior? What are their reactions to a selection of anti-trafficking materials? What are their suggestions for future anti-trafficking initiatives?

**Selection of Participants**

UNICEF staff and social workers on the ground in each country should select participants for the focus groups, according to the selection guide provided with this methodology (see Focus Group Preparation and Implementation Guide, *Annex:1.10*).

The selection of focus groups participants is based on the study’s multiple-category design. The sample selection is based on targeting different age groups in order to compare different levels of awareness. The selection focuses on groups at higher risk of being trafficked, which might include children from institutions, such as shelters or orphanages, and other disadvantaged children. The research design requires multiple groups of each target age group in order to cross compare across the age groups.

Younger children are included in the selection, because they are often targets for traffickers. It is vital to measure at which point trafficking messages are most effective. In addition, a comparison should be made (where possible) between the effectiveness of trafficking campaigns in rural and urban areas. Finally, an additional question is whether minorities’ perceptions and responses differ from other groups.

Potential comparisons to be made:
- Between countries
- Amongst age groups
- Between urban and rural populations
- Between minority or disadvantaged groups and more mainstream groups
- Between children from organized (i.e. school setting) and less organized settings (i.e. shelters, community centers)

**Number and Composition of focus groups**

In order to get enough information for comparison, a minimum of three focus groups is required per age group in both rural and urban settings within each country. Each focus group should have no more than six to eight participants.

Certain adaptations are necessary with younger age groups. When it is evident that their reading level is not adequate to complete the questionnaire, it may be necessary for a translator to assist them. Also, in order to be sensitive it is appropriate to not show the younger age group some of the more graphic posters, if possible.

Minority groups also require adaptation. In order to consider whether minority communities have different levels of awareness, or are impacted differently by campaigns, and the issue itself, it is important to conduct a separate series of focus groups, if possible.
Proposed Structure for Child Focus Groups:
Throughout the research in the focus groups and the questionnaires, the words ‘trafficking’ or ‘forced prostitution’ are excluded from discussions unless the participants start using the terms themselves. Rather than introduce the ideas with a potentially negative connotation, this research project uses the more judgment-neutral terminology ‘travel safety’ and ‘working abroad.’ This was also useful to determine the association of ‘travel safety’ with the possibility of being trafficked or being forced into child labor or prostitution.

Set up of questions
The set up of the questions is designed to funnel the direction of the discussion groups from more general subjects to specific questions about trafficking. The focus group questions are divided into four sections. (For the focus groups guide, see Annex 1.3, for the instructions on running Child Focus Groups, see Annex 1.4.)

Section one aims at initiating discussion about travel and travel safety by encouraging all of the participants of the focus group to begin talking before delving into more complicated areas of discussion. It also provides a time for them to begin thinking about travel and what types of things they should be doing to prepare for work abroad.

Section two explores possible positive and negative experiences that could occur when traveling for work to another country. In Macedonia, were awareness levels were lower, participants were asked more probing questions, about women traveling alone, and whether the participants had heard any stories or rumors about women traveling. The purpose of this section is to allow the participants to explore how they view travel and travel safety and provide the researcher insight into these perceptions as well as to see if they mention trafficking or issues related to trafficking, forced child-labor and prostitution.

Section three examines factors affecting their behavior in relation to travel and trafficking. This section tries to determine the participants’ exposure to prevention campaigns and messages about trafficking, as well as their level of awareness by asking them if they had ever encountered travel safety campaigns, or messages advising them about safe travel.

Section four presents the participants with different anti-trafficking campaign materials by showing them posters and asking their response. The participants are asked to give both their personal response, as well as judgments regarding the effectiveness of the campaign.

Finally, the focus group participants are asked what they think are the best methods for addressing trafficking in their communities. They are asked to identify the types of campaigns to which they would be most responsive.
Poster Selection
Posters and anti-trafficking materials were gathered from each country in the SEE by the UNICEF regional offices, and sent to Columbia University, to be analyzed for content. A representative group of four posters was translated into each language of this study, and shown to the children and the adults in the focus groups. Copies of the posters can be seen in the poster analysis section.

