LOCAL SAFETY AUDIT REPORT:

TOWARDS THE PREVENTION OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND RELATED EXPLOITATION IN THE OTTAWA AREA
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Christina Harrison - Baird // Director

Christina Harrison Baird is the Director of Project imPACT. A lawyer specializing in international human rights and migration, she was called to the Bar of Ontario in 1998 and earned her LLM (Essex) with Distinction in 2002. She has provided expertise on human trafficking to the UN Refugee Agency, the Canadian Council for Refugees, the Canadian Women’s Foundation and domestic and foreign governments.
Despite the complexity of the problem and the short nine-month time frame for the project, respondents welcomed the opportunity to share their experiences and concerns to help combat human trafficking in Ottawa. We would like to thank them for their generous contribution of time and effort to this report. We hope we have successfully conveyed their experiences and their challenges in light of such hardship. The Project imPACT team also wishes to acknowledge the support provided by Leticia Hernandez, the Project Evaluator and a helpful confidante in time of need.

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Throughout this project we heard cases that have changed us forever, most stories coming from local girls that were taken advantage of and manipulated.
Persons Against the Crime of Trafficking in Humans (PACT-Ottawa) was formed in 2004, following an educational workshop in Ottawa called "Trafficking in Women and Children: A Lucrative Multinational Business. What is Our Response?" Since then, PACT-Ottawa has been working to prevent the trafficking of persons and to increase the protection of victims through education, advocacy, networking and support services.

PACT-Ottawa conducts a wide variety of education and public awareness initiatives at the local and national levels, including presentations to school and faith groups, media interviews and commentaries, public events, and an extensive campaign targeting the ground transport industry. We monitor and influence legislative and policy developments relating to human trafficking, through our participation in parliamentary committees, conferences and workshops across Canada. As co-founder of the Ottawa Coalition to End Human Trafficking (OCEHT), PACT-Ottawa helps to promote human trafficking awareness and networking among social service providers in our community, helping to ensure that these services are well adapted to the particular needs of trafficked persons.

PACT-Ottawa is a non-partisan, secular organization whose membership includes professional educators, public servants, social service practitioners, members of faith groups and students, dedicated to the eradication of modern day slavery in all its forms. PACT-Ottawa is a member of the Canadian Council for Refugees, the Chrysalis Anti-human Trafficking Network, the Coalition for an Ontario Task Force and the Committee Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children, and was honoured as a Community Safety Awards finalist by Crime Prevention Ottawa in 2012.

PACT-Ottawa is governed by a Board of Governors elected by its members, and is structured as a collection of committees responsible for each of the organization’s major initiatives. An open members’ meeting is held monthly at our office in Ottawa’s Bronson Centre. PACT-Ottawa is a non-profit corporation under the Corporations Act of Ontario.
LIST OF ACRONYMS

AWAL  Away Without Authorized Leave
CAS   Children’s Aid Society
CERB  Canadian Escort Recommendation Board
Coalition  Ottawa Coalition To End Human Trafficking
CPO   Crime Prevention Ottawa
GoC   Government of Canada
HT    Human Trafficking
LSAG  Local Safety Audit Guide
LGBTQ Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual Queer
OPS   Ottawa Police Service
PACT-Ottawa  Persons Against the Crime of Trafficking in Humans
PSC   Public Safety  Canada
PTSD  Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
SC    Steering Committee
SJWC  St. Joe’s Women’s Centre
SWC   Status of Women Canada
VAW   Violence Against Women
LOCAL SAFETY AUDIT REPORT
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary 1

1. Introduction 5
   1.1. Background 5
   1.2. Defining Human Trafficking 7
   1.3. The Project 7
   1.4. The Report 8
   1.5. Ethics Procedure 9
   1.6. Methodology 9
   1.7. Limitations 13

2. Findings 15
   2.1. Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation in Ottawa 15
      2.1.1. Who Are the Victims? 15
      2.1.2. Root Causes 22
      2.1.3. Trends and distribution of trafficking in Ottawa 26
      2.1.4. Scale and economics of trafficking 38
      2.1.5. Needs of Victims 40
   2.2. Supports, Gaps and Recommendations 45
      2.2.1. Support Services 45
      2.2.2. Outreach and Intervention 48
      2.2.3. Housing, Protection and Health 53

   3.1. Public Awareness 56
   3.2. Training 57
   3.3. Educate to Empower 58
   3.4. Outreach and Partnership 59

4. Conclusion 60

References 61

Appendix A: Interview Guide 68
Appendix B: Consent Form 73
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2013, Status of Women Canada (SWC) approved $200,000 in funding to PACT-Ottawa, for a project aimed at building partnerships and collaboration between community stakeholders for the purpose of identifying and responding to the specific needs of victims of sex trafficking in the Ottawa area.

The project, titled imPACT, is one of only three studies of its kind in the country, piloting the Local Safety Audit Guide (LSAG) to Prevent Trafficking in Persons and Related Exploitation developed by the Department of Public Safety Canada (PSC).¹

The guide was developed by PSC as a tool to assess the nature and scope of trafficking and to develop an action plan tailored specifically to local context.

The research was undertaken between June 2013 and April 2014 with a broad range of key partners and community stakeholders. Project imPACT key partners include: Crime Prevention Ottawa, Ottawa Police Service and St. Joe’s Women’s Centre, who together constitute the project’s Steering Committee (SC). Consultations were held with key partners to identify gaps in services, policies, strategies and programs for women at-risk of or who have been trafficked. Efforts were made to work with community stakeholders who experienced human trafficking, had experience working with victims or who were currently encountering trafficking victims. The research team is honouring the request from these stakeholders to maintain their anonymity in this report.

Due to the complexity and the polarizing nature of the topic human trafficking for sexual exploitation, researchers found it difficult at times to work outside the political context and remain impartial. In light of this process, researchers tried to address this challenge through rigorous research. Data was collected through stakeholder roundtables, in-depth interviews, focus groups and online surveys using discourse analysis, constant comparative method and qualitative coding.² Despite discourse analysis, it is important to understand the human experience and the context within which this research lies. As such the data collected is set within a critical analysis of the current gaps and services in Ottawa with the focus of collecting information to shed light on the complex issue and to act on it.

The majority of stakeholders already worked with a definition that was consistent with the UN Protocol on Trafficking³ or Trafficking in Persons (sections 279.01-279.04) of the Criminal Code of Canada⁴. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of not conflating the term human trafficking with sex work since using the terms interchangeably confuses the issue significantly, diverting funds and energy away from where it is needed.

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² See section 1.6. methodology.
⁴ Criminal Code of Canada PART VIII Offences Against the Person and Reputation, Sections 270.01-279.04 http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/page-195.html#h-84
While conducting this research and working with the general public, youth, community stakeholders and senior government officials, we discovered they held the belief that human trafficking victims for sexual exploitation in Ottawa and Canada came largely from Asia or Eastern Europe. This was mainly because they erroneously believed that an international border must be crossed in each case of trafficking.\(^5\) Through interviews with key informants who were supporting human trafficking victims, researchers learned that 90% of victims are Canadians and from the local area.

Contrary to popular belief, research found that human trafficking is happening in Ottawa and victims are not predominantly from Eastern Europe or Asia.\(^5\)

Human trafficking is undoubtedly happening in Ottawa. One hundred forty victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation were discovered while conducting this research; according to survivors and a former trafficker, making on average $1000 a night per victim.\(^6\) Through interviews with key informants who were supporting human trafficking victims, researchers learned that 90% of victims are Canadians and from the local area. While this research found that the majority of victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Ottawa were youth (12-25 years of age) from all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, the research found that there was increased vulnerability to women and girls due to the convergence of other circumstances. As a result, while youth from all backgrounds were generally at risk of being trafficked, women/girls marginalized by intersectionality of race, class, disabilities, gender ideology and/or sexual orientation were at higher risk of being trafficked. Hence women and girls who are already marginalized for varied reasons are likely socially ostracized and therefore their risk for being trafficked is greater.

Particularly noteworthy among the findings is the age of many trafficking victims, on average ranging from 12 to 25, with 16 year olds being most vulnerable to recruitment tactics. Also noteworthy was the fact that youth, being the most vulnerable group, were hidden from the commercial sex industry because of their age, and usually trafficked within homes or at private parties. Again, these findings from this research challenge the public perception that exploitation takes place in brothels run by foreign gangs controlling foreign women. Without denying the possibility that the foregoing situation occurs, this research clearly shows that trafficking for sexual exploitation is a domestic problem and is happening to Canadian girls/women in our local contexts.

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\(^5\) While conducting this research and working with the general public, youth, community stakeholders and senior government officials, we discovered they held the belief that human trafficking victims for sexual exploitation in Ottawa and Canada came largely from Asia or Eastern Europe. This was mainly because they erroneously believed that an international border must be crossed in each case of trafficking.

\(^6\) See section 1.6. methodology on how we collected this data.
Human trafficking has been called modern day slavery, referring to the historic practice of owning individuals for labour exploitation. However, the research did not encounter many stories where victims were tied up or held in captivity against their will. Instead, the research found that girls and women were groomed over many months and restrained by more subtle psychological control mechanisms, giving the false impression to service providers and frontline staff that some victims are complicit and consent to the exploitive process. This strategic manipulation by traffickers made it difficult at times to identify victims.

In addition, respondents highlighted the fact that perpetrator stereotypes need to be challenged since men or boys are not only the traffickers or recruiters; rather women and girls are just as capable of being traffickers and recruiters.

As stated above, the research suggests that most victims are not in the public commercial sex industry but rather in informal, private settings where they are more difficult to reach. This is particularly the case for underage girls that need to be hidden from the general public, police or service providers. In addition, respondents acknowledged the positive police work being done. However they stated that approaching sex workers with a focus on enforcement (rather than outreach) can endanger potential victims or sex workers by pushing them into more underground and dangerous work. Moreover, our research indicated that police enforcement approaches can fuel tensions between sex workers and police, leading to missed opportunities for collaboration and identification of larger numbers of trafficked youth.

Stakeholders agreed on the immediate and long-term needs of trafficked persons, emphasizing that most of these needs currently are not being met. When support was provided, most of the services were ad-hoc community based actions, with little structured and continuous support. Community stakeholders were concerned that needs for housing, social support and safety services after the initial 72 hours are currently not sufficiently being met; and that should further victims be identified through Project imPACT, trafficked persons may be re-victimized. The most common barriers to supporting victims included lack of funding and resources for specific human trafficking services, the stigma around sexually trafficked persons and sex work, the lack of knowledge regarding human trafficking among both frontline workers and members of the general public, and the psychological manipulation and feelings of affection or fear among victims instilled by their traffickers. Stakeholders also felt that minimal and inaccurate information on human trafficking was available in Ottawa, causing a significant barrier to receiving support from the city, the province or the federal government. Respondents noted the conditions for trafficking are created by often intersecting socio-structural factors, including poverty, sexism/gender stereotyping, racism, homophobia and oppression.
The Ottawa Coalition to End Human Trafficking was developed by St. Joe’s Women’s Centre and PACT-Ottawa, to collaborate in providing direct services and support to victims of human trafficking in Ottawa. See: http://www.ottawacoalition.ca/

The overall aim of this report, built around an analysis of interviews with key informants, is to address the needs mentioned above, as well as highlight the hidden nature of sex trafficking in Ottawa and to provide recommendations moving forward. This report also underlines that larger social problems, in which the problem of human trafficking is embedded, also require addressing. This research thereby underscores the importance of addressing the interconnected issues of poverty, gender inequality, racism, homophobia, hypersexualization of women and girls, and the stigma around sex work, in order to eliminate sexual trafficking in the future.

Based upon the findings in the report, PACT-Ottawa will devise a plan consisting of four main actions:

1. **Public Awareness:** provide both general awareness and targeted education on the definition and issue of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

2. **Training:** continue to collaborate with the Ottawa Coalition to End Human Trafficking (Coalition) by providing training on human trafficking to frontline staff such as health care professionals, social workers, police officers and other community service organizations.8

3. **Educate and Empower:** educate youth by promoting gender equality through existing laws and programs that reduce violence against women and that promote positive gender identities and inclusive interactions between genders.

4. **Outreach and Partnership:** continue to build on community relationships established through Project imPACT in order to provide support and information to more at-risk women and victims.

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8 The Ottawa Coalition to End Human Trafficking was developed by St. Joe’s Women’s Centre and PACT-Ottawa, to collaborate in providing direct services and support to victims of human trafficking in Ottawa. See: http://www.ottawacoalition.ca/
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

Human trafficking (HT) is a crime that takes place at the international and domestic levels. It is challenging to determine its actual extent in Ottawa, as there are many gaps in the information gathered on this clandestine issue. In spite of this, it has been documented that women and girls are more likely than men or boys to be victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. While the public perception favours the view that victims come from other countries, the cases in Ottawa are primarily domestic.

Instances of HT are often under-reported, according to Ottawa Police Service (OPS) and trafficking victims might not be able to identify the type of crime for which they have been targeted.

While key informants reported incidents of HT have involved the recruitment of young girls through schools and social media, there has not been any local mapping of the problem prior to this study. In the absence of a fully integrated and funded local strategy, organizations working with HT victims have had to approach the issue reactively. Incomplete information leads to confusion, which in return makes it harder to identify victims or potential victims of HT in the community. This has led to limited scope for collaboration among agencies working in similar areas.

Recognizing the prevalence of this crime and the importance of building a solid body of knowledge around this issue, the Government of Canada (GoC) launched its National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking in June 2012. The Action Plan encompasses ongoing initiatives to fight human trafficking and introduces new efforts to identify and protect victims. Many of the activities stipulated in the plan are focused on preventing HT and developing strategies to reduce the incidence of this crime and the number of victims. For these purposes, the GoC has devoted close to $6 million a year to implement its Action Plan.

One specific task of the Action Plan is the provision of "[...] funding to support community organizations in improving services for victims of crime, including victims of human trafficking." This includes projects aimed at supporting female victims of HT and those that focus on prevention, such as community safety plans.
As part of this larger commitment from the federal government, Status of Women Canada (SWC) released a call for proposals in 2012 entitled Working Together: Engaging Communities to End Violence against Women and Girls. Eligible projects were required to promote equity for women and girls and to reduce gender-based violence in Canada.

