

Anti-human Trafficking Interventions: How Do We Know if They Are Working?

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Abstract

Since the early 2000s, a significant number of programs and policies have been developed and implemented to prevent and combat human trafficking. At the international, regional and national levels, government, and international, and nongovernment organizations have established plans of action, conducted training, developed policy tools, and conducted a variety of other activities to counter the phenomenon of trafficking in persons. However, only a small number of these anti-human trafficking interventions have been evaluated and an even fewer number have been evaluated rigorously. This article explores the approaches that have been used to evaluate anti-human trafficking interventions. Through a review of 49 evaluations, the study finds that action is required to increase quality evaluations of anti-human trafficking programs in order to ensure that programs are targeted, implemented, and delivered effectively, and the knowledge on the impact of programs is improved.

Keywords

data collection, document review, evaluation practice, vulnerable populations

Introduction

The *United Nations (UN) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime* (2000) provided an internationally recognized definition of human trafficking and stirred the international community to take action to combat human trafficking. Increased international attention to the phenomenon of human trafficking since the early 2000s has prompted considerable investment in programs that aim to prevent human trafficking, protect victims, and prosecute traffickers. The “global funding information sheet,” which reports on the sums allocated to combating human trafficking at the national level in more than 80 countries, suggests that by 2011, prior to private donors such as Walk Free allocating significant funds to anti-human trafficking activities, the annual amount spent on combating human trafficking was approximately

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USD65 million (Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women [GAATW], 2014). Of this figure, it is estimated that the European Union contributed USD15 million, and the United States contributed USD51 million annually (GAATW, 2014). This significant financial investment, and the seriousness of the crime of human trafficking, demands that anti-human trafficking interventions demonstrate results and positive impact on target communities; however, many anti-human trafficking interventions continue to operate without an adequate evidence base.

The initial wave of anti-human trafficking intervention in the early 2000s operated in an evaluation vacuum (Gallagher & Surtees, 2012). Hundreds of projects at the national, regional, and international level have been conducted; training material and plans of action developed; conferences, journals, and policy tools implemented, but despite these efforts, we still know very little about the impact of anti-human trafficking efforts because few of the measures have been rigorously evaluated. In the absence of quality evaluation, advocates, policy makers, and others in the anti-human trafficking sector have been left to draw conclusions from overviews, commentaries, and anecdotal information regarding the effectiveness of anti-human trafficking programs (Gozdziak & Collet, 2005). Only in the last decade have program managers and donors begun to emphasize the need to conduct quality process or outcome evaluations of antitrafficking interventions. However, despite this new focus on the importance of evaluation, recent literature suggests that the evaluations conducted thus far have not been sufficiently rigorous to determine program effectiveness and impact (Van der Laan, Smith, Busschers, & Aarten, 2011).

This study aims to examine the approaches used to evaluate anti-human trafficking programs and consider to what extent evaluations have been sufficiently rigorous to measure the effectiveness and impact of antitrafficking interventions. The study involved a review of 49 program evaluations conducted at the national, regional, and international level. The study finds evidence to support the argument that anti-human trafficking programs have not been adequately evaluated: programs have lofty objectives that cannot be measured or, conversely, objectives that are merely process oriented and are too easily identified as “success”; monitoring and evaluating are often confused or conflated; process evaluation is emphasized over outcome evaluation; and rigor is lacking. Many evaluation reports do not provide information on the data collection methods, and thus the readers are unable to determine whether the evaluation was conducted rigorously. The study concludes that baseline data collection in the field of human trafficking needs to be enhanced, and practices for sharing data and information at the regional and international levels should be improved. The study determines that mechanisms for monitoring programs should be established in the early stages of program planning. Independent and qualified evaluators are needed for objective evaluations that are based on professional evaluation methods and standards. The study concludes that action is required to increase quality evaluations of anti-human trafficking programs; to ensure that programs are targeted, implemented, and delivered effectively; and to improve the knowledge on the impact of programs.

The first section of the article provides background on human trafficking and the literature on evaluations of anti-human trafficking programs. The second section of the article presents the research method. The third section discusses the findings of the study, including the approaches to evaluating anti-human trafficking programs and limitations of the evaluations, and highlights the lessons that can be learned from recent evaluations. The article concludes with a summary of the key points and some concluding thoughts on the importance of quality evaluations of anti-human trafficking programs at the national, regional, and international levels.

Background

Human trafficking—dynamics, definitions, and responses. Human trafficking is a crime that affects most countries of the world (Europol, 2005). While labor trafficking comprises all types of trafficking for

labor exploitation, including industries such as fishing and agricultural labor exploitation, sexual trafficking can be understood as the component of human trafficking that deals with the use of persons in prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation (Efrat, 2015). Trafficking victims are often kept enslaved through techniques such as debt bondage, isolation from family and the community, confiscation of identification and travel documents, the use of threat of violence toward victims and/or their families, threat of imprisonment, and control of victims' money (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008). Victims are frequently deceived and duped through false promises of economic opportunities that await them in more affluent destination countries (Clawson, Small, Go, & Myles, 2003). It thus follows that patterns of human trafficking frequently flow from less developed countries to neighboring countries or industrialized nations with higher standards of living (Miko, 2000). Various "push" factors exacerbate the human trafficking problem, including economic and political instability, government corruption, illiteracy, civil unrest, low food production, high infant mortality rates, and internal armed conflict (U.S. Department of State, 2002). Trafficking victims often suffer severe physical, psychological, and emotional health consequences, as they are subjected to a range of abuses that may include physical violence, sexual assault, emotional abuse, mind control, and torture (Raymond & Hughes, 2001).