The aim of the focus groups research is to gather information about children’s thoughts on travel, the factors influencing their perceptions and finally their reaction to trafficking prevention campaigns. The hope is to gain a broader understanding of their perspectives and how best to conduct prevention campaigns in the future.

Short Questionnaire for Children:
The short questionnaire was developed to gather specific background information on the focus group participants, such as age, travel experience and interaction with other youth who have traveled to other countries. It also asked the child participants if, given the opportunity to work abroad, they would pursue it. For the full questionnaire see Annex 1.2.

2. Adult Community Members
In addition to examining the responses of our target audience, in designing the research methodology, a gauge of the reaction of community members to both the issue of trafficking, and their response to the messages of the campaigns was included. The responses from this group serves to inform our research about our central issue and set of research questions. In dealing with children whose opinions may be heavily influenced by parents and other respected members of the community, it is particularly important to consider how this group reacts to trafficking. As this group is not the main focus, only a small number of focus groups are required, and the questionnaire is also designed to be shorter.

These focus groups are designed to comprise of adult community members, such as parents, teachers, and other members of the community who are concerned about the issue of trafficking. The method of research used with this group is also primarily focus groups. A short questionnaire is also administered to all the adult participants in the focus groups.

Our main research question for this group is:

What are parents’ and teachers’ awareness levels and perception of trafficking? What factors influence their perceptions and behavior? What are their reactions to a selection of anti-trafficking materials and their suggestions for future anti-trafficking initiatives?
Potential comparisons to be made:
- Among the different roles they play in the community
- Between rural and urban populations
- Between their reaction and the children’s reactions to the posters

**Number and Composition of focus groups**
Only a limited number of focus groups and the short questionnaire need to be conducted and administered to adults. Ideally, there should be one per region. The selection of participants for the adult focus groups is also based on our multiple-category design of the study. The sample section will draw on different types of community members, for example, parents, teachers, and lower skilled workers.

**Proposed structure for Adult Focus Groups:**

**Set up of questions**
Following the model outlined above, the set up of the questions is designed to funnel the direction of the discussion from more general to more specific questions about trafficking, and end with gauging their reaction to specific posters. As with the focus group questions for children, the questions for adults are divided into four sections. For the focus group guide, see **Annex 1.6**, and for the instructions on running Adult Focus Groups see **Annex 1.7**.

**Section one** aims at initiating discussion of travel, why the participants believe children within their community travel to other countries and serves to encourage all participants to begin talking before delving into more complicated areas of discussion.

**Section two** explores positive and negative things that can happen when they or children travel to or work in another country. The purpose of this section is to allow the participants to explore their views on travel and travel safety for children. It also provides the researcher insight into these perceptions.

**Section three** examines the factors affecting children’s behavior in relation to travel and trafficking. The participants are shown examples of different anti-trafficking campaigns, and their responses are noted.

**Finally**, the focus group participants are asked what they think are the best methods for addressing trafficking in their communities.

The aim on the focus group research is to gather information about adult community members’ thoughts on trafficking, whether they believe it is an issue within their community and the factors they feel influence children’s perceptions of the issue.
**Short Questionnaire for Adults:**
The short questionnaire is developed to gather specific background information on the focus group participants, such as their role within their community, interaction with other youth who have traveled abroad, and the urgency of this issue within their community. For the full questionnaire please see Annex 1.5.

**3. Non-Governmental Organizations within the Community:**
The best way to elicit information about the development of programs, current practices, and best practices, is to conduct one-on-one interviews with each NGO in the area that has programs addressing anti-trafficking. See Annex 1.8 for the in-depth interview guide.

The purpose of the interviews is to gain an understanding of what is being done on the issue of trafficking prevention throughout the region. The information under consideration goes beyond specific programming, and also includes analysis of how programs are developed, what terminology is being used, and to what extent current and past programs are being evaluated. However, data on their perceptions of program effectiveness is directly addressed in the focus groups with the target audience of the programs.