In March 2013, SWC approved a PACT-Ottawa project proposal submitted under the above-mentioned call for proposals. SWC also selected organizations from York Region north of Toronto and from Edmonton to carry out similar projects. The chosen organizations are working to build partnerships and collaboration between community stakeholders to identify and respond to the specific needs of women and girls who are at-risk or are victims of trafficking. All three projects are piloting the use of the Local Safety Audit Guide to Prevent Trafficking in Persons and Related Exploitation developed by the Department of Public Safety. Using the Guide, projects are conducting a local safety audit, which will inform the development of a community action plan.

The two-year Ottawa project (May 2013 – May 2015), titled imPACT was launched in June 2013 by the Honourable Rona Ambrose, then Minister for Status of Women Canada (SWC), with strong support from the City of Ottawa. The research project’s long-term goal is that the audit’s results can be translated into local prevention policies.
1.2. DEFINING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

For the purposes of this research project, the definition of trafficking is based on the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol.\(^{11}\) The definition provided in the Criminal Code of Canada was not chosen for this research because the Criminal Code was at times confusing to community stakeholders.\(^ {12}\) The UN Trafficking in Personal Protocol was both more frequently used and understood by stakeholders. According to the Protocol, trafficking in persons must have three constituent elements:

**The Act // What is done**
Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons

**The Means // How it is done**
Threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim

**The Purpose // Why it is done**
For the purpose of exploitation, which includes exploiting the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or similar practices and the removal of organs

The above definition was provided to all key informants prior to the interview, and was given to them in hard copy for reference at the time of the interview. It was also made clear to all key informants that this study is looking specifically at human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and not other forms of human trafficking such as forced labour or the removal of organs.

1.3. THE PROJECT

The project targets vulnerable girls and young women of varied socio-economic backgrounds. As part of the first year of the project, consultations were held within the community to identify gaps in services, policies, strategies and programs for women who have been trafficked or are at-risk; with findings shared in this report. These consultations provided feedback and information to develop and implement a community action plan in year two (May 2014 - May 2015). The project’s main partners constitute a Steering Committee (SC), responsible for providing guidance and supporting the Project Manager in the development of the project.

\(^{11}\) Palermo Protocol supra note 3.
\(^{12}\) Criminal Code supra note 4.
The main objective of Project imPACT is: “To support women and community partners in working together to develop and implement a community action plan that addresses the issue of trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation, including its root causes.” At the outset, the following populations were identified as potentially vulnerable to trafficking: immigrant communities, Aboriginal women and girls, and young people.

Specifically, the results expected to be attained from this project are the following:

- Stakeholders can identify the factors contributing to the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation
- Community partners and stakeholders collaborate to identify gaps, priorities and opportunities, and to implement effective mechanisms, supports, strategies and/or solutions
- Stakeholders take specific actions that work toward eliminating the problem of trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation
- A community action plan is implemented to prevent the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation

### 1.4. THE REPORT

This report presents the results of a qualitative and quantitative research project that was completed between June 2013 and April 2014 by two Ottawa-based researchers. The report is divided into four sections. Section one provides the reader with some background information on the project, the methodology and limitations of the report. Section two presents the findings of the research based on the responses from community stakeholders, key informants, at-risk youth as well as victims and survivors. This is followed by section three outlining services currently available for trafficking victims in Ottawa and gaps as well as recommendations identified by respondents. The report concludes in section four with an action plan for the second year of Project imPACT.

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14 Public Safety Canada supra note 10.
15 See section 1.6. methodology for further details.
1.5. **ETHICS PROCEDURE**

Stakeholders and key informants interviewed were provided with a consent form describing the research project, the methodology and the *UN Protocol on Trafficking* definition (Appendix B). Agreement to participate in the study was given by signing the consent form and interviews were audio recorded where further consent was given. Three respondents agreed to the interview but declined to be recorded. Respondents declined to be recorded due to fear of violence by traffickers or criminal law sanctions. Confidentiality and anonymity have been preserved within the report.

Upon completion of this report by the research team, external reviewers provided expert feedback on various aspects of the proposed report such as the project description, the rationale for the proposed recommendations, the intended outcomes, the sequence of the content, the sources and methodology used. External reviewers were unbiased peers who are academics or recognized experts in the field.

1.6. **METHODOLOGY**

The Local Safety Audit Report framework outlined Project imPACT local diagnosis or audit and informed the next steps of the Action Plan at the local level. The Local Safety Audit Guide required the research team to take the following steps:

**Preparatory Stage // Mobilizing Energy And Involvement**
Bringing together key players and stakeholders interested in preventing and reducing the trafficking of women and girls in the Ottawa region.

**Stage 1 // Broad City Profile**
Initial appraisal of problems and contributory factors using readily accessible information.

**Stage 2 // Narrow and Deep Investigation**
In-depth research and collection of information on issues requiring further attention to gain a better understanding.

**Stage 3 // Identifying Priorities, Opportunities & Prevention Strategies**
Develop an Action Plan; determine which issues the strategy should focus on as well as strengths and assets on which to build.

**Stage 4 // Consulting and Communicating**
Consult stakeholders, prepare the final audit report and disseminate the findings.

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16 *UN Protocol on Trafficking* *supra* note 3.
17 *Public Safety Canada* *supra* note 1.
iven the hidden nature of trafficking in persons, the lack of publicly available information about human trafficking in Ottawa and the dearth of organizations having the specific mandate to deal with trafficking, frontline staff currently encountering trafficking victims were sought for participation in this project. This was done in order to gain in-depth and direct information on human trafficking in Ottawa. Frontline staff currently working with human trafficking victims had direct experience with victims, their experiences and needs. Efforts were made to counter the selection bias by asking for referrals from the steering committee, community stakeholders and key informants. This increased the likelihood that the sample accurately represents the population from which it was selected, allowing for results of the study to be generalized to the larger population.

The study employed a multi-method approach, using both qualitative and quantitative data. In light of the complexity of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, including the polarization it can cause in communities, researchers tried to address this complexity through rigid empirical research. Data was collected through stakeholder roundtables, in-depth and in-person case study interviews, focus groups and online surveys using discourse analysis, constant comparative method and qualitative (initial and focused) coding:

- 3 roundtables and online survey with 34 community stakeholders (staff from agencies supporting human trafficking victims or working within or related to the area of human trafficking)
- Interviews with 27 key informants (three self-identified survivors, one former human trafficker and 23 frontline workers currently supporting trafficked persons)
- Focus groups and interviews with 90 youth and 10 self-identified sex workers
- Online survey with 104 people who buy sex

Community stakeholders and key informants included a former trafficker who had been charged, Aboriginal women and organizations, community social rights groups, community and health services, community frontline workers, counsellors, immigration services, local and federal law enforcement officers, parole officers, sex workers, shelters, social workers, survivors of human trafficking, victims services, women’s organizations, youth organizations and youth themselves.

Respondents provided us with information on (1) characteristics of victims; (2) detailed trends and characteristics of human trafficking incidents; (3) victims’ needs; (4) organizations’ responses to trafficking; (5) gaps and barriers in providing services; and (6) the approximate number of victims currently being supported, the amount of money being generated and the characteristics of offenders involved.

Of all the respondents in this research (57 in total), none had the primary mandate to work with victims of trafficking. More than half (55 percent) of these respondents reported that they were probably not aware of all situations involving trafficking victims. This was mostly because of the fact that they did not always have specific training on human trafficking, victims did not easily disclose information and respondents could not always probe too deeply as they were afraid of losing contact with their clients or further marginalizing them. However, as stated earlier, all key informants (27 in total) who participated in this research self-identified as trafficked, had come in direct contact with trafficked persons, either because they recognized a trafficking situation, or through trafficking referrals from other sources, or because trafficked persons self-identified.

**Data Collection**

All of the data on the number of human trafficking victims in Ottawa came from in-depth informant interviews including institutional data from their agencies, held in person over two hours. Key informants were chosen based on their first-hand experience and role working in a frontline capacity with human trafficking victims.

As noted above, key informants represented a broad range of service providers. In order to ensure common understanding of the term “trafficked,” each informant was provided the definition of HT from the *UN Protocol on Trafficking* on two occasions. The definition was provided to all key informants who participated in this research prior to the interview, and was given to them again in hard copy for reference at the time of the interview. This was done in order to prevent key informants from being over-inclusive in whom they determined to be “trafficked.”

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**Chart 1. Respondent’s Primary Service Mandate (n=62)**

- [ ] Immigrant/Migrant women’s services
- [ ] Women’s services
- [ ] Youth services
- [ ] Victim services
- [ ] Police services
- [ ] Youth shelter
- [ ] Legal support and advocacy
- [ ] Other

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21 UN Palermo on Trafficking supra note 3.
It was also emphasised to all key informants that this study would examine sex trafficking in Ottawa and not sex work. Furthermore, no other forms of trafficking such as forced labour or the removal of organs would be studied. In addition, key informants were instructed to give information only about cases they had worked with directly and not about cases they had heard about second hand.

Data were collected using semi-structured questions developed through a consultation process among members of the research team, the steering committee and the director of Project imPACT (Appendix A). Given the differing mandates and activities of the frontline organizations involved, not all questions were relevant or asked and a flexible approach was used during the interviews.

When consent was given the interviews were recorded. The audio-taped information from each interview was transcribed and a research journal was maintained. After each interview, the research team noted and discussed the findings as well as emerging themes using discourse analysis. This was done to provide higher awareness of the hidden power relations, motivations in others and ourselves. In addition, constant comparative method and qualitative coding was used to break down the data into discrete ‘units’ and coding them to categories to develop concepts. The ‘trustworthiness’ of the data was evaluated according to credibility, transferability, conformability and dependability of the analysis procedure. Credibility was established through 1) consistent responses in each interview, 2) triangulation through use of existing literature, 3) review by a research intern and 4) debriefing among the project team after each interview. The criteria for transferability and conformability are met by the sample size and diversity of respondents being consistent with what is considered acceptable for quality research. Dependability was established through the recordings, transcripts and storage of the research. As a result of meeting these criteria, the research team concluded the data met a high degree of integrity.

Informants were asked how many trafficked persons they had worked with during the calendar year 2013. Once informants conveyed how many cases they were dealing with during that specified time, the researchers asked informants for details about the cases, such as demographics, how the victims were recruited and where they were currently receiving support and services (Appendix A). Neither full names, addresses, nor details of the victims were given in order to ensure the confidentiality of the trafficked persons.

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23 See Michel Foucault and Judith Butler in Steven Seidman, The Postmodern Turn: New Perspectives on Social Theory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). And Hélène Cixous’ feminist writings on traditional power structures.
26 Lincoln supra note 22.
27 Glaser supra note 18.
Information was collected from three self-identified survivors directly who have been out of their trafficking situation for a number of years. Interviewing current victims was not possible due to ethical reasons such as safety and health concerns. The research team, in conjunction with key informants, decided not to request interviews from certain trafficked persons. This was done in order to avoid re-traumatising victims and in recognition of the insufficient support services available to help victims and the research team (vicarious trauma) after interviews. In most cases the victims did not want to be identified for fear of reprisals for themselves or their significant others. In addition, a few victims were not fully aware that they were victims of trafficking, as the term human trafficking did not mean anything to them. Most of the numbers were collected from frontline staff that did not deal with the Ottawa Police Service directly. Frontline staff usually encountered trafficking victims in the course of their work on other issues, such as health education, clients on probation for other crimes, street outreach and broader issues relating to violence against women.

1.7. LIMITATIONS

A broad range of service providers was considered as stakeholders for this research in order to create a holistic and inclusive report on the issue of sex trafficking in Ottawa. One community stakeholder declined to participate in the study because they were not a direct service provider. Other community stakeholders did not want to participate in the study, as they thought they had nothing to contribute on this subject. This was particularly the case with LGBTQ community representatives that did not understand why sexual orientation or gender identity would play a role in the problem of human trafficking. However, as elaborated in the report, LGBTQ youth were found to be at-risk of human trafficking because of lack of social acceptance and the high rates of homeless youth identifying as LGBTQ. In addition, sex worker rights organizations were approached, but were hesitant to be involved with an anti-human trafficking initiative because of prior negative experiences with similar projects and organizations. Researchers struggled at times to bridge gaps and broken communication since the perception seemed to be that human trafficking initiatives are entrenched in the abolitionism of sex work. In addition, due to the conflation of the issue of human trafficking with sex work, sex work organizations wanted to distance themselves from this project. Members of these organizations expect to be regarded as sex workers by choice and not to be mistaken for trafficked persons.
**Trafficker Interview Process**

While interviews with stakeholders provided details about human trafficking, the perspective of the trafficker was also critical to fully understand the nature of human trafficking in Ottawa. Interviews with traffickers would allow for greater understanding of the characteristics of human trafficking operations, the amount of money generated and the views and characteristics of traffickers. However, the process of gaining approval to interview incarcerated individuals in federal and provincial prisons was long and laborious. Prior to conducting interviews, it was necessary to submit a research proposal to the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Upon review of the proposal the Ministry replied that they were unable to provide names or locations of individuals who met the study criterion of being incarcerated for human trafficking related to sexual exploitation. Recommendations were made to contact Correctional Services Canada regarding our research project. Given the time constraints upon this report, the research team was unable to proceed with this recommendation. Nevertheless, through the help of OPS researchers were successful in interviewing a former trafficker who was charged with HT and residing in Ottawa. While this is a small sample, it did provide the research team with some insight on the characteristics of human trafficking operations, the amount of money generated and the views and characteristics of traffickers.