Today, the most widely accepted definition of human trafficking comes from the *UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime*, better known as the Palermo Protocol (2000). According to the Palermo Protocol (2000) definition, human trafficking means the recruitment; transportation; transfer; harboring or receipt of persons through the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of abuse, of power, or of a position of vulnerability, or of 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" includes the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, and servitude or the removal of organs. The Palermo Protocol has now been ratified by 147 member states (Van Dijk & Klerx-Van Mierlo, 2014).

National governments have also developed their own human trafficking definitions and policies in recent years, and one of the first countries to achieve this was the United States. In federal U.S. statutes, there are no formal definitions of "human trafficking" or "trafficking in persons." Instead, the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 defines "severe forms of trafficking in persons". Specifically, Section 103 (8) of the TVPA defines this term to mean sex trafficking, in which a commercial act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion; or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. It is this definition, rather than the Palermo Protocol definition, that is applied in the context of U.S. anti-trafficking in persons policies and programs (Siskin & Wyler, 2012) and which the United States uses to measure national governments' efforts to eradicate trafficking. The TVPA's definition of severe forms of trafficking in persons is similar to the Palermo Protocol's definition of trafficking in persons, as both identify force, fraud, and coercion as prohibited means or methods for obtaining the services of another person and both do not require movement of persons across national borders as a necessary precondition for identifying instances of human trafficking (Siskin & Wyler, 2012).

The "three P" paradigm—prevention, protection, and prosecution—has been used as the fundamental international framework, adopted by the United States and other countries around the world to combat contemporary forms of slavery (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). Human trafficking programs can be categorized by three Ps: *prevention* (awareness raising and targeting economic opportunities to vulnerable communities), *protection* (including recovery and reintegration of

women and children), and *prosecution* (including support for implementation of legislation and capacity building of police). The fourth “P”—*partnership*—as announced by former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton in 2009, serves as a pathway to progress in the effort against modern slavery. The four P paradigm is outlined in the Palermo Protocol, thus highlighting the importance of a holistic approach to combating human trafficking that takes into consideration not only the need to prevent human trafficking but also to protect victims and for organizations to collaborate on countertrafficking efforts.

Since the early 2000s, hundreds of policies and programs have been initiated spanning the three Ps to prevent and combat human trafficking, protect victims and persons vulnerable to trafficking, and prosecute traffickers. An example of an international intervention involving the collaborative efforts of governments, international organizations, and nongovernment organizations (NGO) is the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN GIFT), which was launched in March 2007 by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). UN GIFT has the aim of eradicating human trafficking by reducing both the vulnerability of potential victims and the demand for exploitation in all its forms; ensuring adequate protection and support to those who do fall victim; and supporting the efficient prosecution of the criminals involved, while respecting the fundamental human rights of all persons (UN GIFT, 2015).

National governments have also established their own policies and programs to meet the three Ps. For example, in the US, the TVPA is designed to combat human trafficking through protection, prosecution, and prevention. The protection element addresses trafficking victims’ needs for support to recover and reintegrate into society and includes benefits and services to victims within the US who are not US citizens or permanent residents (Potocky, 2010). Under the TVPA, two new immigration statuses were created—continued presence and the T-visa—and access to public benefits for trafficking victims was created through a mechanism known as “certification” (Potocky, 2010). Under the T-visa, adult victims of all types of human trafficking are granted temporary status and employment in the US for four years, after which time trafficking victims may apply for permanent resident status (Potocky, 2010). Certification allows trafficking victims to receive the same support services and benefits in the US as refugees, including healthcare, housing and employment assistance, financial support, and English language training (Potocky, 2010).

Other countries have developed similar responses to human trafficking. For example, the Australian government has developed the Commonwealth Action Plan to Eradicate Trafficking in Persons (Attorney-General’s Department, 2004). The Action Plan’s elements include prevention, detection and investigation, criminal prosecution, and victim support and rehabilitation. Under the Action Plan, the Australian government established a community awareness campaign to increase knowledge of human trafficking; created an Australian Federal Police Transnational Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking Team to investigate human trafficking and sexual servitude; placed a Senior Migration Officer focused on human trafficking in Thailand; developed new visa arrangements for trafficked persons who were of interest to, or could assist police investigations and prosecutions; instigated a victim support program for persons who had been granted visas to assist police investigations or prosecutions; and developed a reintegration assistance project for trafficking victims who were returned to source countries in Southeast Asia (Burn, & Simmons, 2006).

A vast array of projects focus on the prevention of human trafficking through, for example, awareness raising activities. A well-known example is MTV EXIT (End Exploitation and Human Trafficking), launched with cooperation from USAID in 2006. The program is a multimedia, multi-platform awareness and prevention campaign against human trafficking (MTV EXIT Foundation, 2013). MTV EXIT works with local groups in various countries of Asia to understand the nature of

human trafficking in each particular country and subsequently tailors and localizes messages for different audience groups in each country. The MTV EXIT campaign material, which encompasses documentaries and music concerts, among other media, is designed to build knowledge and influence attitudes and behavior of the target audiences. Target audiences are segmented into three overall groups: young people from at-risk communities who should be aware of the issue of human trafficking, seek safe migration, and understand the risks of migration and trafficking; people who are not at risk of trafficking but who represent the demand that underlines trafficking; and the general audience who should receive awareness information to inspire them to take action against human trafficking (MTV EXIT Foundation, 2013).