Potential comparisons to be made:
- Language used
- Target audience
- Program development
- Programming implementation
- Evaluation methods

The number of interviews varies from country to country, and is determined by the number of active programs in each region.
Annex: 1.2
Questionnaire for Children

1. What is your age? __________

2. Have you ever traveled to another country?

   No       Yes
   If yes, how many times? __________________________
   If yes, where? __________________________
   __________________________

3. Do you want to travel for the first time (or again) to another country?

   No       Yes
   If yes, where? __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________

4. Do you personally know anyone 18 years old, or younger, who has traveled to another country?

   No       Yes

5. Do you personally know anyone 18 years old, or younger, who has traveled to work in another country?

   No       Yes

6. If you had the opportunity work in another country, would you?

   Not at all   Probably not   Don’t know   Probably yes   Absolutely

7. If yes, Why?

   _____ Adventure   _____ Independence   _____ Learn about a different culture
   _____ Education   _____ Money   _____ Visit family/friends abroad
   _____ Friends talking about it   _____ Training   _____ Other

8. If no, why not?

   _____ Would miss my family   _____ Concerns about safety
   _____ Prefer life here   _____ Could find a job here

On the other side of this page, please draw or write your feelings about travel and working in other countries.
Annex 1.3: Focus Group for Children

Guided Answer Form

Section 1: Time limit: 15 Minutes

1. Have any of you traveled to another country?  
   Yes_______  
   No_______

   Follow-up: Where did you go?

   ___Albania   ___Macedonia
   ___Belgium   ___Moldova
   ___Bulgaria   ___Romania
   ___Czech Republic   ___Russia
   ___Croatia   ___Slovenia
   ___England   ___Slovakia
   ___France   ___Spain
   ___Germany   ___Switzerland
   ___Greece   ___Turkey
   ___Hungary   ___United States
   ___Italy   ___Yugoslavia
   ___Kosovo

Those who haven’t traveled to another country, do you want to? Yes_______  
   No_______

Where do you want to go?

   ___Albania   ___Macedonia
   ___Belgium   ___Moldova
   ___Bulgaria   ___Romania
   ___Czech Republic   ___Russia
   ___Croatia   ___Slovenia
   ___England   ___Slovakia
   ___France   ___Spain
   ___Germany   ___Switzerland
   ___Greece   ___Turkey
   ___Hungary   ___United States
   ___Italy   ___Yugoslavia
   ___Kosovo

[if yes] Why are you interested in traveling to another country?
2. Why do you think young people like you travel to other countries?
   _____ Fun
   _____ Education
   _____ Money
   _____ Visit Family
   _____ Work

3. Does anyone know someone 18 years old, or younger, who has traveled to another country?
   Yes_______
   No________

Follow-up: Where did they go?
   ___ Albania      ___ Macedonia
   ___ Belgium      ___ Moldova
   ___ Bulgaria     ___ Romania
   ___ Czech Republic    ___ Russia
   ___ Croatia     ___ Slovenia
   ___ England      ___ Slovakia
   ___ France       ___ Spain
   ___ Germany     ___ Switzerland
   ___ Greece      ___ Turkey
   ___ Hungary     ___ United States
   ___ Italy       ___ Yugoslavia
   ___ Kosovo

Do you keep in touch with them, or have they returned?
   _______Yes   _______No   _______ Returned
Section 2: Time limit: 20 Minutes

Transition: Now we are going to talk about some good and bad things that can happen when you travel to other countries.

4. What are some good things that can happen when you travel to work in another country?

5. What are some bad things that could happen when you travel to work in another country?

6. What are some bad things that could happen when a woman travels for work? When a woman travels alone for work?

7. Have you heard any stories of bad things happening here in this country?

   a. Any stories about your [countrywomen]?

   b. Do you think it could happen here?

8. If you could travel to another country or travel to another country again, what would do to prepare for your trip?
9. Do you think travel safety is an issue within your community?

   Yes_______
   No_______

Section 3: Time limit: 60 Minutes (1 Hour)

10. Have you heard or seen any messages about personal security for travelers [or use ‘trafficking’ or other words used by participants]?

   Yes_______
   No_______

   Follow-up: (i.e. posters, PSA’s, school discussions/workshops et al)
   What medium was used?

   ______ Phone Number for hotline
   ______ Poster
   ______ Radio
   ______ School Programs
   ______ Television
   ______ Workshop
   ______ Youth Group Activity
   ______ Other

   Could you describe the message?