**Victims In Numbers**

Prior to this research minimal information was available in Ottawa regarding the number of human trafficking victims. The confidentiality of data and the lack of information being collected and shared by law enforcement and NGOs hamper the collection of this information. In addition, most of the publicly available data is anecdotal or sensational, rather than presenting serious analyses of the problems. This lack of data was mentioned as a key barrier to a more effective response to the problem of human trafficking in Ottawa. Furthermore, the underground nature of trafficking, the victims’ reluctance to report crimes to the authorities, the difficulty in identifying victims, the fear of re-victimizing, the lack of public awareness on human trafficking and the conflation of sex work with human trafficking, presented the research team with significant challenges for reliable data collection. As a result, the research team was not always able to report accurately on the specific number of cases by demographic background, social class, education or housing status (i.e. whether they were homeless or in-care). When quantitative data was not shared, data could only be shared in a qualitative manner gathered through key informant interviews with frontline staff currently working with HT victims. Where not otherwise specified, responses were categorized in the following way; most: over 50 percent; some: between 50 and 20 percent; few: less than 20 percent.

In addition, qualitative evidence and secondary data may at times be unreliable due to hidden interests or distorted by different viewpoints. This challenge was somewhat mitigated by using, as mentioned earlier, discourse analysis. It is acknowledged that the HT cases found during this report may be a reflection of where service providers are proactively looking or where victims can more easily escape, be found and identified. It should be noted that the data may not include victims who are harder to find or do not easily come in contact with service providers. It remains a matter of some concern to the project team that there may be additional victims who are not receiving necessary assistance and are not represented in this research.
2. FINDINGS

2.1. TRAFFICKING FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN OTTAWA

2.1.1. WHO ARE THE VICTIMS?

This research found that the majority of victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Ottawa were youth from all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. However, the research also found that there was increased vulnerability to women and girls due to the convergence of other circumstances. As a result, while youth from all backgrounds were generally at risk of being trafficked, vulnerability of women marginalized by intersectionality of race, class, gender ideology and/or sexual orientation are at higher risks of being trafficked. Hence marginalization and social exclusion, increase the risk of being trafficked. Respondents noted that this, in turn, made recruiting and grooming victims ‘easier’ as traffickers used strategic manipulation to provide victims a false impression of safety and social inclusion. According to respondents this deepened victims’ reluctance to report as trafficked, since they felt a sense of gratitude for being cared for, loved or simply accepted for who they were.

_I never felt socially accepted as a teenager because I was ‘different’ than the rest of the girls, when J (trafficker) came along he not only gave me lots of attention and love but he also made me feel included and accepted for who I was - that made it ‘easy’ for him to pull me in and keep me. For a while it felt like home._

- Local Survivor

Chart 3. Characteristics of Trafficked Persons Identified (n=140)
Risk and causal factors identified

Contrary to popular belief, most victims of sex trafficking in Ottawa are domestic. In our study, there were no cases of girls/women trafficked into Ottawa from other countries for the purpose of sexual exploitation. A few victims were trafficked from other parts of Canada, but the majority of those trafficked were from the Ottawa area. Victims of trafficking encountered through this research ranged in age from 9 to over 40 and had varied socio-economic, religious and ethnic backgrounds. The study indicated that while anyone can become a victim of sexual trafficking, certain groups may be more vulnerable. Respondents cited several important factors as creating the conditions of vulnerability to be trafficked; these included addiction, youth, female gender, homelessness, low self-esteem, poverty, prior abuse and social exclusion (not in order of highest risk).

Across Canada, the majority of sex trafficking victims are between the ages of 15-35. This is largely consistent with the research findings in this study, although one respondent identified victims between 9 and 11 years of age, the majority were between the ages of 15 and 18. In particular, the most vulnerable group, was youth; with youth lacking social support or searching for belonging and coming from unstable housing having increased risk of being trafficked.

The following is a list of risk factors most frequently identified by key informants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
<th>Number of Key Informants who Identified this Risk Factor (n=27)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of social support/search for belonging</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless/Instable Housing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addiction/Substance Abuse</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of parental supervision/instability at home</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior abuse</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement with Child Protection*</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Issues/Cognitive Impairment/Developmental Delays</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in legal system (current or prior)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low self-esteem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*While a involvement with a child protection service was identified as a factor overall, means key informants explained that youth in care in areas or in homes were notably vulnerable.

While conducting this research and working with the general public, youth, community stakeholders and senior government officials, we discovered they held the belief that human trafficking victims for sexual exploitation in Ottawa and Canada largely came from Asia or Eastern Europe.

Ninety percent of trafficking victims discovered during this research were Canadian or from the local area, for the remaining 10% their background or citizenship was unclear. While this research did not find any international cross-border cases, this does not mean that these cases might not exist in Ottawa.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Human Trafficking in Canada: A Treat Assessment (Ontario: RCMP, 2010).
These additional risk factors were mentioned by key informants:

- Lack of assertiveness
- Skewed perception of relationships (lack of knowledge regarding healthy relationships)
- Gang involvement
- Recent arrival to Canada
- Previous involvement with sex work

**Youth**

Informants identified that the overwhelming majority of victims of trafficking who were identified in our research were under the age of 25. Key informants identified that young women are more likely to be trafficked for sexual exploitation because of their vulnerability along with the demand for younger women in the sex trade. Traffickers preyed upon vulnerabilities such as the need for economic support, social acceptance and inclusion, and the desire for love and affection; these vulnerabilities were most predominant among youth, which made them more susceptible to traffickers.

**Youth In Care**

Informants indicated that youth residing in care, particularly youth in group homes, are exposed to certain risk factors that place them at an elevated risk of being trafficked. Leading up to their placement in care, young persons have experienced (either personally or vicariously) some form of abuse, neglect or trauma. Consequently, respondents noted any previous emotional trauma is often relived or intensified through subsequent feelings of confusion, abandonment, loneliness or general anxiety caused by an abrupt change in living environment. Respondents added, whether this change was voluntary or involuntary, or decided upon in the best interest of the child, this form of separation from familiar surroundings and transfer into the care of social workers can lead a young person to respond in self-destructive ways.

Apart from substance abuse and self-harming behaviours, notwithstanding any pre-existing criminalized behaviour, respondents indicated that feelings of 'loss' are often compensated by seeking comfort in anything or anyone who offers to fill this void. In many cases, youth in care are unfamiliar with the attention and care provided by the group home staff, coupled with imposed supervision; they often reject any services or help offered to them. As a result, some respondents stated that these young people sometimes resort to frequent "AWALing" (leaving state care without permission) and build associations within the community that they believe not to be either “part of the system” or an authority figure attempting to exert control.

According to respondents, due to the artificial group home environment and the professionalism inherent in the staff/client relationship, the creation of healthy attachments to caregivers appears to be rare. Comfort and a sense of belonging are sought in relationships with peers who appear to share similar struggles. As a result, respondents stated that given the perceived lack of a responsible adult to confide in, these youth are highly vulnerable to exploitation by traffickers who merely have to offer a feeling of safety, control or attention in order to gain a young person's trust. Key informants added that many youth in care report feeling "homeless" and consider their primary needs to be money, shelter and independence.

31 It is acknowledged that despite some risks associated, social workers in group homes may be preferable to physical or sexual abuse in the family of origin, and some young people who experience challenges in care may be responding to trauma from their families of origin.
In light of this, respondents identified that a trafficker approaching a youth who feels desperate to regain a sense of control, recognition and self-worth is presented with an easy target when offering a "home," monetary compensation and the slightest positive attention. In particular, young females—who according to respondents, often lack a healthy understanding of what constitutes a respectful relationship, including sexual relations—are highly vulnerable to becoming the victim of an exploitative sexual relationship.

"If you think like a trafficker, a great group of people to traffick is young women who are running away from group homes or open custody. AWAL rates are huge in state care (both custody and CAS), and these are typically the ones getting trafficked in my experience."

- Service Provider

This is due not only to past victimization but also to their susceptibility to any promise of love and affection. An option to escape from a place that serves as a daily reminder of past abandonment can be enough reason to AWAL (Away Without Authorized Leave) without plans to return. In a few cases girls and women were trafficked over the weekend, only to return to the group home afterward and have the trafficking incident dismissed as an act of rebellion. This cycle can continue over many weekends.

Sex Work

Both researchers and respondents identified the fact that it was important throughout this report and the research process to avoid conflating the two terms sex work and human trafficking. Nevertheless, the question arose whether sex workers were at a higher risk of being trafficked than other groups. In order to answer this question the research team interviewed and held focus groups with sex workers as well as people working with sex trade workers.

The sex industry in Ottawa is quite large and diverse, with research showing that trafficking victims appear in many different aspects of the sex industry. The following chart shows the sex industry in Ottawa and where it is concentrated geographically. It is important to note that this does not necessarily reflect where human trafficking is taking place, but where the sex industry is operating. While some respondents linked exploitation in the sex trade and trafficking, others stressed that there was no link. Additionally, the majority of trafficked women and girls in Ottawa are not appearing in the geographical places indicated in the chart, but instead at private parties outside of the established sex industry. As a result, when services are arranged and take place in private spaces, it is extremely difficult for law enforcement to prosecute abusers. It is also important to note that those cases may occur anywhere in the city, and that traffickers are increasingly working outside of the geographic areas in Ottawa that are traditionally known for sex work, because it is less conspicuous and less risky. Nevertheless, as this research has indicated, sex workers can be a significant resource for helping to combat human trafficking and to inform police of suspicious activity. As a result, profiling the sex industry in Ottawa will help inform the action plan (see section 3), where there is potential to collaborate with sex workers.

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32 Compared to what the general public believe it to be in Ottawa. The term general public is referred to as people and organizations in Ottawa researchers encountered while conducting this research and presenting at events.
Focus groups with sex workers revealed a few women transitioning in and out of trafficking situations. When telling their stories, they made it clear that at times they were trafficked, while at other times they were doing sex work completely outside of a trafficking situation. In the instances where they were trafficked, they self-identified, and explained that at the time they were recruited and controlled fully by a pimp, and worked without receiving any of the money. These women were particularly vulnerable because they had already been stigmatized by police and society and were afraid of reporting to the police. Generally respondents stated that sex workers can be more vulnerable to being trafficked given the stigma and underground nature of their work. However, it should be noted that working in the sex trade does not automatically equate to human trafficking, even if some sex workers felt that they were being sexually exploited.33

The people who recognize trafficking the fastest are sex workers - so they need to be at the table because they are really good allies.

- Service Provider

33 See Palermo Protocol supra note 3 on the definition of human trafficking.
Clients of Sexual Services

Not all buyers of sexual services (commonly referred to as “Johns”) are aware that some individuals are forced to provide sexual services by traffickers. In a few trafficking cases, it was the prospective buyer of sexual services who initiated contact with police.

The researchers conducted an online survey with people who pay for sex. According to the 104 people who responded to this survey 47% identified not having the opportunity to have sex otherwise as being a primary reason that they pay for sex. The survey also asked why respondents thought people become sex workers – 73% of respondents said that they like it, 81% said that it was to support their families, 66% said they do sex work to obtain money for school. On the other hand, only 8% of respondents believed that sex workers supported an addiction, only 6% stated they are forced into it, and 2% identified emotional abuse as a reason. It is important to note that this is merely the perception of those who responded to the survey; and that it is not necessarily representative of the feelings of all people who pay for sex. Nor does it show that all people who pay for sex are not aware of the reality faced by the women with whom they pay to have sex.

A local survivor of human trafficking who was interviewed as part of Project imPACT explained that at the time she was forced into sex work she told everybody, including the men who paid to have sex with her, that she wanted to do this, that she was raising money for school, and that she did not not have a pimp. This was all part of a script enforced by her trafficker, and was not reflective of the reality she was living. The majority of service providers interviewed as key informants explained similar scenarios in which the survivors they worked with were manipulated by their traffickers into giving a similar type of narrative.

While people who pay for sex may not bear the sole responsibility to decipher whether or not the sex worker they paid has been trafficked, it is important to note that the facade presented by victims of human trafficking is often because of manipulation, fear or self-preservation. The survey addressed to people who pay for sex asked respondents what they would do if they suspected that a sex worker they had paid was being forced into this work: 7.14% of respondents said that it was none of their business and they would not do anything, while 37.76% said they would ask if they could help, and 55.10% said they would not have sex and would report it to police. Taking into consideration that 55.10% of people surveyed said they would report to police if they knew (and that a few cases have been reported by sex buyers), this could imply that buyers of sexual services may be valuable allies to some women and girls who have been trafficked.

*Note that this online survey was posted on backpage.com under the Ottawa escorts section, and is likely to be over-representative of people who seek commercial sex primarily through online ads. The purpose of this survey was not to conduct an extensive study, but to get a general sense of demographic information about people who pay for sex, as well as about their attitudes about sex work and sex workers. This was done to gain a better understanding if buyers of sexual services could be used as a resource to report human trafficking victims to police.
Aboriginal Women and Girls

Respondents shared the perception that some victims of trafficking had migrated from the reserves to the city for better life opportunities and the glamorous notions of city life. Respondents stated the pull to Ottawa is strong for Aboriginal youth living in adjacent communities or in northern communities who are searching for better opportunities. Respondents added once in Ottawa Aboriginal women are more likely to be victims of trafficking because they often do not have family supports in the city, and are disproportionately affected by poverty, racism and marginalization, leaving them increasingly vulnerable. This vulnerability was largely attributed by respondents to their economic, social, political and physical marginalization, lack of access to resources, the criminalization of many Aboriginal communities, poor physical health, and lack of strong family and community relationships. Key informants expressed that it was very difficult to reach Aboriginal women to provide resources as they often lack knowledge of available resources or are trafficked immediately as they enter the city.

"All too often, homosexual, bisexual and transgender persons are forgotten in discussions about sex buying and human trafficking.

- Service Provider"

Homeless and LGBTQ Youth

Respondents noted that youth who are homeless, street-involved, or living in unstable housing situations are at-risk of being trafficked because they often have overlapping vulnerabilities. In general, it was pointed out that youth who are homeless face many risks. This statement by respondents is supported by research in that "street youth are much more likely than domiciled youth to be victims of a broad range of crimes. In particular, young women who are homeless face increased vulnerability to specific forms of violent crime, including sexual assaul."34

One key informant estimates that 40-50% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ (a figure that is consistent with research and for most cities across Canada)35 and that many of these youth have experienced neglect, abuse or abandonment due to their sexual orientation or gender identify.36 Given that between 5 and 10 percent of the Canadian population identify as LGBTQ, LGBTQ youth experience homelessness at a disproportionate rate. Respondents pointed out that many homeless youth also have low self-esteem, have been involved with the legal system, have addictions and lack social supports. Almost by definition, homeless youth live in poverty. Youth who are homeless are affected by almost all of the identified risk factors when compared to other populations. Additionally, most respondents noted that shelters are often targeted by traffickers and recruiters because of the vulnerable population (particularly vulnerable women) living in them. On the other hand, respondents added living on the street or couch-surfing presents other dangers, particularly for young women, who can be trafficked by the people from whom they seek shelter.