Prevention activities also target local communities. A local-level example of a prevention program is the Information Campaign to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children in Cambodia, which was a 4-year campaign implemented by IOM in partnership with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and with funding from The U.S. Agency for International Development. The campaign was conducted in 18 provinces in Cambodia through a mass information campaign, a village-based/micro-information campaign, development of a database, and policy and advocacy work. A core aim of the project was to build the capacity of the Cambodia Ministry of Women's Affairs through event-specific activities and campaigns, in conjunction with specific capacity-building workshops and training. Advocacy in this campaign was implemented only at a provincial level and focused on facilitating a better environment to enable multisector counter trafficking efforts to be implemented or strengthened (Sainsbury, 2006).

While these examples provide only a snapshot of the antitrafficking programs that have recently been implemented, they provide some insight into the diversity of the programs and their different objectives and target audiences. The programs may have a broad geographic focus (i.e., international or regional); focus on one of the Ps or indeed all of the Ps; be short term or long term depending on funding; or target working with governments, at-risk youth populations, or villagers at provincial level, among others.

Evaluating anti-human trafficking programs. A basic principle underpinning the prevention of crime such as human trafficking is that it requires the practical application of research and evaluation findings in the development and implementation of strategies to reduce the problem (United Nations Council for Economic and Social Development [ECOSOC], 2002). A quality evaluation can determine whether a program has been implemented as planned, what outcomes have been delivered as a result, whether the stated objectives of the program were achieved and the various reasons that a program did or did not work (Owen, 2007). This can inform improvements to the program and help decision makers to determine whether it should be continued. However, knowledge of "what works" in the field of human trafficking is particularly limited (Tyldum & Brunovskis, 2005).

This article adopts the definition of evaluation provided by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC) Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance Committee (1991):

An assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

Idriss, Jendly, Karn, and Mulone (2010) suggest that in the specific area of crime prevention, process and outcome evaluations are the most common types of evaluation. Process evaluation aims to improve the understanding of program activities and whether they have been implemented as

planned, whereas outcome evaluation is more concerned with program effectiveness (Morgan & Homel, 2013). There are a number of evaluation methods that may be used to evaluate anti-human trafficking programs, including experimental research designs such as randomized control trials, quasi-experimental designs and pre- and posttest comparisons, qualitative inquiry, participatory action research, and realistic or theory-driven approaches (Owen, 2007). The Scientific Methods Scale (SMS) was developed as a guide to assess the methodological quality of outcome evaluations and has become recognized as an important reference for evaluators. According to the SMS, a research design that achieves Level 3 on the SMS, with measures of the outcome pre- and post-intervention and an appropriate comparison group against which to compare results, is considered the minimum design for drawing valid conclusions about the effectiveness of an intervention (Farrington, Gottfredson, Sherman, & Welsh, 2006).

There is no single best approach to answer questions regarding whether program activities have been implemented as planned and the overall effectiveness of programs; however, there are accepted standards that can help guide decisions on how to conduct evaluation. For example, the UN Evaluation Group (2005) outlines the criteria for good program evaluations: the evaluation process should be transparent; evaluators should possess evaluation expertise; evaluations should be conducted by a person who is independent and impartial; evaluation design and methods should be purpose driven; adequate planning should be performed to ensure that the required data are collected; and there should be a follow-up process after the evaluation to check that recommendations have been implemented as advised.

Unreliable estimates of human trafficking numbers. Laczko (2005) argues that few independent studies have evaluated and assessed the effectiveness of anti-human trafficking policies, programs, and activities. Consequently, knowledge and understanding of the issue and how to best prevent human trafficking, support trafficking victims, and punish offenders remain limited (Albanese, Donnelly, & Kelegian, 2004). Much remains unknown about the long-term impact of human trafficking on victims and their families, the services required to support the complex needs of trafficking victims, the effectiveness of programs, and best practices for victim recovery (Clawson, Dutch, Salomon, & Goldblatt Grace, 2009).

One of the most critical barriers to understanding human trafficking and the collection and analysis of data on the phenomenon is that the individuals involved in human trafficking, including victims and perpetrators, are hidden populations (Laczko, 2005). Reliable estimates of the number of human trafficking victims and perpetrators do not exist (Weitzer, 2014). The ILO (2005) has continued to cite a figure of 2.4 million people trafficked in the world at any given time. The U.S. Department of State (2014) has provided a different estimate for a number of years of approximately 600,000 to 800,000 people around the world, both adults and children, being trafficked across international borders annually. In many countries, important data on the number of arrests and prosecutions are also lacking or unreliable (Gallagher & Surtees, 2012). Despite these limitations, estimates of the trafficking phenomenon are repeatedly presented in the media and by various government and international agencies as accurate (Weitzer, 2014).

Cwikel and Hoban (2005) suggest that the current estimates of human trafficking numbers are questionable due to methodological weaknesses, gaps in data, the interpretations made, and the discrepancies in data found across different studies and reports. Without reliable data, scholars, policy makers, and others are forced to lean on assumptions about human trafficking that may be far from the truth (Van der Laan et al., 2011). It follows that programs to prevent and combat human trafficking may be designed based on data that are inaccurate. The lack of reliable data also has implications for the evaluation of anti-human trafficking interventions. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO, 2007) argued that conducting impact evaluations of anti-human trafficking projects is difficult due to several factors, including questionable estimates of the number of trafficking victims. Reliable

estimates are needed for baselines by which to evaluate how effectively specific interventions are reducing human trafficking (Gallagher & Surtees, 2012; GAO, 2007).