   How do you feel, or what is your reaction to these messages?
   (If they seem sensitive to this ask how they think their friends would react to this type of messages)

11. Have these messages affected your behavior?

   Yes_______
   No_______

   Follow-up: If so in which ways?
12. If you were going to take a job in another country or another town, whose advice would you take?

_______ Brothers
_______ Family
_______ Friends
_______ Parents
_______ Relatives
_______ Religious Leaders
_______ Sisters
_______ Teachers
_______ Other

Follow-up: Have these other factors affected your behavior?

Yes_______
No________

If so in which ways?

Of all this advice which has had the greatest impact?

13. Do you think others pay attention to the messages?

Yes_______
No_______

14. What other factors, formal, (such as media, education, discussion groups) and informal, such as talking with friends and family, do you feel impact your opinion on safety of travelers?

Have these other factors affected your behavior?
If so, in what ways?

Of all the messages, advice, and other things you’ve heard about, which have had the greatest impact?

15. Show posters and have them write or draw their reactions to the materials.

16. What is your reaction to materials in general? (If they are resistant, ask them what they would predict their friends reactions would be to these materials.)

   For each of the posters, the following areas should be covered: Initial Response, General Comments, Who is the Perceived Target?, What is the message of the poster?, Is the message clear?, and Is the message effective?

   Reaction #1

   Reaction #2
Reaction #3

Reaction #4

Reaction #5

Reaction #6
After all the posters are shown, have a brief overall discussion about the posters as a group.

Which was most effective?

17. How do you feel the messages about travel safety [or use trafficking if used in focus group] should be put across in your community?

16. Some say too much attention is being paid to the issue of travel safety in the community, some say too little and others just enough. What do you think?
Annex 1.4: 
Instructions for Running Focus Groups for Children

Introduction and Questionnaire:

**Time limit: 15 minutes**
When everyone arrives, the participants should be welcomed, and given the questionnaire. (Please do a short introduction of yourself, and let them know you will answer any questions they have for you at the end of the focus group. It might be useful to let them know you are open to answering almost anything. Do not go into details of the actual project. Use terms phrases such as getting their feedback on Travel Safety campaigns and learning more about their perspective on traveling to other countries.) Participants should fill out the initial questionnaire and expression of feelings about travel exercise upon their arrival before the focus group begins. Please note, this should not take more than 15 minutes.

It is possible that there may be too many participants who wish to participate in the focus groups. It is important to keep the focus groups to the appropriate size (6 – 8), because with groups larger than this, there is less participation of each member. Efforts should be made to either have one group wait, or fill in the questionnaire without participating, without causing bad feeling among the potential candidates, which may color the experience of the focus group.

**Conducting the Focus Groups**
The focus group should be broken into three sections:

**Section 1: Warm-up and Back-Ground (Questions 1-3)**
**Time limit: 15 minutes**
- The purpose of this section is to put the participants at ease and start them thinking about the issues surrounding travel safety.
- It is important to get as many to participate straight away
- This is intended to be the shortest section, and you should not spend a lot of time on it. A maximum of 20 minutes should be spent here and the guided form should help facilitate this time limit.

**Section 2: Theme Exploration (Questions 4-9)**
**Time limit: 20 minutes**
- The purpose of this section is to introduce the theme of travel safety and explore the participants’ perspectives on good and bad experiences that can happen when they travel to other countries.
- It is important to continue full participation from the group and elicit responses from quieter participants.
- This section is the second most important and should provide a smooth transition into our section on the core research question.
Section 3: Core research questions (Questions 10-18)

**Time limit: 60 minutes (1 Hour)**

- The purpose of this section is to address the **core research question**.
- This section should take twice as long as the other sections. Try not to rush any of the questions. However be mindful that the second to last question (question 17) is the most important one of all, so make sure you have enough time to get some depth on this one.
- If there are sections were there are no answers at all—for example, if no one remembers any messages about trafficking at all, (Questions 10 and 11) it is acceptable to move on to the next set of questions.
- Participants may be tired at this point, so we have introduced a participatory activity to get them reenergized (Question 15). 15 minutes should be spent on the participatory response exercise.