As mentioned above, LGBTQ youth experience homelessness in vastly disproportionate numbers. Homelessness, combined with the additional lack of a positive, supportive social network, experienced by some LGBTQ youth, arguably make them particularly vulnerable to being trafficked. While our research did not identify LGBTQ youth as being particularly at-risk in general, nevertheless, considering their over-representation in the homeless population, it is important to recognize their particular vulnerability. Additionally, respondents noted that LGBTQ youth have increased vulnerability even among the homeless population because of the rampant homophobia and transphobia that takes place in many adult shelters, often making it unsafe for LGBTQ to access many services. As a result, respondents felt that LGBTQ homeless youth often feel rejected twice, once by their family and again by society or the institutional care system. In fact, this social rejection and stigma has been identified as forces behind the substance abuse problems and risky sexual behaviours of many LGBTQ homeless youth. Research has shown that LGBTQ homeless youth often engage in sexual risky behaviour or substance abuse in order to cope with neglect of their basic needs. Respondents stated, this additional vulnerability of risky sexual behaviour and substance abuse makes LGBTQ youth further vulnerable to human trafficking.

2.1.2. ROOT CAUSES

Recurring themes from respondents on the root causes of HT are listed in this section. Since some of the respondents’ perceptions and responses were based on general societal inequalities, the researchers tried to support these statements with research already existing in the area of social science. This was done to substantiate their perceptions of the root causes of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Ottawa.

Youth At-Risk

As mentioned above, respondents noted that youth are among the groups most at risk of being trafficked for sexual exploitation in Ottawa. However, key informants added that many of the factors that put young women and girls at risk of being trafficked are the same factors that put them at risk of dropping out of high school, becoming involved with the law or becoming homeless. The transitional life phase of adolescence presents risks, making young people very vulnerable. Being trafficked for sexual exploitation is one of the many possible risks attending that vulnerability.

However, it is important to remember that human trafficking does not only exist simply because there are people vulnerable to exploitation. Respondents pointed out that even more important is the reality that there are people ready and willing to profit from this exploitation. These are of course the traffickers, but include third parties (such as hotel owners, drivers, people who buy sex and so on) who also profit from the exploitation of girls and women.


38 Alex Abromovich “Address discrimination of LGBTQ youth in shelters” The Toronto Star (2014) online: http://www.thestar.com/bigideas/quality_life/2014/03/05/address_discrimination_in_shelters_of_lgbtq2_youth_alex_abromovichs_big_idea.html. Note: Researchers were impressed by the Diversity & Inclusion initiatives implemented at the YSB in Ottawa, particularly for LGBTQ youth. The management team and staff provide an inclusive and open space for LGBTQ youth through dialogue, posters and judgment-free/safe-space zones.

39 Durso supra note 37.
Pimping & Gang Influences in Popular Culture

It is important to acknowledge that not all pimps are involved with trafficking. However, the ways that pimps and pimping culture are portrayed in much of the media contribute to a glamorization of pimps who exercise power over women and are violent toward women. Respondents noted the glamorization of pimping in the media has contributed to a popular culture in which pimps are idolized. Pimping is seen as a "cool" and admirable job; and the word "pimp" is used as not only a noun, but also an adjective or verb used to describe something or someone in a positive light. The television show "Pimp My Ride" uses this term to refer to improving someone's car; and people often use terms like "pimped out" to describe something that has been improved or that is seen as very desirable. Examples in popular culture include popular rap artist 50 Cent's album "P.I.M.P.", Academy Award-winning movie Hustle and Flow, and the annual "Players Ball", which includes a "pimp of the year" award. These examples as identified by respondents all contribute to a popular culture in which the concept of "pimping" is portrayed favourably. This is especially dangerous because it occurs in a culture where men are simultaneously depicted as "taking care" of women by exercising power and control over them, often through manipulation and violence.

"In our culture, it's easier for pimps to get girls involved and sell 'the package' - the cars, the nails, the money... Ice T has an annual pimping ball, but he plays a sexual assault detective on CSI."

- Service Provider

Key informants in our research expressed that gang mentality among young people significantly contributes to human trafficking in Ottawa. One Ottawa Police officer explained that Ottawa has loosely formed gangs that operate based on mimicking gangster culture that they see in the media and that they think is "cool." The officer explained that many young people, particularly young men, idolize gangster culture and the people who are a part of it. A part of gangster culture that they admire is making money, particularly in the very lucrative business of trafficking.

"A lot of women I encountered are not even in the social safety net. It starts way above them. They don't have [identification] so they're not on [Ontario Works], or [Ontario Disability Support Program] or never had a prescription filled. It's more about how services need to change in order to be more accessible, [than] what other services we need."

- Service provider

It is important to note that the relationship between gangster culture and actual gang activity is still widely contested; it is a relatively new concept that has not been fully proven. However, the experience of key informants interviewed for this project is that they see the influence of pimping and gangster culture upon many of the people involved in human trafficking. For example, the concept of "no snitching" is considered very important in gangster culture and is promoted heavily by popular culture. This has been identified in this research as a barrier to combatting human trafficking.

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40 Michael C. Chettleburgh, Young Thugs: Inside the Dangerous World of Canadian Street Gangs (Toronto: Harper Collins, 2007)
It is typically very difficult to identify key players in trafficking cases, because if they are not caught directly, others involved are usually not willing to give any information or to testify, since that would be considered “snitching.” In addition, survivors of human trafficking expressed that it was ingrained in them that “snitching” was the worst transgression, and that the trafficker, as well as other girls or anyone part of the “family,” would seek retribution for this transgression. Another example according to respondents is that the idea of being a “pimp” holds high status to those who revere pimping and gangster culture; this contributes to the amount of social and psychological power that traffickers have over their victims.

**Poverty & Systemic Oppression**

Respondents noted that poverty, oppression, homophobia, sexism, unemployment and limited access to resources are among the most common root causes of human trafficking. In addition, trafficking victims may find themselves living in social isolation, poor socio-economic conditions and drawn to more affluence in the hope of finding a better life. Others may initially be captivated by the apparent allure of living a luxurious lifestyle and the appearance of having men admire and desire them.

In many cases, traffickers are already known to their victims or come from the same region in Ottawa. They win the trust of the victims over a grooming process of several months. This makes women and girls who live in areas of Ottawa with high rates of crime and specifically of gang involvement much more vulnerable to being trafficked. The same is true for women who are homeless and living in shelters, as traffickers often target shelters to recruit women.

Traffickers offer their victims opportunities for work or pay for luxurious goods, travel or accommodation or simply offer them social acceptance and inclusion. Traffickers often take the identity papers and travel documents in the “best interest” of the victim, under the guise of safe storage and or to arrange travel. Women and girls without strong support systems are much more vulnerable to this type of tactic by traffickers, as are those living in poverty who otherwise do not have access to the goods and opportunities offered to them by the traffickers.

“Financial is another issue. That’s a big, an easier way to catch these girls. From what I’ve seen, these girls come from lower income or almost no income families. This is a way to say you’re going to make a lot of money really fast. Which comes to the recruitment – this is sort of an entry point.”

- Service provider

According to respondents, a few trafficking victims are fully aware of the sex work they will do but are misled about their earnings or working conditions. They are emotionally blackmailed, threatened or intimidated as a form of control. For example, women may be made to believe that if they go to the police, they would be arrested for working in the sex industry. Respondents pointed out that women who are sex workers face many dangers and vulnerabilities in their work, and those who do not have access to supports and resources are more vulnerable to becoming trafficked because they may not see themselves as having options.
Sexism & Gender Stereotyping

Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation is a crime that affects women significantly more than it affects men. Respondents pointed to the fact that women and girls are much more vulnerable to being trafficked, warranting a thorough gender analysis of the issue. While it is not the purpose of this report to provide a comprehensive gender analysis, it is nonetheless important to identify some of the key aspects of gender inequity that play a part in sex trafficking.

Popular culture and the media’s sexual objectification of girls/women was identified by two-thirds of the respondents as playing a critical role in making girls/women vulnerable to HT. Research indicates that one of the most pervasive aspects of gender inequity experienced worldwide and heavily perpetuated by popular culture and the media is the sexual objectification of women. The notion that women are seen as objects (who have things done to them), while men are generally portrayed as subjects (who are whole, sentient beings who make their own decisions and do things to others, often women) is seen in multiple ways. These include movies in which the man almost always initiates romance and sex, to widespread advertising in which women’s bodies are sexualized and used to sell products (largely) to men, to music videos in which men play a leading role and women are used as props. The pervasive imagery of women as objectified, lacking in agency and dominated by men also contributes to men being socially sanctioned to exercise sexual power over women in our culture. These problematic gender-biased attitudes, respondents noted, are present in cases of human trafficking in Ottawa.

Another common form of gender stereotyping identified by respondents is the expectation of men’s perceived role as “saving” or “taking care of” women. This type of mentality may appear less obviously harmful, but many of the stories from this research indicate the potential danger of this mentality. One of the most common ways that traffickers recruit girls is by establishing a relationship in which the trafficker or recruiter “takes care of” the girl, or “saves” her from an undesirable situation. When interviewing a former trafficker who initially presented himself as a “driver,” researchers asked whether or not he paid the women at all. His response was that of ‘course’ he did not pay them because girls are not good with money, but that he took care of them by buying them everything they needed (as defined by him), and also portrayed himself as having saved them from the terrible lives they had been living before they met him. The concept that men should save and take care of women furthers the notion that women are dependent on men. It also romanticizes the idea of men providing women with material things, saving women either from themselves or from undesirable situations. This concept also pointed out by respondents, perpetuates the idea that a man’s love is what is most important for a woman. As mentioned above, respondents noted that traffickers manipulate this perception in order to traffic girls; they exploit girls’ socially-imposed notions that the ultimate romantic gesture is a man caring providing for them, and saving them from a dissatisfied life.

Virginity and the hyper-sexualization of young girls are additional key components identified as among the root causes of sex trafficking. Several key informants and sex workers identified that the demand by men to have sex with girls who look young (and often are young) and virginal creates a market for young girls in the sex industry, which traffickers often capitalize on. This is consistent with the Project imPACT research findings that the majority of women and girls who are trafficked are under 25 years old, and that a large proportion of those are girls (i.e. under the age of 18).

41 UNODC supra note 9.
Respondents note the hypersexualization of young girls can be seen in different forms, ranging from marketing sexual clothing to pre-pubescent girls, to disallowing girls of the same age from wearing clothing that might “distract boys” at school. These two examples might seem contradictory, but what they have in common is that they both imply that girls of this age are sexual. In addition, the media has been criticized for the fact that the majority of adult women they depict in print and on screen have a body type similar to that of a young, pre-pubescent girl. Furthermore, this image is often used and fetishized in pornography.

All of this combined respondents stated, results in a culture in which there is a demand for sex with girl children and young women who appear to be underage. While not all men who contribute to this culture explicitly want girls who are under the age of 18, our focus group with sex workers found that Johns consistently ask for young girls, and have specific requests for characteristics of young girls. Sex workers stated that since experienced sex workers are not seen as “virginal” or “pure” anymore, the infatuation with purity and virginity leads directly to trafficking of young girls to satisfy the demand for a constant flow of new girls for commercial sex.

Another aspect of gender inequity connected to HT that was identified by respondents was economic constraints. Poverty is a critical factor driving this exploitation. Even in Canada, women are largely responsible for the informal unpaid work. Research clearly indicates that gender stereotypes perpetuate women’s over-representation in lower paid, less secure, traditionally female jobs and determine the distribution of responsibilities for paid and unpaid work. As such women are often discriminated against in terms of wages and access to labour markets. This is due to a variety of factors, including occupational segregation, the disproportionate amount of unpaid work performed by women in caring for children and others, the number of hours worked, labour market experience as well as gender discrimination.

This ‘feminization of poverty’ as pointed out by Pearce increases women’s vulnerability to exploitation by traffickers. In addition, even though women are more likely than men to go to college or university, they are less likely than men to be employed and do not necessarily end up with higher employment earnings than men when they enter the job market. In addition, women continue to have lower average annual earnings than men. In 2008, women’s earnings remain at about 71 percent of men’s, fluctuating between 70 and 72 percent since 1999. These gender inequalities, as pointed out by respondents, of inadequate opportunities for education, employment and income, are factors adding to trafficking for sexual exploitation.

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46 Ibid.
2.1.3. TRENDS AND DISTRIBUTION OF TRAFFICKING IN OTTAWA

Social Media

Online technologies give traffickers the ability to exploit a greater number of victims and advertise their services across geographic boundaries. Many of the key informants we interviewed identified, social media as being used extensively in human trafficking situations, and as having various functions. It was identified as being used for recruitment, to advertise the selling of women and girls, and as a means of controlling victims through blackmail. Respondents pointed out that the profitability of human trafficking has increased as Internet advertising and web-enabled cellphones have aided traffickers to reach a larger client base and create more allure.

“A guy will message a girl on Facebook and just start flirting, and if you have a few mutual friends you already feel a bit safer. It’s very efficient; he can send that same message to several girls at once.”

- Service provider

Recruitment through Social media: Social media can play a large role in recruiting victims of human trafficking, particularly those who are young. Respondents stated that there is a false sense of security and safety among youth with online technology. According to respondents, recruiters often target a girl over social media, particularly Facebook, by adding her as a friend and then starting to casually chat with her online. These recruiters will target a girl with whom they have a few mutual friends, which causes the girl to be less guarded and more trusting. The recruiter establishes trust by identifying things they have in common and people they both know; and consequently is able to obtain information about the victim. This is the beginning of the grooming process, which can then develop into a trafficking situation.