Issues associated with program design, monitoring, and quality evaluation. Elements of the design of some antitrafficking projects, such as short time frames and objectives that are too broad, can impede evaluation (GAO, 2007). The U.S. GAO (2007) found that programs also impeded impact evaluation because they often lacked a logic framework that clearly linked activities with goals, indicators, and targets; they lacked appropriate monitoring elements; and they had short time frames coupled with overly broad objectives. Because of such difficulties, few evaluations that measure the impact of programs have been conducted, and as a result, little is known about the actual impact of antitrafficking interventions (GAO, 2007). Consequently, two of the U.S. GAO's (2007) recommendations for evaluation of international anti-human trafficking programs are to develop a program-specific logic framework and build monitoring and evaluation into project design. Similarly, Potocky (2010) suggests that measurable indicators should be developed for human trafficking programs as well as procedures established for setting and modifying targets. Measurable indicators with mutually agreed-upon targets will allow project stakeholders to assess how the project is performing in terms of achieving its overall goals and objectives (GAO, 2007).

The U.S. GAO (2007) conducted a document review of 23 U.S. government funded anti-human trafficking projects in Indonesia, Thailand, and Mexico and found that of the 23 projects, 21 included one or more monitoring elements but only 10 stated how performance was measured. Most did not have a logic and evaluation framework linking activities to goals, indicators, and targets (GAO, 2007). GAO (2006) suggested that although the number of monitoring and evaluation studies appears to be increasing, more scientific evaluation is needed to ensure the success of the interventions and activities being developed, as well as to help agencies achieve their desired results, and to ensure transparency and accountability.

A 2011 Campbell Collaboration review of anti-human trafficking for sexual exploitation program evaluations coded 20 studies and concluded that none of the studies met at least Level 3 on the Maryland SMS, that is, a controlled design with both pretest and posttest measures and comparable control conditions. The study determined that policies or interventions to prevent cross-border sex trafficking have not been rigorously evaluated, and thus it is impossible to determine their effect (Van der Laan et al., 2011). Similarly, a review of evaluation in anti-human trafficking initiatives by the GAATW found overwhelmingly that anti-human trafficking programs are not being sufficiently evaluated, which impedes the effectiveness of anti-human trafficking responses and limits progress in preventing the crime (Hames, Dewar, & Napier-Moore, 2010). GAATW concluded that urgent action is required in designing sound evaluation systems to ensure that anti-human trafficking interventions are effectively targeted and implemented (Hames et al., 2010).

There are inevitable consequences to the dearth of quality program evaluations. The UN has admitted that the information that has been gathered on human trafficking does not currently show whether countertrafficking efforts have reduced human trafficking (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2009). Williamson, Clawson, and Chen (2008) argue that relatively little is known about the issue of human trafficking and the effectiveness of programs aimed at combating it. Busch, Fong, Heffron, Faulkner, and Mahapatra (2007) argue that evaluation of human trafficking programs is essential for determining whether efforts have been effective in reducing the incidence of human trafficking, providing appropriate resources to victims, increasing awareness in the community, and empowering trafficking victims. However, the limited research that has explored the consequences of anti-human trafficking activities has suggested that some initiatives may actually be counterproductive and cause harm to the victims that the programs are designed to benefit (Hames et al., 2010). For example, a review conducted in eight countries in 2007 of the impact of anti-human trafficking initiatives on human rights found that some initiatives undermined or even

Table 1. Search Key Words.

Subject of the study	Types of interventions	Evaluation research
Human trafficking	Intervention	Evaluation
Sexual exploitation	Prevention	Effectiveness
Labor exploitation	Protection	Impact
Anti-human trafficking	Prosecution	Best practice

Table 2. Databases Searched.

Academic Search Premier	Emerald	Science Direct
Arts and humanities citation index	Google	Sociological abstracts
Australian Criminology Database (CINCH)	Google Scholar	Social Science Research Network
Cochrane controlled trials register	JSTOR	SpringerLink
Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews	Lexis Nexis Academic	Web of science
Campbell Collaboration Reviews of Intervention and Policy Effects	Project MUSE	Wiley InterScience
Elsevier Science Direct	Sage	WorldCat

Note. JSTOR = journal storage.

Table 3. Organizations' Websites Searched.

AFESIP	Free the Slaves	Polaris Project
Australian Institute of Criminology	Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women	Stop the Traffik
Australian National Audit Organization	Global Migration Group	UN ACT
Antislavery Australia	Home Office United Kingdom	UNICEF
Antislavery International	International Justice Mission	UNDP
Chab Dai	International Organization for Migration	UNICRI
Coalition Against Trafficking in Women	La Strada	UNODC
Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking	MTV EXIT	UNODC Independent Evaluation Unit
ECPAT	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe	UN WOMEN
		Urban Institute
		U.S. Department of Justice

Note. UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund; UN ACT = United Nations Action for Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons; AFESIP = Agir pour les Femmes en Situation Precaire; UNDP = United Nations development programme; UNICRI = United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute; ECPAT = End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism; UNODC = United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

violated the rights of trafficked persons and other groups such as migrants and sex workers (GAATW, 2007). These negative findings regarding anti-human trafficking programs highlight the need for comprehensive evaluations to measure the impact of programs and ensure that programs and program staff are accountable (Hames et al., 2010).

Exploring evaluations of anti-human trafficking programs. The author was initially compelled to write this article after a search for anti-human trafficking program evaluations in academic databases and journals resulted in a surprisingly limited number of documents. A preliminary review of approximately 10 evaluation reports also suggested a diverse array of approaches to evaluating anti-human

trafficking programs and policies and a number of methodological weaknesses. This study therefore sought to take a closer look at how anti-human trafficking programs have been evaluated, to consider the quality of the evaluations, and to explore the challenges associated with conducting quality evaluations of anti-human trafficking interventions.