At the end, wrap up, and open up the discussion for the participants to ask you questions. Very often, there can be some revealing discussion after the ‘official’ end of the focus group, so do not stop taking notes during this section.
Annex 1.5
Questionnaire for Adults

1. How would you describe your role in the community?

Parent    Teacher    Community Leader    Other___________

2. Do you know anyone 18 years old, or younger, who has traveled to another country?

No    Yes

3. Do you know anyone 18 years old, or younger, who has traveled to work in another country?

No    Yes

4. Do you think travel safety is an issue in your community?

Not at all    Not very much    Don’t know    Yes somewhat
Annex 1.6: Focus Group Guide for Adults

Section 1: Time limit: 15 Minutes
1. Have any of you traveled to another country?
   Follow-up: What kind of experiences did you have?
   Did you travel alone or with your family?
   Did you travel to another country when you were younger, under the age of 18?
2. Does anyone know someone 18, or younger, who has traveled to another country?
   Follow-up: Where did they go?
   Do you keep in touch with them, or have they returned?
3. Why do you think young people like to travel to other countries?

Section 2: Time limit: 15 Minutes
Transition: Now we are going to talk about some good and bad experiences that can happen when you travel to other countries.
4. What are some good experiences that can happen when you, or young people, travel to another country?
5. What are some bad experiences that could happen?
6. Do you think travel safety is an issue within your community? What safety issues come to mind?
7. What do you think children should do while preparing to travel safely to another country?

Section 3: Time limit: 30 Minutes
8. Have you heard or seen any messages about safety for those visiting or working abroad?
   Follow-up: (i.e. posters, PSA’s, school discussions/workshops et al)
   What types of messages were they?
   Were any of them targeted at children?
   Could you describe the message? What medium was used?
   How do you feel or what is your reaction to these messages?
9. What other factors, informal and formal, do you feel impact children’s opinions in your community on travel safety?
10. Have any of these messages or any other factors effected your perceptions of travel safety or your behavior?
11. What is your reaction to materials in general? (Hold up the materials)
    Reaction to #1?
    Reaction to #2?
    Reaction to #3?
12. How do you feel the messages about travel safety should be put across in your community?
    (Too much, too little or not enough attention?)

Code: __________
# of Participants: ______
Age Group: __________
Location: __________
Date: ____________
Time Start: _________
Time Finish: ________
Annex 1.7
Instructions for Running Focus Groups for Adults

This is a shorter focus group than the child’s group and should only take between an hour and an hour and a half.

**Introduction and Questionnaire:**

**Time limit: 10 minutes**
When everyone arrives the participants should be welcomed, and given the questionnaire. Participants should fill out the initial questionnaire. This should not take more than 10 minutes.

**Conducting the Focus Groups**
The focus group should be broken into three sections:

Section 1: Warm-up and Background (Questions 1-3)

**Time limit: 15 minutes**
- The purpose of this section is to put the participants at ease and start them thinking about the issues surrounding travel safety.
- It is important to get as many to participate straight away.
- This is intended to be the shortest section, and you should not spend a lot of time on it. A maximum of 15 minutes should be spent here and the guided form should help facilitate this time limit.

Section 2: Theme Exploration (Questions 4-7)

**Time limit: 15 minutes**
- The purpose of this section is to introduce the theme of travel safety and explore the participants’ perspectives on good and bad experiences that can happen when traveling to other countries.
- It is important to continue full participation from the group and elicit responses from quieter participants.
- This section is the second most important and should provide a smooth transition into our section on the core research question.

Section 3: Core research questions (Questions 8-12)

**Time limit: 30 minutes**
- The purpose of this section is to address the core research question.
- This section should take twice as long as the other sections and try not to rush any of the questions. However be mindful that the last question (question 12) is the most important one of all, so make sure you have enough time to get some depth on this one.
- In this section we are asking for their opinions and NOT how they think children are responding to these materials.

At the end, wrap up, and open the discussion up for them to ask you questions.
Annex 1.8
Interview Outline for NGOs

The questions here form a guided interview—should there be other interesting facets of the programs you wish to pursue in more detail, you should. However, we should aim to get at least the same minimum information from each interviewee, in order to have more complete information on each NGO’s work and campaigns. Please use this form for the interviews—the back of the page can be used for extra notes for additional questions. If you need more paper, staple additional notes to the form.