Selling through Social media: Respondents noted that social media is used to sell trafficked women and girls. Classified websites such as Backpage, Plenty of Fish and Craigslist are used to advertise girls, but traffickers (particularly those who are younger) also use Facebook and other social media platforms to advertise and sell sex with their victims. Survivors identified that there are also websites devoted exclusively to advertising and recommending escorts such as CERB (Canadian Escort Recommendation Board).

Control & Manipulation through Social media: Social media is also used to control and manipulate victims, often through blackmail. One survivor explained that her trafficker forced her to give him her social media passwords, and posted pornographic videos of her on her own Facebook page. This was used to make her feel more isolated as it ostracized her from her family and friends; it was also used to blackmail her into submission, as they threatened they had more photos and videos that would post or send directly to loved ones.
Recruitment and Grooming

Key informants identified that there are a few areas in Ottawa that have a higher rate of trafficking than the rest of the city. These include: Vanier, Byward Market area, Ottawa South, Kanata. While key informants identified the aforementioned areas as recruitment hubs, key informants also noted that trafficking occurs across the city, and can happen anywhere. Interviewees reported that trafficking is moving toward the suburban parts of Ottawa, and that it is more likely to happen in high-density housing including apartment buildings and houses. Initial recruitment for the purposes of sex trafficking appears to happen at places where traffickers perceive or know that there will likely be vulnerable people (typically girls) who are seeking love and attention and who also need money. This may include parties, shelters, group homes, social housing establishments, the Greyhound bus station and methadone clinics.

"You can’t expect that teenagers are going to want to grow up in them [group home]. They will run away [with a trafficker], if someone shows care and concern and living conditions that involve a certain amount of agency, and seemingly involve someone who actually cares about them – not as part of their job."

- Service provider

As indicated by respondents, women and girls living in group homes and shelters are targeted by trafficking recruiters because many report being dissatisfied with their group home environment, and would choose to live somewhere else if given the option. Traffickers are aware of this dissatisfaction, and are very skilled at recruiting girls through a ongoing grooming process which often involves showing the girl a lot of attention and affection, and promising her a better quality of life. Traffickers are often very aware of girls going AWAL (Away Without Authorized Leave) from group homes and custody facilities, and know that this is an opportune time to target them. Girls who have gone AWAL are particularly at-risk because by running away they have typically breached several conditions, and do not have many support options. Traffickers sometimes also encourage young girls within group homes to run away, and to encourage other girls to run away.
A few key informants presented another scenario in which a girl is invited to a party (or to many parties over a period of time) and given a lot of free drugs. This happens several times and then she is told that she has to repay the debt, and forced into sex work.

The most common methods of recruitment in Ottawa seem to be through traffickers developing relationships with their victims through romantic relationships, friendship or social inclusion, often in a way that slowly created dependency. Creating these dependencies also made victims less likely to identify themselves as victims to police or cooperate in criminal investigations. Respondents noted that traffickers used strategic manipulation to provide victims a false sense of safety and social inclusion. This in return, strengthened a victim’s reluctance to report as trafficked since they felt a sense of gratitude for being cared-for, loved or simply accepted for who they are.

While the majority of the scenarios presented to the researchers involved a relatively long grooming process, there were a few scenarios in which a woman or girl was essentially abducted rather than recruited over time. Recruiters achieved this by offering a girl a drive and then kidnapping her, or by holding a girl captive after inviting her to a party, drugging her and then gang-raping her while videotaping the rape to use as blackmail and/or to sell for pornography.

**Exploitation**

Respondents described how girls and women were groomed, manipulated and coerced to perform sexual acts for the benefit of their trafficker. Traffickers often manipulated their victims to believe that they were in a romantic relationship as a way of maintaining their loyalty and commitment. When traffickers recruit women and youth, they will often work to build a trusting and dependent relationship with them before beginning the process of sexual exploitation. At first, this process may involve a trafficker requiring the person to do increasingly compromising sexual acts with him. Then he may coerce her to have sex with a friend at a party, or to work as an exotic dancer. He may appeal to her love for him, and suggest that, if she truly loves him, she will do what he says.

> They controlled me through opiates, got me addicted to them. I'm not happy that I have an addiction now, but I don't think I could have got through this period without opiates. They helped me cope and disconnect.

- Local survivor

Respondents underlined that once victims are groomed, trafficked persons are tightly controlled by their traffickers through the use of violence and sexual assault, thereby ensuring compliance. Many are threatened with violence or death if they try to leave, and sometimes the traffickers will also impose an “exit” fee. Trafficked women and youth are usually forced to hand over their earnings, or to reach a daily quota. Rules and procedures imposed by traffickers prevent victims from going to police, seeking help, or being caught, and importantly, prevent victims from gaining social or financial independence, thus reinforcing the trafficker’s control over their lives. In addition, victims are typically moved from their home community by their trafficker to facilitate their isolation from sources of support or assistance. This increases the trafficker’s control and the victim’s dependency on the trafficker for support and orientation.
Victims are exploited in a variety of ways. The most common that were identified in the research are given below:

- **Threats of physical harm to the victim or her family**
- **Blackmail, including threatening to send pornographic images and videos to friends and family, or to post them publicly**
- **Psychological manipulation, in which**
  - the trafficker has eroded the victim’s self-esteem and self-worth to such a degree that she does not feel worthy of any other lifestyle.
  - the victim is convinced that she has chosen to do this, that she is a criminal, and that she has no other options.
- **Chemical dependency**
  - where it is pre-existing, is targeted and deepened, or
  - is created by giving the victim high levels of drugs very often in order to keep them dependent on the trafficker. Opiates are a common type of drug used for this purpose because they are highly addictive and because they lower the victim’s inhibitions and dull pain – both physical and emotional.

**Operations**

While key informants reported that some trafficked women and youth were in escort agencies, exotic dance clubs, massage parlours, pornography production, residential brothels and street prostitution, trafficked women and youth were also at private parties, in hotels and in homes. According to key informants traffickers may also place ads online or in newspapers offering the sexual services of trafficked women and youth. Respondents had the perception that there has been an increasing trend of smaller brothels, which have appeared in cities across Canada including Gatineau (part of the National Capital Region).

Respondents noted Ottawa has massage parlours that are known to be involved in the sex industry, and according to two survivor stories may be involved in human trafficking. These institutions often operate by providing licenced services, with service providers offering extra sexual services using their own discretion. Websites such as CERB and Backpage.com are often used to sell sex online. Traffickers post ads with pictures and descriptions of women that use code words to imply that they are selling sex (i.e. “without limitations”). On both of these websites there are ads placed from Ottawa and the National Capital Region that are very clearly selling sex, some, according to key informants, with trafficked girls.

However, while there are few cases of trafficked women and girls being sold in the commercial sex industry as outlined above, key informants and HT survivors identified that the majority of the girls are being trafficked through private homes and parties where they are less conspicuous. Because most of the victims are recruited under the age of 18, forcing them to work in commercial sex establishments is too risky for the traffickers, since they are more likely to be identified by authorities.
One survivor shared with us that she was groomed over many months by what she thought was her boyfriend, then gang-raped and sold from within a private home for many weeks, held in a room without any contact with anyone except for “clients.” By the time the gang-rape occurred, she felt she was to blame for what happened. Even many years later the psychological manipulation continued to haunt her. Furthermore, key informants identified private parties as being the most common place that girls are trafficked. A girl would be invited to a private party at someone’s home, and then gang-raped while being recorded. The video footage would then be sold as pornography and also used as blackmail to force the girl into sex work.

Another technique used by traffickers to avoid being caught is moving their victims between cities. Informants reported several cases of girls being moved through the “pipeline”, which often includes Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Cornwall and Niagara Falls – with victims sold in both the commercial sex industry and at private parties or through escorting in multiple locations.

**Psychological Control**

Psychological control was identified by key informants as being the most common and effective means of control that traffickers in Ottawa use to exercise power over their victims. Key informants stated the foundation for psychological control is often laid during the initial grooming process, before the girl has been trafficked. Traffickers show attention, affection, care and concern for the women and girls they recruit, and slowly start to exploit them. Respondents stated by showing occasional affection throughout the period of exploitation, traffickers are able to continue to exercise psychological control over their victims in a manner that resembles situations of domestic abuse, and using many of the same tactics that are used on prisoners of war (see Biderman’s Chart of Coercion as mentioned by one respondent - Table 3).

Key informants added as the trafficker moves farther into exploitation of the woman or girl, psychological abuse typically becomes the norm, sometimes reinforced with physical abuse also. Survivors all pointed out that continuous abuse combined with the deprivation of essential physiological needs caused them to reach a state of exhaustion that broke down any internal “willingness to resist.” The voices of Ottawa survivors are supported by the work of Canadian clinical psychologist and international expert on human trafficking, Jacqui Linder. Dr. Linder recently explained at a HT conference in Ottawa that many victims of human trafficking go through the six mammalian responses to threat. Initially they try to avoid the situation (avoidance). Of course this becomes difficult when the victim is not aware of being trafficked until well into the situation. Next, they try to appear inconspicuous and not draw attention to themselves (attempted immobility). Then they try to escape or realize that they cannot (flight). Next they try to resist or retaliate but often realize that it is futile (fight).
Dr. Linder, who runs a helpline for HT victims, points out that if the trafficker withholds essential needs such as food or sleep for an extended period of time, it causes the victim to become disoriented, progressively lose physical strength to verbally and/or physically resist the trafficker(s), and eventually leads to a feeling of “defeat.” At this point the victim moves on to the fifth response, relating to their exploiter in an attempt to survive the exploitive situation (appease aggression). Dr. Linder explains that appeasing behaviour often resembles consent from the outside, but that it is very important for service providers and others who care about the victim to make the distinction. Key informants in Ottawa identified trafficked women and girls as being in this stage – appeasing aggression because it was the most intuitive response and the response that was safest for them at the time.

Six Mammalian Responses to Threat:

1. Avoid
2. Attempted Immobility
3. Flight
4. Fight
5. Appease Aggression
6. Tonic Immobility

Source: Jacqui Linder, Chrysalis Network Keynote Address at “Note For Sale” April 8th, 2014

“I told people during [the time I was being trafficked] that I was doing sex work to support my drug habit – this is what he told me to tell people, and I was too scared of him to tell people otherwise, and too dependent on him. I would do whatever he wanted because I was afraid. He would call me upstairs to get him a pair of scissors that was just a few feet from him, and I would do it. He was so volatile that I didn’t want to upset him and just wanted to keep him happy.”

- Local survivor

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48 Jacqui Linder, Chrysalis Network Keynote Address at “Note For Sale” April 8th, 2014
Respondents noted that once at this stage, the victim often becomes vulnerable to internalizing the abuser's threats, insults and other methods of degradation to the point of submission. In a heightened state of fear, physical agony and with a pervasive wish to have the abuse come to an end, the victim is primed to respond to the procurer's intermittent use of manipulation techniques, which may include allowing the victim to regain a glimpse of hope, with final cooperation. The element of hope as well as the victim's personal survival instinct or the feeling of responsibility toward loved ones, who also have been threatened, can be a powerful force in keeping the individual in submission.

As mentioned above, traffickers also often simultaneously used other methods of coercion including intervals of affectation and kindness interrupted by extreme violence. Survivors stated such methods lead to confusion and the building of a form of dependency – psychologically speaking – between the trafficker and his/her victim. Respondents added this form of conditioning ensues that teaches the victim through continual isolation, excruciating pain and humiliation that the only way to periodically feel safe is to cooperate with the abuser. This dependency also ensures that the abuser becomes the sole subject of “safety” in otherwise total isolation.

Respondents noted feelings of shame and guilt following extended abuse, including acts of sexual violence. Further the victim's connection to her abuser and lead to deeper emotional/psychological isolation. Survivors shared that they internalized and normalized every insult, name calling and repetitive beating. The option or thought of returning "home," away from the abuser's control, either became unimaginable or they perceived themself as undeserving. Respondents supported this by explaining that as the victim's sense of self-worth is eroded and replaced with feelings of shame or possibly self-hatred, the abuser's intermittent affection may lead the victim to believe that his treatment is adequate or should even be received with gratitude. At this point, remaining in the relationship, may overcome the element of fear, and can be better understood as the victim having been brainwashed or traumatized into believing that there is no longer an alternative.

As one key informant pointed out, the Biderman’s Chart of Coercion outlines the methods used to manipulate and control prisoners of war, and have been used to explain how the same types of tactics are used in situations of domestic violence. Below we compare these same tactics to those used by traffickers. Key informants identified each of these methods as a means of control used by a trafficker.
Another model pointed out by respondents to explain the “invisible chains” that victims of trafficking experience is the concept of Stockholm Syndrome. This syndrome is a psychological phenomenon in which someone who has been victimized expressed feelings of affection, respect or empathy toward their perpetrators – typically in situations where they have been held captive for a period of time. The conditions of Stockholm Syndrome are often present in relationships between a trafficker and his/her victim. This dynamic was identified by the majority of key informants as an important reason why victims do not want to or try to escape their traffickers, and why survivors do not want to press charges.

### Four Conditions of Stockholm Syndrome:

1. The presence of a perceived threat to one’s physical or psychological survival and the belief that the abuser would carry out the threat.
2. The presence of a perceived small kindness from the abuser to the victim.
3. Isolation from perspectives other than those of the abuser.
4. The perceived inability to escape the situation.

Source: Counselling Resource: Mental Health Library, Love and Stockholm Syndrome: The Mystery of Loving an Abuser (2011)
**Traffickers**

The key informants in this study have identified a few different roles involved in the process of trafficking girls and women for sexual exploitation. These include:

Recruiters: Recruiters are male or female (more than half of the recruiters were female), and their role is to develop a relationship with a woman or girl for the purpose of trafficking. If the recruiter is female, she often does this by befriending the girl who is being recruited, developing a relationship and establishing a sense of trust. Often these recruiters introduce the girl to a group of “friends” who are also involved in trafficking her. When the recruiter is male, often he acts as a boyfriend or as someone romantically involved with the girl he is trying to recruit. Similar to the girl acting as a friend, the “boyfriend” recruiter aims to develop a relationship where the girl trusts him and becomes dependant on him.