The key questions that guided this study were: What approaches have been used to evaluate anti-human trafficking programs? How rigorous have the evaluations been? What are the limitations and challenges of conducting quality evaluations of anti-human trafficking interventions? An extensive search strategy of documents in electronic databases and an Internet search of specific websites was used to identify studies and publications to include in the review. The literature search was conducted for peer-reviewed journal articles and gray-literature reports published between 2000 and 2015 in the English language. The year 2000 was chosen because that was the year that the Palermo Protocol came into force and most anti-human trafficking initiatives started, guided by a common definition, at that time or in the period since. The search incorporated evaluations of labor and sex trafficking programs and policies. There was no geographic focus, and evaluations conducted in all countries of the world were included in the shortlist for review. A key limitation of the study was that due to time, budget, and language constraints, the author could only search for collate and review evaluations published in the English language.

Twenty-one databases were searched using the search criteria outlined in Tables 1-3. In addition, 29 websites of international and NGOs were searched for relevant evaluations. Documents were considered relevant and included in the shortlist for review if the titles, abstracts, or content contained the key search terms. The initial shortlist of evaluations comprised 56 documents that were reviewed for relevant content. After the initial review, it was determined that some of the evaluations that were identified using the search terms were not, in fact, evaluations. For example, a publication by Burn and Simmons (2006) entitled "Trafficking and slavery in Australia: An evaluation of victim support strategies" was not an evaluation but rather a review of the literature on human trafficking in Australia and a discussion of the country's visa and support scheme for trafficking victims. Similar documents were excluded from the final review because they were not considered evaluations; that is, they were literature reviews, or market research reports, or PhD theses. After removing such documents from the review list, 49 evaluations were reviewed and coded for the study. A coding sheet was developed covering research design and methodological quality. Also, characteristics of the program/intervention were coded, that is, type/s of intervention and target population/s.

Even though the author conducted an extensive search for relevant documents in 21 databases and 29 websites, it is possible that not all evaluations available in the public domain were identified. Many NGOs operating at the national, regional, and international levels may have conducted evaluations of their programs, but because they are not made widely available (e.g., are only published on NGOs' websites) it is possible that these evaluations were not captured in the search (Tables 4 and 5).

Findings

Evaluations of anti-human trafficking programs aim to measure and assess many program elements, including the following: effect of legislation and prosecutions; relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the program objectives, strategies, and interventions; direct and indirect effects of programs to reduce human trafficking; appropriateness of program performance and cost efficiency measures in demonstrating progress toward meeting the programs' short and long-term goals; efforts to eliminate trafficking; collaboration and coordination of stakeholders and service provisions; cost efficiency; and duplication of efforts.

Table 4. Evaluations Reviewed for the Study.

Author(s)	Year published	Evaluation report title
Ageros, B., Pathilath, B.	2009	Terminal evaluation report of UNODC R76 project
Aijala, P., and Roth, V.	2006	Evaluation of counter trafficking: Prevention and capacity building initiatives in Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro) and F.Y.R. of Macedonia
Allan, P., and Capello, A.	2014	Final independent in-depth evaluation of the UN GIFT
Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women	2006	Qualitative evaluation of the economic and social stabilization programme for potential victims of trafficking in the border regions of FYR Macedonia
Atkins, B., Morana, N., and Hanserb, R.	2013	Human smuggling and the international sex trade: An evaluation of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act
Back, L., Hohnen, J., Roath, M., and Gonzalez-Aleman, J.	2005	Country programme evaluation Royal Government of Cambodia/UNICEF 2001–2005
Balanon, F. G., and Barrameda, T. V.	2007	Coalition against trafficking in women—Asia Pacific 2004 to 2006: Evaluation of Programs
Berman, J., and Marshall, P.	2011	Evaluation of the International Organization for Migration and its efforts to combat human trafficking
Bernström, B., Jalakas, A., and Jeffmar, C.	2006	Antitrafficking Activities in Central Asia Finance by Sida
Budiharga, W., and Arna, A.	2007	Combating human trafficking in Indonesia through law enforcement: evaluation on IOM Project supported by NZAID
Buhler, M., Barron, M., Thy, A., and Sovanny, P.	2004	Child protection networks. Findings and recommendations of the external evaluation
Busch, N., Fong, R., Cook Heron, L., Faulkner, M., and Mahapatra, N.	2007	An Evaluation of the Central Texas Coalition Against Human Trafficking
Caliber	2007	Evaluation of Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking: Key Findings and Lessons Learned
Centre for Research on Environment Health and Population Activities	2003	The antitrafficking programme in rural Nepal: Assessment of change in awareness and communication among adolescent girls, peers and parents in Baglung District
Chames, C., Davies, N., and Phillips, T.	2012	Final report for the evaluation of the United Nations Joint Programme on Human Trafficking
Clawson, H., Dutch, N., Salomon, A., and Goldblatt-Grace, L.	2009	Study of HHS Programs serving human trafficking victims
Commission of the European Communities	2008	Evaluation and monitoring of the implementation of the EU Plan on best practices, standards and procedures for combating and preventing trafficking in human beings.
Conte, J., Cue, K., Galagos, D., Raygin, A., and Kajumolo, K.	2014	BEST: Businesses ending slavery and trafficking: Inhospitable to human trafficking program evaluation
Cunnington, P., and Hung, S.	2009	UNIAP Phase 3 2007-2010 Mid Term Evaluation Report

(continued)

Table 4. (continued)