I. General / Warm Up Questions

1. What is the organization’s main focus?

2. What kind of programs do you have for youth?

3. Do you tackle the issue of travel safety? [or trafficking—determine with UNICEF staff which terminology is OK to use for each interview.]

II. Specific Program Information

4. How does your program (for anti-trafficking) work, exactly? What are the different elements?

5. What kind of language do you use in presenting this topic to your target audience?

6. What is the process you use for developing the campaigns?

7. Who is the target audience of your travel safety/trafficking campaigns?

8. How do you reach your target audience (schools, community groups, on the street, media)?

9. What impact do you think your campaign has had?
10. What were the goals of your campaigns?

11. What has been successful?

12. What challenges have you faced?

13. Have you done any sort of evaluation? If yes, what type?

III. Comparison with Other Programs

14. What other campaigns do you know of?

15. From your perspective, what types of campaigns are the most effective?

16. Are there other elements that you would like to add to your program? Are there any new programs that you would like to be doing? (Why aren’t you? What are the restrictions?)

17. Are you in touch with other people involved in the same issue/work? Do you share ideas?

IV. Other Issues

18. What are some of the obstacles you face? (i.e. Corruption, lack of specific laws, difficult to reach audience, negative response from certain parts of society, etc.)

19. In your opinion, how might these obstacles be overcome?

20. Do you have a mission statement? Background information? Hand outs on the NGO in general? Handouts on specific campaigns? Any material they are willing to share? [could include program documents, etc. This is a way to close up the interview.]
Annex 1.11
Focus Group Preparation and Implementation Guide

Participant Selection for the Target Group
The participants will be recruited by the UNICEF field offices, either with assistance in targeting specifically at risk groups by local NGO partners, or directly through schools, and community centers. Ideally, the local NGO partners will not be working directly with anti-trafficking issues, but will be able to identify girls and boys from vulnerable backgrounds. The participants should be selected on the basis of their vulnerability, not on their awareness of the issue. Criteria for selection could include:

- low income families,
- school drop-outs,
- participants in other technical training programs,
- youth organizations,
- orphanages
- other community assistance programs.

It will be important that the participants be gathered from a broad range of these categories, so as to maximize the range of opinions and feedback from each focus group. It would be preferable if siblings are not in the same focus group.

The SIPA team will request a brief outline on how the selection process was conducted, to verify compatibility between sites.

Participants should not be told in advance that they will be participating in research regarding anti-trafficking campaigns, but rather that the research will be on sensitive media campaigns. This is necessary so as to minimize the biases they bring to the focus group on the issue.

Parents or caretakers will not be able to attend the focus groups, but can pick up their children afterwards, and will be able to ask questions after the focus group is concluded.

Selection of Participants for the Community Leader / Parent Focus Groups
The participants will be recruited by the UNICEF field offices, either with assistance in targeting specifically at risk groups by local NGO partners, or directly through schools, and community centers. Participants will be individuals interested in the issue, and concerned about the youth in their community. It should be a mix of parents, community leaders, and teachers, with an equal number of men and women if possible. Participants should have diverse backgrounds. We will only be conducting one of these per community.
Selection of Location for Focus Groups
The locations will be determined by local UNICEF field offices or consultants prior to SIPA team’s travel.

Ideally the space should be a neutral space (ie. Not a classroom in a school), and should be an informal setting, with enough chairs for everyone. The chairs should be arranged in a circle, with space for a flip chart or a place to hang paper participatory activities.

Timing of Focus Group
Each focus group should take no more than 1 ½ hours, and we anticipate running 2 –3 per day. They should be conducted at an appropriate time of day so as not to excessively disrupt the participants’ daily activities. Early evening should not be discounted as an appropriate time.

Moderating the Focus Group
There will be 2 moderators—one primary moderator, and one secondary moderator. The SIPA team will also need a translator, to be present during the entire focus group. Both moderators will welcome the participants as they arrive, and establish a feeling of comfort and respect for each participant. Each participant will be given a name tag.