Drivers:
Service providers, particularly those working with young women involved in the justice system, identified drivers (those who drive trafficked girls around) as playing a significant role in avoiding detection. That is, while these young women have been trafficked, their traffickers allow them to attend mandatory appointments (i.e. with their probation officer, etc.) in order not to arouse suspicion.

Trafficker:
Some convicted human traffickers (mostly men) were affiliated with street gangs and organized crime. One was identified as being part of a large, influential organized crime organization. Key informants identified that the traffickers likely have a similar profile to the victims of trafficking, having experience prior abuse or neglect. Other key informants suggested that it is not possible to present a profile of a trafficker, because the group is very diverse and demographic information would not be helpful.
In addition, respondents highlighted the fact that perpetrator stereotypes need to be challenged since men or boys are not only the traffickers or recruiters; rather women and girls are just as capable of being traffickers and recruiters. Information about traffickers continues to be one of the most challenging aspects of this phenomenon from the perspective of finding reliable information. The majority of survivors of trafficking were not willing to talk to frontline staff or the research team in detail about their traffickers due to fear. Neither do most service providers know much about traffickers. Key informants with information about traffickers identified that these offenders had experienced oppression, abuse, isolation, addiction and lack of accountability.

“In the game you don’t ask, you just do what you are told by your man.”

- Former Trafficker

A former trafficker, not involved in HT for a number of years, justified his actions by regarding his victims as not “real” people. In other words, even many years later, he dehumanized his former victims and “made” them as “others” – as being, in some very significant way, “not like us or him.” This internalization of his (sexist racist, classist) disregard for these girls and women legitimated, in his view, their marginalization and discrimination, and sanctioned their neglect and denial of fundamental rights. He stated in the interview that traffickers see the girls and women as their property and that if anyone came between him and his commodity, including the girls themselves, there would be extreme violence and control exerted. He mentioned that once the girls and women are “in the game” there are no means of escape because traffickers use blackmail, violence and threats towards victims and their families. He stated the girls were “easy” to recruit as they were looking for fast money and luxurious lifestyles. Once they were lured in, it was impossible for them to escape. The only possible way he felt the girls would leave is if they were given meaningful alternatives that did not involve violence. Paradoxically he stressed the importance of giving victims meaningful alternatives outside the game that would provide them with a good life. His reason for getting into “the game” was the ease of fast, vast amounts of money. His average income for one girl was $1000 a night; he “owned” an average of three girls over a 10 year period with the girls not receive any of the money. His justification for this was that girls were not good with money and he took care of their hair, nails, food and accommodation.
Recent cases before court in Ottawa

In 2008, Laura Emerson of Gatineau pled guilty to human trafficking, was convicted and is serving a comparatively long sentence (7 years); her partner, Gordon Kingsbury was charged with related offenses. The two abducted three young girls from a women’s homeless shelter in Ottawa and forcibly confined them in a home in Gatineau for several months (one for almost a year). The girls were drugged, forcibly kept inside the house and forced into prostitution.

In August, 2013 Ottawa saw its first human trafficking conviction since the 2005 addition of the HT law to the criminal code. Jamie Byron was convicted of human trafficking after he lured a teenage girl from her home in Windsor, Ontario and subsequently forced her into prostitution during the summer of 2011 in various cities across Ontario and Quebec.

In 2012, three teenaged girls were charged with human trafficking and related offenses. Two pled guilty in December 2013. The third, the alleged ring leader, pled not guilty and was convicted in January, 2014 of human trafficking and other related offenses.

In January 2014, police conducted a raid in Ottawa in an attempt to look for victims of trafficking. This resulted in one charge of human trafficking.

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50 Data is always hard to gather in this crime, where victims are sometimes treated as criminals and traffickers may be prosecuted under other existing laws, such as kidnapping, rape or assault. This lack of data is often cited as a major hindrance in developing an effective approach to human trafficking, but unless investigating cases and rescuing victims become a priority, there will not be accurate data.


2.1.4. SCALE AND ECONOMICS OF TRAFFICKING

Minimal information is available in Canada on the number of human trafficking victims. Dispersed data across different agencies within the government, as well as other organizations including law enforcement and NGOs, each using their own criteria to define a victim of trafficking, hinders the gathering of this information. Most data collected to combat human trafficking is focused on anecdotal evidence or sensationalism rather than on critical analysis of the problems. Too often in this area, respondents pointed out that research was deliberately skewed to serve a particular political agenda. This lack of data is a key barrier to a more effective HT response. In spite of the difficulty of collecting such data—which is further complicated by the underground nature of the crime and the reluctance of victims to come forward -- the research team has tried to determine the number of sex trafficking victims in Ottawa.

The research team found approximately 140 victims in Ottawa, while the research was being conducted. With this figure in mind, we calculated what potential profits traffickers could be making from economically exploiting their victims. Through key informant interviews we determined that a trafficker could make between $500 and $1700 per night from one victim. In order to avoid inflating numbers and to err on the side of caution, we used $500 to calculate the possible profits accruing to traffickers. Typically according to key informants, victims were made to work every day of the week, creating a potential profit of $182,500 from one girl in one year. Traffickers kept all proceeds. According to our key informant interviews, however, traffickers usually "owned" three girls. This means that on average a trafficker can make up to $547,000 per year. Furthermore, if we consider that there are 140 victims in Ottawa, traffickers are potentially making as much as $25.5 million in one year.

By comparison the cost of human trafficking for sexual exploitation to the social services system is extensive and very difficult to measure. This study was not commissioned to evaluate the cost of human trafficking, so for the purposes of this report, we have outlined below the costs of human trafficking as per the findings of several reports. While research specifically on the cost of human trafficking has not as yet been done in Canada, the following reports show statistics that we believe to be comparable to the costs of HT in Ottawa. The purpose of the table below is not to give a clear answer of what the cost of human trafficking for sexual exploitation is to society; but to present a range of what the cost is for survivors of similar types of crime.
140 HT Victims in Ottawa

A few have questioned the discrepancy between victims that were found in Project imPACT research and the small number of human trafficking cases brought before the courts, to OPS or talked about in the media. We have found that the majority of victims do not want to testify in court or press charges for fear of their own or their loved ones’ safety, lack of awareness of their own rights or because of the psychological pain that they know would be inflamed by re-living the experience through a legal process. (Of the three self-identified survivors we interviewed none had pressed charges at the time of this research).

In addition, some victims and survivors of trafficking neither consider themselves to be victims of human trafficking nor become identified as such by service providers. This is due in part to a lack of knowledge about what trafficking is, what it looks like, and of the indicators that it may be happening – on the part of both service providers and victims. Many victims also do not want to consider themselves ‘victims,’ or may not know how to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy relationships, or even between a relationship and severe exploitation/trafficking.

As noted earlier, respondents stated that traffickers used strategic manipulation to provide victims a false sense of safety and social inclusion. This in turn strengthened a victim’s reluctance to report as trafficked since they felt a sense of gratitude for being cared-for, loved or simply accepted for who they are (see sections on Exploitation and Grooming). With this in mind, of the 140 victims 59% of victims self-identified while 11% were identified through training received by frontline staff and 30% were identified through referrals such as through OPS.
Respondents noted the physical and psychological impacts of human trafficking for sexual exploitation are significant, and that many survivors suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms. Sexual exploitation is, by definition, traumatic, and in the case studies used in this report, the trafficking experience was ongoing and the victims experienced compound trauma resulting in chronic PTSD. The extensive physical and psychological impacts of PTSD add to both the monetary cost and the human cost of human trafficking.

2.1.5. NEEDS OF VICTIMS

Community stakeholders identified a variety of needs of victims of domestic sexual trafficking. Below are some of the needs we encountered while conducting this research. However, it should be noted that the experiences of victims vary and the specific needs of each victim should be taken into account when supporting a victim. Gender, age, Aboriginal status or health conditions, as well as the stage of the exploitation process in which the victim finds herself, all impact their particular needs.

**Physical Safety**

Physical safety is a top priority for any victim of crime and particularly those who have suffered ongoing abuse and trauma. The safety of human trafficking survivors is a particular challenge for many reasons, including the fact that survivors who have recently left their trafficking situations have a high likelihood of returning, due to feelings of insecurity and the uncertainty of a living a different way of life. Key informants stated that the first 72 hours after a woman or girl leaves a trafficking situation is the most vulnerable time period for a trafficking victim to return to a trafficker, mostly out of fear of retaliation by the trafficker. Clearly, trafficked women and girls are in great need of immediate shelter, but also of long-term safe housing. They also need to be able to transfer housing units quickly, if they are in danger. Key informants identified the need for a safe house specific to victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, citing that their needs are very complex, intense and specific.

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56 This statement by key informants was not verified by a certified mental health professional.
He knew the names of my mom, dad and siblings, where they go to school, where they work; and where my family lives.

- Local Survivor

Respondents added one of the victim’s primary fears is that for her own safety. The trafficker has typically threatened her to the extent that no matter how safe a situation social service believe has been provided, the survivor remains conditioned to feel unsafe without the trafficker, particularly if she has “betrayed” or disobeyed him by leaving. In addition to their own safety, survivors of human trafficking are worried about the physical safety of significant others. Traffickers can threaten the families and friends of victims in order to instill fear and exert control. Key informants identified this sort of threat as a very effective way of ensuring compliance, since victims realize that even if they see a way to escape the trafficking situation, their loved ones may still be in danger.

Basic Needs & Alternative Options

Upon leaving their traffickers, survivors need to find viable, realistic options for moving forward. Respondents indicated that these options need to be diverse, realistic, and suitable for each individual. It is important that each survivor have a great deal of agency in choosing how to move forward. For some, basic needs including housing, food, safety, addictions treatment and psychological care are the main priorities for a period of time after leaving their trafficking situation.

When we talk to girls we approach them by asking, 'So you want to be in the sex trade? Fine, that’s up to you.' We try to explain the difference between working and being exploited.

- Service Provider

For others, employment or education is the biggest priority. According to the focus group with sex workers, for some survivors of trafficking who previously worked autonomously in the sex industry, their primary need may be to explore how to return to work in the sex industry outside of a trafficking situation, and to gain the knowledge, skills and supports to be able to work autonomously in the sex industry without being trafficked or exploited. For other survivors, finding another job outside the sex industry and gaining access to education and training opportunities in order to find meaningful employment may be their biggest priorities. The most common theme in terms of needs of survivors was that the approach be client-centered, and support the autonomous agency of the survivor by enabling her to determine the services most useful to her.
In order for this to be effective, survivors must be identified as having been trafficked, exploited or had their human rights abused. Ideally they should self-identify, with support and information from service providers. It is also crucial that they not be judged or victim-blamed. Through the research, respondents identified several examples of victim blaming on the part of service providers, police services, the legal system and the general public. In one example, police did not take the victim of human trafficking seriously because the victim had previously been involved in sex work and had a drug addiction. In another example, researchers witnessed in court a 14-year-old victim of trafficking being questioned on what she was wearing at the time she met her trafficker, and asked why she did not leave her traffickers even though they did not always physically restrain her. These examples underline the need for increased understanding about the psychological impacts of being trafficked, as well as sensitivity training on how best to speak with and respond to the needs of trafficked persons.

Health Care

Since the physical toll of human trafficking can be very significant, the physical health care needed by survivors is both important and often extensive. Having health care that is accessible, flexible, trauma-informed, and non-judgemental is therefore crucial. Survivors often need health care that addresses three areas: a basic assessment of overall physical health; sexual health services; detox and addiction services.

Basic Physical Health Assessment: According to respondents, the majority of human trafficking victims were denied access to any type of health care during the period in which they are trafficked; with several being in a trafficking situation for a significant period of time (up to several years). Having regular physical health check-ups is important for all people, and this basic human need is compounded by the extreme stress and generally unhealthy living conditions endured by trafficked persons. These deleterious conditions may include starvation and very poor nutrition, sleep deprivation, lack of hygiene, beatings, exposure to unsanitary conditions, and chronic overwork (among many others). There are also several psychosomatic symptoms (with somatization defined as the tendency to experience psychological distress in the form of physical symptoms)\(^{57}\) associated with trauma, causing survivors to have additional physical health issues in need of treatment.

“Having addiction counselling from a harm reduction approach, one that is linked to trauma counselling and doesn’t require immediate abstinence, is essential. Otherwise, you risk taking away a coping tool that has often been key to survival.”

- Service provider

\(^{57}\) Alex Lickerman, M.D., “Psycho-Somatic Symptoms: How emotional trauma often manifests as physical symptoms” (March 4, 2010) online: http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/happiness-in-world/201003/psychosomatic-symptoms.
Sexual Health Services: Survivors of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation have according to the research typically not received any health care, including sexual health care, for the duration of their trafficking situation. This is exacerbated by non-consensual sex over a period of time, with victims often being forced to perform very risky sexual acts. Key informants stated because women and girls in situations of trafficking have little to no agency in what they do or do not do, traffickers often exploit this by offering Johns “no limits” and women and girls “doing anything.” This puts trafficked persons in situations with extremely high risk of violence, trauma and of contracting sexually transmitted infections. Additionally, trafficking victims are forced to take the birth control pill constantly, without any breaks to ensure they will not have their menstrual period. The sexual and general health implications of this can be significant and require medical attention.

Addiction Services: Many traffickers use addiction as a recruitment and exploitation tactic, leaving survivors with crippling addictions, often to opiates. While this is not the case for all survivors, many require immediate access to detox and/or harm reduction. Key informants explained that without methadone maintenance or detox, survivors are at high risk of returning to their traffickers in order to feed their addiction. Opiate addiction is extremely powerful and withdrawal is both physically and emotionally painful. Key informants identified immediate access to detox and harm reduction (including methadone) as necessities, and noted the importance that these services are non-judgemental, trauma-informed, and accessible in the broad sense (including being accessible without referral, regardless of access to identification, in a physical location that is easy to access and free of charge).

**Psychological Care**

The trauma experienced by victims of trafficking is significant and therefore trauma counselling is crucial to helping survivors move forward. Addictions treatment, as mentioned above in terms of physical health, also requires a strong psychological component. It is important for survivors to have access to trauma specialists concurrently with addictions treatment (if addictions treatment is needed), because for many trafficked persons, substance use is the only way for them to dull the pain caused by the continuous trauma they endured.