Author(s)	Year published	Evaluation report title
Dalberg Global Development Advisers, and the UNODC Independent Evaluation Unit	2011	In-depth evaluation of the UN GIFT
Edberg, M., Cohen, M., Gies, S., and May-Slater, S.	2014	Trajectories of involvement in commercial sex exploitation and domestic trafficking of girls and young women: Selected qualitative results from an evaluation study
Engel, J. M.	2001	Statistical abstract and summary report of Russia's first multi-regional, multi-media public education antitrafficking campaign
ESCAP	2002	Evaluation report: Implementation of ESCAP resolution 53/4 on the elimination of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in Asia and the Pacific
Gallagher, A., and Riiskjaer, M.	2008	Review of UNHCR's efforts to prevent and respond to human trafficking
Garcia, F. E. B.	2006	Prevention, protection and rehabilitation of girl survivors of sexual abuse, prostituted girls and girls at risk
Gibbs, D., Hardison Walters, J., Lutnick, A., Miller, S., and Kluckman, M.	2015	Evaluation of Services for Domestic Minor Victims of Human Trafficking
Gilmore, J.	2008	Evaluation of the Microsoft Unlimited Potential Antitrafficking Program in Asia
Gold, L. G., and Ami, N. B.	2004	National NGOs report to the annual UN Commission on Human Rights: Evaluation of national authorities' activities and actual facts on the trafficking in persons for the purpose of prostitution in Israel
Gopalan, S., and Livingston, L.	2008	Terminal evaluation report: Strengthening the law enforcement response in India against trafficking in persons through training and capacity building
Gozdziak, E., Parente, G., and Kounthy, S.	2010	Evaluation of the Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking Technical Cooperation Program: Report on the Site Visit to Cambodia
Hagar, I., Leuthold, M., and Winkler, A.	2001	It's not only shameful... it's a crime'. Evaluation of the inflight spot 'Child sex abuse is not a peccadillo' on flights of Austrian airlines to Vienna
Hashash, Y.	2007	Evaluation report. Trafficking project. Hotline for migrant workers and Isha, L'Isha
ICMPD	2010	Evaluation of Member States' legislation and the situation concerning trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation
ILO	2001	Action against trafficking and sexual exploitation of children—Going where the children are: An evaluation of ILO/IPEC programmes, Thailand, Philippines, Colombia, Costa Rica and Nicaragua

(continued)

Table 4. (continued)

Author(s)	Year published	Evaluation report title
IOM	2008	Final report to the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic: Counter-trafficking campaign targeting clients of prostitution in the Czech Republic
IOM	2006	Final Evaluation: Information Campaign to Combat Trafficking in Women and Children in Cambodia
Jones, C.	2009	Victims of human trafficking in the Midwest: 2003-2005 needs assessment and program evaluation commissioned by the Office for Victims of Crime, Department of Justice
Kaye, M.	2010	An evaluation of the Antitrafficking Monitoring Project
Kuneviciute, I.	2012	Anti-Trafficking Campaign in Kosovo 2012: Final Campaign Evaluation Report
Naik, A.	2012	Independent evaluation of UNIAP (2007–2013)
Porumb, C., Moldovanu, I., Stepan, A., Platon, D., Besliu, A., Cretu, V., Moraru, N., and Guzun, I.	2004	Life skills education for prevention of trafficking in human beings: Evaluation report
Potocky, M.	2010	Effectiveness of services for victims of international human trafficking: An exploratory evaluation
Pramod, V., and Liberalato, S.	2011	Preventing and combating the trafficking of girls in India using legal empowerment strategies: Evaluation report
Skuse, A. J., and Downman, S.	2012	MTV EXIT ASIA III: A campaign to increase awareness and prevention of trafficking in persons
Thompson, J.	Unknown	Terminal evaluation report: Assistance in the formulation and implementation of the SADC Declaration and Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons
UNICEF	2006	Evaluation of antitrafficking policies in Romania
U.S. Department of Defence	2014	Evaluation of the Department of Defence combating trafficking in persons program
Van Selm, J.	2013	Evaluation of the effectiveness of measures for the integration of trafficked persons
No author	2010	Mid-term evaluation report: Strengthening school network for human trafficking prevention in Bokeo Province

Note. UN GIFT = United Nations Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking; HHS = Health and Human Service; UNHCR = United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund; UNODC = United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; NZAID = New Zealand Aid Programme; IPEC = international programme on the elimination of child labor; ESCAP = Economic and Social Commission for the Asia Pacific; SADC = South African Development Community; FYR = Former Yugoslavian Republic; UNIAP = The United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking; ICMPD = International Centre for Migration Policy Development; ILO = International Labor Organization; IOM = International Organization for Migration.

Confusion between monitoring and evaluation. The review of anti-human trafficking evaluations determined that there is a confusion between “monitoring” and “evaluation” and this may represent a barrier to conducting quality evaluations. Monitoring of human trafficking programs appears to

Table 5. Evaluations Initially Shortlisted for Review but not Included in the Study.

Author(s)	Year published	Title	Reason for exclusion from study
Australian National Audit Office	2009	Management of the Australian Government's Action Plan to Eradicate Trafficking in Persons	An audit, not an evaluation
Austrian Government	2009	The First Austrian Report on combating human trafficking	A national plan of action
Burn, J. and Simmons, F.	2006	Trafficking and slavery in Australia: An evaluation of victim support strategies	Primarily a review of literature
Gervais, C.	2005	Report on promising practices for the prevention of human trafficking	A description of five "promising" programs
Honeycutt, R.	2012	Sex trafficked survivors' recovery: program evaluation of Transitions Global Cambodian safe house	A PhD thesis
Valdambrini, J.	2004	Prevention through awareness: Campaigning on child sex tourism	A market research report
Williams, P.	2003	Coalitions against trafficking in human beings in the Philippines.	A research report on the modus operandi of human trafficking

occur fairly frequently, enabling the relevant organizations to assess their progress in meeting program objectives and stipulated outputs. Therefore, to some extent, methods for collecting and managing data are in place; however, because monitoring is confused with evaluation, it is sometimes used instead of or to the exclusion of evaluation. There is an important difference between monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring is often performed "in house" by program managers and other program staff and allows staff to track inputs and outputs and primarily serves the interests of management staff (Binnendijk, 1990). However, evaluation is designed to measure intermediate results and longerterm impacts (Binnendijk, 1990).