The primary moderator’s role will be to conduct the focus group—to ask questions, draw individuals out, and listen carefully. Important things to keep in mind:

1. The moderator should be mindful of their body language, and the non-verbal signals they are sending—it is important to listen and be respectful of all opinions raised.
2. There are no right or wrong answers in a focus group—each response is equally valid.
3. The moderator should not betray any personal feelings about the answers given or the general discussion—avoid head nodding, verbal comments or signals of approval or disapproval.
4. While it is key to stick to the questions asked for comparative purposes, the moderator should feel free to ask clarifying questions.
5. While the moderator will be understanding the translator, the focus of her attention should always remain on the participants.
6. Know the questions well enough to be able to ask them fluidly, without too much reference to your notes.
7. Use participant’s names (from the name tags), when addressing questions directly to individuals. Be sure to use names for everyone, so no one feels left out.
8. Look participants in the eye when asking the question, even though they may not understand you, since this will help establish a connection and a rapport.

The secondary moderator will take extremely detailed notes, but will not engage directly in the focus group. They will be sitting off to one side (not part of the circle of participants.). Important things to keep in mind when taking notes:

1. Try to note direct quotes, if possible.
2. Note trends and commonly expressed opinions or views.
3. Personal notes, opinions, and impressions should be noted to one side, and not be part of the direct body of note-taking.
4. If they have questions, they should not ask them directly, but write them down and hand them to the primary moderate towards the end of the focus group.
5. They should note non-verbal activity.
6. They should do a sketch of the seating arrangements, to assist with debriefing afterwards.

The translator will try to translate as accurately as possible, each person’s comments, without interpreting them. They may need to slow the discussion down in order to translate more accurately, and not lose whole pieces of the discussion.

**At the end of the Focus Group**

The moderator will invite a brief question and answer session, which will allow participants to voice concerns about the information they’ve given, or the research project itself. It is important to address these concerns, but if possible, a lot of information about the research project itself should be reserved for the end of the focus group session.

**Immediately After the Focus Group**

The moderators should individually write up their notes immediately following the focus group, and then discuss their impressions together, and add further notes. It would be helpful also to sit down with the translator to get their impressions of the focus group. The notes HAVE TO be written up before the next focus group is conducted. It is important to digest the focus group, and come up with a list of summary points, and main themes and topics that were discussed.
Annex 1.10
Improvements for Methodology

Overall, the methodology addressed the research questions raised by this project. There were some specific improvements that could be made in future replications of this research and these are outlined below:

Prior to Beginning the Focus Groups
It is clear in the methodology that the word ‘trafficking’ should not be used until the participants use it themselves. Time should be taken at the beginning of the focus groups with the translators to make sure they understand the methodology, and the language we want to use in this study.

Whenever possible, focus groups should be conducted in the language that the participants are most comfortable with. At times children had difficulty with Macedonian and would have been more comfortable if the focus group was conducted in Albanian or Ramani. When the focus groups in Albanian communities were conducted in Albanian, the children seemed more able to fully participate.

It is most helpful to work with one translator throughout the research (if possible), so that they may become part of the research team. It is also important that one translator assist the research team in conducting a focus group, directly translating everything that is said. Side conversations among participants can impact the groups discussion and are all responses are important. Aside from certain extreme circumstances, it is important that the translators not switch in the middle of a focus group. Due to the sensitivity of the topic it is important that the children feel comfortable and that those participating in the research are constants.

The introductions at the beginning of the groups and how they were made to the participants had a great deal of impact on the participants’ level of comfort. Care should be taken to have enough time for proper introductions to everyone prior to beginning the focus group. Also, the introductions should be made by the researchers themselves, and not by the translators.

Questionnaires
In some of the focus groups, the children were illiterate, and needed help translating and filling in their questionnaire. Where possible, the research team should know in advance when this might happen, to be able to schedule more time to fill in the questionnaire, with the translator reading out the questions.

Overall, the questionnaires proved to be a useful tool in gathering specific information, and getting the participants to begin thinking about travel safety.

Focus Group for Children
Where possible, it should be made clear to outsiders (representatives from the NGOs, teachers), that only one or two can attend the focus groups with the children. Having
people the children trust attend was helpful, but more than one or two additional people attending might compromise confidentiality of the answers, and be distracting for the focus group participants.

One difficulty in some of the focus groups was the indirect approach to the topic of trafficking, via the discussion of ‘travel safety.’ In some groups, the connection between ‘travel safety’ was made easily, and the discussion transitioned with no problems. However, in other groups, the connection was harder to make, and the transition seemed more difficult.