“The way trauma is stored in the brain is very unique. Rebecca Campbell, PhD., explains it as writing everything that happened down on sticky notes, mixing them all up, and trying to make sense of them all. The interviewing process needs to reflect that. If you interview someone immediately after a traumatic event, and they’re still in crisis, it may not be the full picture. This is just one way the police and justice system can misunderstand and re-victimize people.”

- Service provider
There is also a need for case management and the provision of a wide network of social supports and services. Case management is necessary because of the complex needs of trafficking survivors. It is important for trafficked persons to have a "go-to" resource person or organization that can manage those needs and offer consistent support throughout their healing journey. The resource person should have a vast knowledge of the various services available. This support is important to victims to prevent them from returning to their trafficker, since psychological control of the trafficker or threats of violence to family members were said to be causative factors in breaking contact with service providers.

Another psychological need of victims and survivors or human trafficking (both during their trafficking situation and after they escape) is a general understanding by service providers of what trafficking is, and training on how to approach victims and survivors. Specifically, service providers should be aware of the appropriate language to use, should be aware of their own assumptions and biases, and should come from a trauma-informed perspective (meaning that they have an understanding of the psychological impacts of trauma and have a basic understanding of how to approach trauma survivors). Specifically, professionals who are likely to interact with victims of trafficking (including police, social services, health care workers, representatives of the legal system, etc.) must be careful to avoid re-traumatizing these victims and should have supports and accommodation in place to shelter women and girls who have been trafficked. For example, significant court supports are needed for victims who choose to testify against their traffickers, and police officers who interview victims of human trafficking should understand how traumatic memories can be stored in the brain. For example, one key informant explained that some of her clients gave information to the police immediately after leaving their trafficking situations, and that later those clients realized that they did not give accurate information because the trauma has been so fresh, and because traumatic memories are often distorted, particularly in the short-term period after the trauma occurs.

In order to truly feel and be safe immediately after a survivor leaves a human trafficking situation, a survivor not only needs shelter and protection, but also psychological care. One survivor of human trafficking explained that she would have benefited from having someone to talk to who had experienced being trafficked, one who had been out of the trafficking situation for a significant period of time and could just sit and be with her, and be available if she needed to talk. This type of peer-to-peer (survivor-to-survivor) approach was echoed by key informants, who expressed the need for someone to be available to victims of human trafficking immediately after they leave the situation, primarily in a supportive role (and identified that ideally this person would be a survivor of trafficking who was well into recovery).

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2.2. SUPPORTS, GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.2.1. SUPPORT SERVICES

The vast majority of service providers interviewed identified the lack of services in Ottawa specific to meeting the needs of human trafficking victims/survivors. Several service providers made reference to St. Joe’s Women’s Centre as being the lead service for case management of victims of human trafficking. However, they also mentioned that as no long-term services are available, an ineffective “Band-Aid” approach is being applied.

Unfortunately, interventions and support services available to victims of human trafficking are few and poorly developed. Most victim services offered general support to victims of a wide variety of crimes and problems. During this research the government did not fund or operate any dedicated facilities for trafficking victims. As a result, there were no government programs specifically designed to serve trafficking victims in Ottawa. City services such as the Ottawa Police Service – Victim Crisis Unit had primary responsibility for general services to victims of crime, which were also available to trafficking victims. Other service providers offered trafficking victims access to shelter services, short-term counselling and other services. In most cases, female trafficking victims could receive services at shelters designed for victims of partner violence and abuse. However, the demand for some services, such as longer-term assisted housing, detox facilities, and trauma counselling generally exceeded the available resources. In addition, respondents asserted that the complex needs of trafficking victims are often very different from the needs of victims of partner violence.

Victims and survivors also felt that the number of social service agencies was overwhelming, especially when dealing with trauma. That is, victims themselves did not always know what services they required, and they lacked guidance from staff (case management). Survivors also voiced their general lack of comfort, reassurance or personal support for anxiety. Victims at times felt discouraged from seeking help, and service providers generally seemed to lack the understanding of victims’ traumatized state of mind. Respondents indicated that the lack of specialized services and lack of training for frontline staff, such as police officers and social workers, led to inadequate support for victims.
Respondents also noted that increased protection and victim support services could enhance victim cooperation and support the prosecution of traffickers. In spite of these shortcomings, organizations manage to respond to victims’ needs on an ad hoc, sometimes volunteer basis.

Representatives from every sector spoke about the need to share information on human trafficking and to work together to support trafficked persons. Most community stakeholders did not know what their counterparts at other agencies were doing or whom they were helping. In addition, they did not know whom to contact should they encounter a human trafficking victim. As a result, the service providers and executive staff interviewed identified the need for increased training, education – specifically for youth – and public awareness. A few interviewees identified having attended a one-day workshop; they also explained that the workshop did not provide them with the essential tools required to effectively identify human trafficking or to respond to the needs of victims, but rather made them more aware of the issue.

“General raising awareness and education about this. Combatting misconceptions. Victims need to know that if they’re going to report that they’ll be taken seriously. That’s often a big barrier. Other than St. Joe’s, I don’t really know of anywhere else I could send someone.”

- Service provider
The Ottawa Coalition to End Human Trafficking (Coalition) is one of the most active organizations in the fight against human trafficking in Ottawa. The very successful Coalition was developed by St. Joe’s Women’s Centre and PACT-Ottawa, to collaborate in providing services to victims of human trafficking in Ottawa. The Coalition works closely with the anti-trafficking section of the police department of the city of Ottawa and the RCMP. The Coalition prevents and manages crises of victims and survivors of human trafficking at a community level. This Coalition helps victims with short or long-term support and provides access to local and specialized services for victims of trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation. It serves as a safety net in order to guide victims through the judicial process or by directing them to social services that tailored to their needs.

The Coalition is comprised of 45 members from 10 domains in the national capital region that are ready, willing and able to assist a trafficked person. It meets monthly and is chaired by an independent consultant. The main aim is to establish engagement between the various authorities, including police, parole officers, health professionals, shelters and non-profits and sex workers to share intelligence, trends and work together on problem-solving cases. The Coalition also helps agencies and their frontline staff by offering training and helping them to identify sources of assistance. The Coalition is also used to train and raise awareness as well as provide regular updates, so that stakeholders are notified about new data, cases and best practices. The Coalition has had considerable success in fostering links between professionals who are able to share experiences, service gaps and support for victims of trafficking in Ottawa.

However, the Coalition is facing some challenges such as providing a safe accommodation for victims and survivors of human trafficking in cases where their life remains in danger after they have appealed for assistance. Women’s shelters and hotels are initially considered but they cannot provide adequate security from traffickers trying to find their victims. The Coalition also has had difficulties handling severe cases of post-traumatic stress disorder and establishing connections based on trust with some victims because of ethno-cultural clash.
It is also significant that all respondents highlighted the need for adequate funding from the federal, municipal and provincial governments. Stakeholders faced funding challenges due to the lack of sustainable and reliable funding to provide victim support services since the majority of funding seems to be project-based or duration-specific. Respondents also emphasised the need for government support for a 24-hour human trafficking helpline to work in conjunction with crisis intervention services. Currently the only existing helpline in Canada is Chrysalis Network, a 1-800 national trauma helpline, which is solely funded by its founder, Jacqui Linder.

All respondents underlined the need for governments to commit to the issue of human trafficking by providing funding and by backing frontline workers and advocates that support the needs of trafficking victims. Funding for prevention also must address the conditions of poverty, gender stereotyping, homophobia and addiction.

2.2.2. OUTREACH AND INTERVENTION

While respondents did encounter trafficking victims who had escaped, many raised the need to be proactive in finding trafficking victims and offering aid through outreach initiatives. With this in mind, respondents identified the need for police intervention in situations of confinement or severe controls. Key informants and stakeholders also identified that these initiatives must not infringe on the rights and safety of sex workers who are there by choice. Additional needs identified were support for long-term outreach and street outreach to provide victims with information about their rights and accessible sources for help. Building trust and being non-judgmental were mentioned as key elements to successful outreach programs.
Current responses through programs such as STORM, OASIS, Operation Come Home and initiatives by OPS include reaching potential victims on the street, in brothels, massage parlours, bars or strip clubs. Trafficking victims are sometimes reached through websites; medical staff who treat women for physical and mental health ailments such as addiction, anxiety etc.; and through social workers or parole officers working with victims due to other crimes or problems. Respondents reported that community stakeholders frequently work in collaboration with other organizations in order to help possible trafficking victims since workers were overloaded and under-resourced.

**Education and Gender Equality**

Service providers identified a need to begin educating young people on human trafficking at an early age (10 - 12 years of age), since youth have been identified as the most vulnerable group for recruitment and exploitation. Service providers suggested attending the school board and requesting that presentations be conducted in class. It was suggested that education and resources be targeted to those who are at the beginning stages of recruitment. Respondents noted that the common reality is that service providers are intervening with women who have been involved in human trafficking for extended periods of time. They identified the challenges of connecting with these women because they have developed a strong bond with their trafficker, and in many cases believe that the trafficker loves them and is their boyfriend. Service providers suggested that a focus point be identifying risk factors at the earlier stages and performing strong interventions and case management to ensure young women are not recruited and exploited. Public awareness by way of posters was suggested by majority of the interviewees. It was recommended that posters be displayed in high schools, colleges, bars, community centres and strip clubs. Service providers also discussed connecting with the City of Ottawa and other agencies to perform outreach initiatives.

With this in mind, article 10 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex) obliges States parties to eliminate “any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education ... in particular by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods.”\(^{60}\) Furthermore, article 4 of that Convention specifies that “temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination.”\(^{61}\) As such it is recommended that the Government of Canada and its agents put programs and measures in place to eliminate gender stereotyping and educate youth on healthy relationships. Furthermore, factors such as sexual orientation and gender identity should be considered when putting school programs in place, as social stigma around these issues are major contributing factors to youth homelessness. The government needs to focus on education, prevention and transforming the current hetero-normative system. Making society safer and more inclusive for all youth, regardless of their gender identity and sexual orientation, would challenge the current overrepresentation of LGBTQ youth among the homeless youth population.


\(^{61}\) Ibid.
Ottawa Police Service Response to HT

The findings below are feedback from stakeholders on OPS’s current initiatives. Respondents felt that the York Region’s Police HT Vice Unit currently offers the best practice of combating human trafficking. In Ottawa, respondents noted that despite the need, there is no permanent human trafficking unit with the OPS that has the full capacity to actively investigate human trafficking; although a pilot unit is in place at the time of writing. While respondents mentioned several examples of successful police operations in which trafficking activities were uncovered, respondents also pointed to insufficient or inappropriate law enforcement activities as a barrier. Respondent’s felt that the pilot human trafficking unit is overstretched and needs more dedicated financial and resource support particularly for victim management. While the officers currently involved in the unit were viewed as dedicated to combating human trafficking in Ottawa, other stakeholders noticed that officers and supervisors struggled with the lack of training and internal resources available to them.

“Initiatives such as the raids do not foster trust in the sex working community, and we are going to be less likely to contact the police if we don’t trust them to have our best interests at heart.”

- Local sex worker

Furthermore, respondents felt the OPS targeted mostly known sex workers and adult entertainment establishments. However, the findings of this research suggest that a significant number of HT hidden cases are not sequestered in these establishments, and are therefore being missed. That is, a larger proportion of HT victims were not found through enforcement initiatives in the commercial sex industry; they were more likely to be found in informal, hidden settings. As such, a number of organizations felt that police were missing the HT victims outside of the commercial sex trade model. With this in mind, community stakeholders felt ambivalent about OPS operations. For example, sex workers who experienced police enforcement activity at their homes for the purposes of finding HT victims, felt their privacy and rights had been violated. In some cases sex workers reported feeling harassed and fearful for their safety. Respondents also noted that these kinds of operations make it difficult for community stakeholders including the police to identify, liaise with and gain the trust of sex workers. Respondents identified that their fears of arrest or being violated by officers can lead them to avoid accessing necessary services or reporting human trafficking cases for fear of being disregarded or criminalized.
Current [police] officers working within HT are dedicated and want to help but they don’t have sufficient training or resources to be able to address this complex issue.

- Service provider

As well, respondents acknowledged the significant efforts that specific police officers had made in building positive relationships with the community, victims, at-risk women and girls and sex workers. They also indicated that these relationships continue to have positive effects. However, respondents were concerned that the expertise that had been developed by these skilled officers and the positive relationships they had established in the community were not being sufficiently utilized. That is, while respondents talked favourably about initial police efforts that had established trusting relationships with sex workers and at-risk women and girls, it seemed that the officers who had established these relationships, were not being sufficiently engaged in the ongoing work. Respondents felt that due to continuous change and officer turnover, networks established are falling into disarray and the knowledge and experience gained is not being adequately leveraged. Community stakeholders are disappointed that these officers, who have extensive experience in HT, seem no longer to be involved in HT initiatives other than through Project imPACT or community stakeholder events to which they are still invited. These officers continue to be a valuable resource for Project imPACT. Many respondents had prior negative experiences with OPS officers, but not with these officers. In particular, one officer was consistently mentioned by survivors, victims, sex workers and at-risk women and girls, as one they would trust and seek out for help or guidance. The problem with not continuing to utilize such officers is that, as mentioned earlier, victim’s inherent mistrust of authority makes them unlikely to initiate contact with police. The importance of continuing to utilize such officers in order to sustain these positive relationships with victims or at-risk women and girls was strongly emphasized. These officers are pivotal for bridging any divides between OPS and marginalized groups and reaching further potential victim too frightened to approach police. A victim’s first contact with police is critical and can in fact determine whether the victim will ever choose to cooperate with police in support of a prosecution. Respondents noted positive encounters with the police can also be part of a catalyst that causes a victim to see possible changes in their circumstances.