Dearth of rigorous evaluations. Of the limited number of programs that have been evaluated, many outcomes have gone unreported or the methodology is too inadequate to draw any definitive conclusions on the effectiveness of the programs. Completed evaluations more commonly provide evidence relating to project outputs such as the establishment or extension of an existing project or the increased use of an organization's services. Where evidence of outcomes is documented, this "evidence" is often subjective in nature and predominantly refers to the qualitative data collected from program staff, stakeholders, and participants on the perceived impact of activities. Evaluations have typically focused on process rather than impact. While process evaluations are an important tool for improving service delivery and assessing whether program activities conform to program design, impact evaluations assess the net effect of a program by comparing program outcomes with an estimate of what would have happened in the absence of the program (GAO, 2007). The evaluations have failed to distinguish between short, medium, or long-term outcomes and thus either focused entirely on outputs or made unsupported assertions about the impact of the programs.

No studies were found that met at least Level 3 of the Maryland SMS. In other words, the review of program evaluations did not identify any evaluations that used a controlled design with both pretest and posttest measures and comparable control conditions. Thus, no conclusions could be drawn on the effectiveness of programs for preventing trafficking, prosecuting offenders, and protecting victims, as the evaluation designs of the studies reviewed were not sufficiently rigorous to measure program effectiveness or impact.

Unaddressed and unrealistic program objectives. Some anti-human trafficking projects focus on broad and possibly too high-level objectives. For example, some projects have lofty goals such as “eliminating human trafficking” or “strengthening government action against human trafficking” that are not, in reality, achievable especially by small organizations with limited budgets. Conversely, some programs identify easily attainable goals such as whether the program was implemented as it was intended, which are designed to point to program success but reveal little about the actual impact or effectiveness of the program. Some evaluations fail to assess whether, and to what extent, program aims and objectives are reached. By avoiding this crucial question, the evaluation reports are rendered effectively baseless. In a number of evaluations, the central program aim and objectives are not made clear, therefore, subsequent descriptions of data collection methods and evaluation findings become confusing to the reader and do little to explain whether the program was a success.

Short-term focus of evaluations. The study identified few evaluations that track individual victims over time. There is no doubt at least in part due to the human resources required and costs associated with conducting longitudinal studies. Some evaluations of anti-human trafficking programs are performed retrospectively. This is perhaps because of the fact that many programs are implemented without careful reflection on monitoring and evaluation processes, and only after the program has been running for some years does the question of program evaluation become critical. Thus, due to the fact that evaluations are conducted retrospectively, in addition to funding constraints, most evaluations are short term in nature. There are currently few longitudinal studies of anti-human trafficking programs. Long-term studies are needed to understand the impact of anti-human trafficking programs. For example, community-level awareness raising programs may be evaluated after a year or two, but unless evaluations collect data on target groups over the long term, it will be difficult to understand what the real impact of awareness raising or other interventions on target communities has been.

Failure to evaluate cost efficiency. Evaluations rarely consider the impact of programs against program costs. Reflection on this point is critical for understanding how financial and human resources have been spent and whether they have been used effectively to meet the objectives of the program. Without this discussion, it cannot be known whether resources have been properly targeted. Techniques such as cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analysis may demonstrate the financial value of strategies, which can be useful for organizations desiring to secure future donor funding (Dossetor, 2011).

Failure to include victims in data collection processes. Few of the evaluations reviewed included program beneficiaries (trafficking victims) in a meaningful way. Of all the groups and individuals that should be consulted in evaluations, persons who have been trafficked will have the most knowledge of the trafficking experience and the most information to share. Evaluators may deliberately choose to exempt trafficked persons from the data collection methods for solid reasons, such as wanting to do no harm to victims by burdening them with questions about their trafficking experience or the support they have received since being identified as victims. However, evaluations that exclude trafficked persons can arguably be considered somewhat flawed. Evaluators and program managers may claim to have adopted victim-centered and human rights-centered approaches; however, without the voice of program beneficiaries such as victims, it is impossible to measure the effect of programs on the well-being of trafficked persons. In the specific area of evaluations of human trafficking victim protection programs, it is arguable that evaluators must include qualitative processes with trafficked persons to successfully evaluate the effect of the programs.

The importance of independent, impartial evaluations. Many evaluations of anti-human trafficking interventions have been undertaken by program staff whose positions may influence the

transparency and legitimacy of the evaluations. This is particularly the case with evaluations of anti-human trafficking programs managed by smaller NGOs. Transparency, which is crucial to the credibility of program evaluations, is difficult to achieve without impartial and independent evaluators. Program staff such as managers may not be able to take an impartial view of programs due to their proximity to the program planning and implementation elements. In-house evaluations do not always explain the evaluation methods, which means that it is difficult to determine the rigor of the evaluations. In-house evaluators may bring specific agenda and experiences that are likely to influence method choices, findings, conclusions, and recommendations. As highlighted by Vandekerckhove (2003), conducting in-house evaluations can be problematic as organizations evaluating their own programs may have explicit or implicit political or other agendas that will influence their conclusions.