**Focus Group Guide**
Additional pages should be stapled to the back of the focus group guide, in order to allow the moderators to add additional notes as needed.

**Feedback from the Field**
A number of NGOs gave the research group positive feedback on the methodology—it was considered to be systematic, and yet an informal way to approach a difficult issue.
### Annex 2: Focus Group Details

#### Table 2.1: General Focus Group Details

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<sup>20</sup> The age of participants has been divided into three categories: Younger (8-12); Middle (13-15); and Older (16 and older). The two groups of adults have not been included in this chart.
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### Annex 3. Differences in levels of Awareness

#### Table 3.1 Levels of Awareness, Differences Across Region Type

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<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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#### Table 3.2 Levels of Awareness, Differences Across Ethnicities

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<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Annex 4: Contact Information for Local NGOs

Cerenja—Zdruzenie Na Romite
Contact: Demirova Enise
Ul. Radanski Pat Br.
202 Stip, Macedonia
Telephone: 03 2 384 917

Civil Initiative for Equal Opportunities (SEMPRE)
Contact: Dzala Bojkoska
Sisak 23
7000 Bitola, Macedonia
Telephone: 389 47 252 095

Forum of Albanian Women
Tetova, Macedonia

Happy Child
Contact: Verica Stamenkova Trajkova
Telephone: 389 2 622 491

Healthy Options Project Skopje (HOPS)
Contact: Branko Dokuzovski
Kapan An Lokal 3
1000 Skopje, Macedonia
Telephone: 389 (0)2 130-038

HERA
Contacts: Marija Stojanovic, Marija Vasileva
Skopje, Macedonia

Institute for Sustainable Development
Contact: Paul J. Parks
Dime Anicin 9
1000 Skopje, Macedonia
Telephone: 389 2 114-855

International Organization for Migration
Contact: Guillermo Schichina
Ul. “Kricin” 2A
1000 Skopje, Macedonia
Telephone: 389 2 3082 812
Kvinna till Kvinna
Contact: Agneta Falck
Krisinebergs Slottsvag 8
SE-112 52 Stockholm Sweden

Open Society Institute, Macedonia
Marija Savovska
Bul. Jane Sandanski 111
PO Box 378
1000 Skopje, Macedonia
Telephone: 389 2 44 44 88 Ext. 106

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
Contact: Gerry Bjallerstedt
QBE Building
11 Oktomvri No. 25
1000 Skopje, Macedonia

Union of Women’s Organization of the Republic of Macedonia (SOZM)
Contact: Vinka Angelovic
Probistip, Macedonia
Telephone: 032 481 864

Contact: Savka Todorovska
Vasil Gorgov bb.
Baraka 4, PO Box 571
1000 Skopje, Macedonia
Telephone: 389 2 134-390

United Nations Children’s Fund
Contact: Gregory Grimsich, Barbara Rowlandson
Ul. Mitropolit Teodosij
Gologanov br. 42A
1000 Skopje, Macedonia

United States Department of Justice/Criminal Division
United States Embassy
Juru Gargarin 15
1000 Skopje, Macedonia

Youth Council
Ohrid, Macedonia
 Annex 5: Map of Macedonia
Annex 6: Acronyms

EU European Union
FYROM Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
FAMNET Family Network
HOPS Healthy Options Project, Skopje
IATP Internet Access and Training Program
ILO International Labor Organization
INGO International Non-Governmental Organization
IOM International Organization for Migration
IREX International Research and Exchange Board
ISC Institute for Sustainable Communities
OSCE Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSI Open Society Institute
NGO Non-Governmental Organizations
NIS/CEE Newly Independent States/Central and Eastern Europe
SEE South Eastern Europe
SEMPRE Civil Initiative for Equal Opportunities (SEMPRE)
SIPA School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University
UNAIDS United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
UNDCP United Nations Drug Control Program
UNDP United Nations Development Program
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA United Nations Populations Fund
UNHCR United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF United Nations Children’s Fund
UNICRI United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute
UNIFEM United Nations Development Fund for Women
UMCOR United Methodist Committee on Relief
USDOJ United States Department of Justice