The neglected P. While there appears to be a limited but growing number of evaluations of human trafficking prevention and protection programs, attempts to evaluate the impact of countries' prosecution efforts are notably absent. Only 11 evaluations reviewed considered the outcomes of legislation and prosecutions to combat human trafficking. UNODC (2009) suggests that one possible explanation for this is that some countries are poorly prepared and equipped with dealing with prosecutions of human trafficking. UNODC (2009) also reports that two of every five countries of the world do not report any convictions of human trafficking, and 14% of all countries have no data available at all on prosecutions.

Discussion

As discussed in the early pages of this article, most anti-human trafficking programs have only been running since the early 2000s. Therefore, many programs are still new in the sense that they have been active for less than 15 years. Due to the considerable funding dedicated to preventing and combating human trafficking and the seriousness of the crime, it is essential that programs are designed with monitoring elements in place and that programs are rigorously evaluated. The UN Evaluation Group (UNEG, 2005) outlines what quality evaluations should comprise. The reader of an evaluation report must be able to understand the following: the purpose of the evaluation, exactly what was evaluated, how the evaluation was designed and conducted, what evidence was found, what conclusions were drawn, what recommendations were made, and what lessons were distilled (UNEG, 2005). This study determines that these elements have not yet been achieved in most evaluations of anti-human trafficking program evaluations. Data collection techniques and methods for evaluation of anti-human trafficking programs have been insufficient. There are a number of challenges and limitations to conducting quality evaluations of anti-human trafficking programs, including: the "hidden" victim population, lack of reliable data and baseline data, limited evaluation budgets, poorly defined program objectives, over-reliance on monitoring rather than evaluation, dearth of rigorous impact evaluations, and evaluations conducted by program staff who by nature of their employment are not impartial.

These findings are not intended as criticisms of program managers or evaluators. The practical difficulties facing organizations in undertaking quality evaluations have already been explored in the literature (see, e.g., English, Cummings, & Stratton, 2002). Reflecting on how the various challenges to conducting rigorous program evaluations may be overcome may ultimately be more useful than merely focusing on criticisms of approaches to evaluating anti-human trafficking programs. An important first step in improving the anti-human trafficking evaluation environment is to address the problems associated with programs that lead to poor evaluations in the first place, such as weaknesses in project design that impede monitoring and evaluation. For anti-human trafficking program managers, it is important to ensure that the requisite conditions for conducting evaluations are in

place, such as the collection of baseline data where possible, the establishment of clear program objectives, and clarity around who the program beneficiaries and stakeholders are. It is also important that program managers engage independent evaluators to conduct impartial evaluations of anti-human trafficking interventions. Program managers and evaluators should ensure that comprehensive evaluation methods and frameworks are established; sufficient financial and human resources are allocated toward high quality program evaluations; and program evaluations are made available to the public. The reasons for which evaluations have not been able to achieve at least Level 3 of the Maryland's SMS can also be overcome, at least in some cases where it is appropriate, through early planning for evaluation and establishing an evaluation design that is controlled with both pretest and posttest measures and comparable control conditions. Following the delivery of evaluation findings, including process evaluation findings, mechanisms and processes should be developed for embedding lessons learned into future program and policy design.

Imposing evaluation requirements on organizations, particularly within a project funding arrangement, may not guarantee that project activities will be rigorously evaluated. In fact, such requirements may result in program staff being unnecessarily diverted from their regular duties and forced to work on program evaluations that, in the end, are not impartial. Such requirements may also lead to resistance to evaluation because additional burden placed on busy individuals may alienate staff who are not experienced in conducting program evaluations. Thus, improving the number and quality of evaluations may require a move away from approaches that rely solely on encouraging organizations to undertake potentially expensive and time consuming evaluations of their own work. Alternatively, a move away from in-house evaluations should be actively encouraged, budget permitting.

Attempting to conduct evaluations of programs that have only been operational for a short time and that aim to prevent human trafficking through raising awareness raising is potentially futile. The long-term nature of much antitrafficking prevention work means that outcomes may not be delivered until several years after the intervention has been delivered. Evaluators therefore need to be realistic about what outcomes can be delivered in the timeframe available for the evaluation and design evaluation methods accordingly. As argued by GAO (2007), evaluators need to determine which projects are ready to be evaluated before conducting evaluations. In other words, evalability assessments should be conducted to determine whether a program is ready to be evaluated (GAO, 2007).

Transparency is crucial to the credibility of evaluations, which means not only having impartial evaluators conduct the evaluations but also making the evaluation frameworks, findings, and recommendations made public. Without reference to the frameworks, understanding how the evaluation findings were reached is nearly impossible. Further, the findings of the evaluations as they relate to whether and to what extent the program aims and objectives were reached should be highlighted and shared widely. If the programs' aims and objectives were not achieved, this information also needs to be shared as lessons learned, even if they are difficult or negative ones, are important for improving the understanding of what works and what does not work in anti-human trafficking interventions.

Conclusion

Evaluation is crucial to understanding whether interventions are effective and having a positive impact. Yet, despite rapid growth in the number of programs at the international, regional, national, and local levels that aim to prevent and combat human trafficking, protect victims, and prosecute traffickers, there has been a limited attempt to comprehensively evaluate anti-human trafficking programs and their effectiveness. Millions of donor dollars have been poured into the fight against human trafficking, but it appears that little of this money has been set aside to monitor

and evaluate antitrafficking interventions. At present, programs appear to be based on assumptions about what works in preventing and combating human trafficking. To ensure the success of antitrafficking initiatives, programs need to be based on evidence of what has been successful in other settings. Without this evidence base, programs may be designed that are ineffective or, worse, have a negative effect on potential and actual victims of human trafficking. The heinous nature of human trafficking makes it vital that we gain insight into the effectiveness of anti-human trafficking strategies and interventions.

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