A notable concern was the poor relationship between the OPS and victims/survivors. Respondents identified OPS officers as not being proactive, and in some cases re-victimizing the victim. Police must be informed and trained on the issue of human trafficking, and develop the necessary skills for both identifying, interviewing, and responding to potential victims, and prosecuting offenders. Respondents stated that OPS needed to have a dedicated capacity of specialized and trained officers to deal with the complex and multifaceted crime of HT. For example it was reported that HT victims are brainwashed over many months and years not to trust police or any outsiders. Officers need to understand this complexity and be non-judgmental, patient, sensitive and street savvy to address the needs of victims. As a result, respondents underlined the need to carefully select and train the officers of a dedicated vice unit, so that they can effectively relate to and engage victims, with the ultimate goal of supporting these victims and prosecuting offenders.
Furthermore, it was viewed as important that OPS continue to deliver public education sessions on human trafficking in high schools, group homes and at youth organizations. Respondents felt the limited and uncoordinated investigative attention given to the organized sexual exploitation of youth is a concern, especially given the emphasis on early identification and prevention strategies for youth at-risk contained in the current OPS Business Plan and the Chief’s current operation a focus being VAW. With this in mind, the necessary work cannot be achieved without a dedicated police vice unit, adequate resources, specialized training, diverse and skilled officers, as well as financial support. Respondents emphasized that without an established unit and sufficient resources, it will be a daunting challenge to combat human trafficking in Ottawa.

**Sex Work, Conflation and Stigma**

Respondents underlined that the conflation of human trafficking and sex work has led to misleading initiatives and has raised concerns amongst community stakeholders. The focus of human trafficking taking place within the sex industry has led police and anti-trafficking initiatives to focus on brothels, massage parlours and strip clubs. This is problematic as interviews with key informants working with trafficking victims stated that the majority of female victims of sex trafficking are not exploited in these commercial establishments. In addition, while media or movies depict victims of sex trafficking being violently voice into sex work against their will, victims in Ottawa do not fit this example. Indeed, while the woman may be coerced and at-risk physically, nonetheless she may view her trafficker as her boyfriend or friend and may only fully comprehend her exploitative conditions several years later. Hence there is a risk that police could damage their own image and entrench the mistrust of a potential victim of trafficking by searching a brothel. Consequently when the trafficked person becomes cognizant of her exploitive and dangerous situation, any mistrust of police may militate against her seeking their valuable support. We have also heard from some respondents that the police enforcement approach creates further conflict between sex workers and police. As this research has indicated, sex workers are a significant resource for helping to combat human trafficking and to inform police of suspicious activity.

Sex workers participating in a focus group advised that while in the past they may have reached out to the police to report suspicious activity, their resistance to collaborate with police increased after witnessing enforcement activity. Outreach conducted by previous officers before the OPS pilot unit was established resulted in positive and productive relationships with sex workers. The importance of the OPS re-establishing positive relationships with the community and sex workers cannot be underestimated. The York Region’s Police HT Vice Unit has adopted an effective and proactive enforcement approach, focusing enforcement efforts on the predatory pimps and traffickers, with little attention paid to those non-street-level sex trade workers who may be working independently.

Key informants pointed out that some women may be working in the sex trade for financial reasons; they may be economically vulnerable due to inadequate benefits, low wages, homelessness and high rents. It is of utmost importance to remain non-judgemental. The complex social factors that function in many women’s lives cannot be ignored when combatting human trafficking. Respondents emphasized without dealing with the bigger social problems of lack of basic human needs, and intersecting problems of racism, sexism and classism, human trafficking initiatives will not fully address the root causes. As a result, respondents stated educating the public and challenging deep-rooted biases about sex work is one way of preventing trafficking by promoting women’s rights.
With this in mind, research indicated an important way to bring about real, lasting change for victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation is to work with sex workers directly, in a non-judgmental manner. Once moral judgements are no longer part of the equation, it is possible to work collaboratively with these essential stakeholders to combat human trafficking. Respondents emphasized that non-sex workers need to see their own position and privilege in the larger social and political world. Many sex workers in the focus group felt that they were as frightened of the police as they were of “bad dates” (a euphemism for encounters with sex buyers who are violent). These negative perceptions must be challenged and replaced by greater mutual trust. This research found that sex workers are critical allies against human trafficking; sex workers can identify underage girls because they may be the first to encounter them. Working directly with sex workers is therefore an effective alternative to the enforcement and rescue model. Finally, respondents noted the conflation of sex work and trafficking misses out on the innovative and effective anti-trafficking efforts by sex workers who see the difference between sex work and trafficking. Sex work organizations should be regarded as important collaborators in the effort to devise a better strategy to combat human trafficking without harm to sex workers.

Respondents indicated gaps related to protection and support given to victims, considering the trauma and harm they have suffered. Key informants indicated the importance of accessible and immediate detox facilities. Generally access to these services is limited due to already over-stretched resources and long wait times. These are important support services needed immediately by HT victims as most are forced into drug use to ensure control by and dependence on the trafficker. Currently Recovery Ottawa is the only available medical detox that does not have exceptionally long wait times and the need of identification. However, it should be noted that this is not a residential clinic and as such does not address the safety needs of human trafficking victims.

Without appropriate supports and efforts to provide long-term housing, trauma counselling and skills development; we risk re-victimizing survivors.

- Local survivor

Service providers also pointed out that after some immediate needs were met during the initial 24-72 hours, needs for specialized and long-term services such as trauma counseling, secondary housing and shelters, job skills and employment training were not being met. As mentioned above, economic attraction is one of the greatest factors enabling traffickers to recruit victims. As such, frontline workers noted that sustainable income is an important factor for survivors of human trafficking since financial pressures often remain even after they have exited, such as the inability to find long-term affordable housing and employment. Without employment training or job skills, victims are at high risk of being exploited again.

2.2.3. HOUSING, PROTECTION AND HEALTH
Dedicated Human Trafficking Shelter

Service providers identified the immediate need for long-term, safe, affordable housing and an emergency human trafficking shelter such as Deborah’s Gate in Vancouver. It was noted that placing human trafficking victims in domestic abuse shelters might increase their stigmatization. Therefore, a shelter specifically designed for human trafficking victims would be the most appropriate solution.

“A huge gap is where do they go after we’ve housed them temporarily in a motel. So what happens then? We have no options. Many of the women in shelters are there because of family violence, but it might not be an appropriate place for victims of human trafficking because of judgment, etc.”

- Service provider

While OPS-Victim Service Unit and the Ottawa Coalition provide much needed support, more resources need to be provided for substantial, long-term support beyond 72 hours. Due to the nature of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, it is not always safe for survivors to stay in homeless shelters. Women’s shelters are not always appropriate for survivors of sex trafficking because their needs are quite different from women who are fleeing domestic violence (who are the primary clientele of these shelters). Additionally, survivors of sex trafficking often face stigma from other women living in these shelters who associate them with sex work and do not feel comfortable being housed in the same shelter.

| Table 5. Support Services Needed in Ottawa as Identified by Respondents (n=62) |
|-------------------------------------------------|------|
| Answer Options                                   | Response Percent |
| Emergency shelter or safe house for trafficked or sexually exploited women and girls | 24%  |
| Trauma counselling                               | 14%  |
| Long-term housing                                | 12%  |
| Rebuilding and/or recovery                       | 10%  |
| Substance abuse/addiction supports               | 10%  |
| Exit strategies and safety planning              | 7%   |
| Public awareness and outreach                    | 6%   |
| Provision of basic needs                         | 4%   |
| Legal supports                                   | 4%   |
| Education and training                           | 4%   |
| Other                                           | 4%   |

Respondents stated safe and adequate housing must be available for human trafficking victims, where there is proper support for health and emotional well-being. As well, life skills, educational training and career planning support are important. Key informants added the healing process often takes a considerable period of time, and long-term consistent support from caring, knowledgeable individuals, including counsellors and experiential peer supports, is required. Safe environments need to be created where this can take place. Guided by a team of clinicians, counsellors, live-in coaches and other volunteers, survivors staying in a safe house can be provided with the necessary life and recovery skills.
One [woman] started off as a victim, then came back and was recruiting, then ended up enforcing. She became a big issue, because it’s hard to protect people living in the shelter from someone else living in the shelter.

- Service provider

The notion of “rescuing” trafficking victims may appear to be a good idea but the reality is more complex. Talking to survivors and service providers, victims rarely rush gratefully into the open arms of law enforcement, service providers, hospital staff or family members. Instead they were often not immediately compliant with shelter regulations and mistrusted the people trying to help them. Recently rescued victims reported being tired, traumatized, depressed and frightened. As a result, victims need intense amounts of practical support, as well as compassion and patience. Initially, victims are in need of practical resources such as food, shelter, clothing and most importantly counselling or even psychiatric care for depression and PTSD; however, respondents noted they also need someone to understand and help explain that their feelings are normal reactions to an extremely exploitative and abusive situation. Without this constant care, victims struggle to see that any alternative life is possible. However, even with these important interventions, respondents added it is not always enough to break the trauma bonds, either the first or second time around. However, service providers should not stop trying rather respondents noted the need to give victims agency in their own existence.
3. **NEXT STEPS: ACTION PLAN**

Stakeholders highlighted the need for both general and targeted awareness and education efforts as necessary components of HT prevention, as well as early identification of persons at risk and intervention. A general lack of awareness of the issue, on the part of the public, frontline workers, law enforcement and victims themselves, was a key challenge to effectively addressing this crime. While stakeholders felt some progress had been made amongst frontline service providers through the Train-the-Trainer course, more work is needed for providers to comprehend the psychology of victims and the trauma they have experienced. With these critical points in mind, PACT-Ottawa will be putting a community action plan into place.

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<tr>
<th>Table 6. How Trafficked Persons Heard of Support Services (n=140)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Answer Options</td>
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<tr>
<td>Through word of mouth</td>
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<td>Through referrals from law enforcement</td>
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<td>Through referrals from a shelter or sexual assault centre</td>
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<td>Through referrals from a youth organizations</td>
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<td>From other trafficked or sexually exploited women</td>
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<td>Through referrals from a street outreach worker</td>
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<td>Through referrals from a hospital or health service</td>
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<td>Through community directory e.g. 211</td>
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<td>Through posted notices in public places</td>
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3.1. **PUBLIC AWARENESS**

Respondents felt that the public lacks understanding both of what trafficking is and of its extent in Ottawa. While conducting this research we also found that assumptions were often made about human trafficking and the individuals who were trafficked. Human trafficking was often conflated with human smuggling and sexual exploitation. Stakeholders found media coverage often to be incomplete, confusing and presented from a hidden political agenda. Respondents identified public education and advocacy against gender, race and ethnic discrimination as important activities to combat human trafficking. Public education campaigns addressing stereotyping, prejudices and explaining the definition of human trafficking were suggested as responses.

As a result, PACT-Ottawa will develop working partnerships with all stakeholders including HT survivors to assist in enhancing public awareness at shelters, group homes, youth organizations and high schools. Without widespread awareness, identification and accurate reporting of this issue, data on trafficking will continue to underestimate the problem. Continued public awareness and increased education among service providers --including social workers in shelters, parole officers, sexual assault centre workers, NGO representatives, teachers and others in how to identify and effectively manage human trafficking cases-- are of critical importance in effectively challenging and ending HT.
Secrecy and misinformation regarding trafficking are challenging problems preventing victims from receiving the necessary support and services. As a result, efforts will be made through posters and information sheets to address misperceptions and to educate the Ottawa community. It is critical that public misunderstanding of the issue and its prevalence in Ottawa be addressed. Furthermore, PACT-Ottawa will create awareness within the Ottawa community through the media, including social media, and through information campaigns run by other advocacy organizations and service providers. Emphasis will be made regarding the fact that human trafficking involves every class, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and age, and that stereotypes are obstacles to tackling the real issue of trafficking.

3.2. TRAINING

Regular effective training of service providers is crucial for spotting women and girls who are being exploited. When visiting shelters, youth organizations or high schools, researchers observed a limited understanding of trafficking on the part of social workers and teachers who mistakenly thought human trafficking required crossing an international border. This lack of insight into the reality of HT needs to be addressed.

To date, PACT-Ottawa and the Coalition have focused on training frontline staff and raising public awareness of human trafficking. The Train-the-Trainer project created a certain level of protection within the community by strengthening the professional development and awareness of frontline workers in an array of service organizations including: social, health, law enforcement, legal, corrections, parole, mental health, education, homeless and housing, faith, shelter, women’s, and new Canadian/ethno-cultural/immigrant organizations. Many of these frontline workers are working directly with vulnerable and marginalized populations and identified clients or potential clients who are involved in this crime locally. This kind of training has helped relay information to service providers about the social services, law enforcement or counsellors available to prevent further exploitation, provide protection, and give personal supports required to safeguard at-risk populations against being trafficked.

Moving forward, PACT-Ottawa will continue to support these efforts but also will enhance awareness activities by updating the Train-the-Trainer manual based on research from Project imPACT. The action plan will focus on assisting the Coalition to identify people and places most at-risk of human trafficking so that prevention and intervention can be better targeted. PACT-Ottawa will also solicit input from local victim-services organizations, to ensure that materials answer key questions, address myths and stereotypes and support the competency-development needs of local professionals.

PACT-Ottawa will also help to further develop and provide a Community Response Protocol. This protocol will aim to simplify and improve the referral process so that frontline workers are provided with a clear course of action when faced with a potential victim of trafficking. A helpful set of protocols on human trafficking will be made available to agencies with all the names and numbers of those they can contact when handling a case in Ottawa. The materials will also reflect the gender, ethno-cultural and case-specific elements and trends of the Ottawa community. Training materials will be inclusive, culturally appropriate and respectful of diversity. The overall manual and materials will include the legislative, provincial and local information pertinent for local professionals. The development of a comprehensive manual and training will serve as a tool to improve understanding among frontline workers about human trafficking, including the identification of potential victims, their specific medical needs, and referral of potential victims to service providers and NGOs.
3.3. **EDUCATE TO EMPOWER**

As stated above, one of the biggest risk factors regarding HT for young people who live in Ottawa is a lack of education and understanding of the issue of human trafficking. The main goal of Project imPACT therefore will be to increase the awareness among youth of how traffickers recruit and groom their potential victims and the methods they use to break down, isolate, control and exploit youth. PACT-Ottawa will develop, coordinate and deliver education to youth, parents and service providers. It will support a prevention, education and early intervention outreach specifically designed to engage high-risk youth (ages 12-25) across Ottawa to be proactive in preventing human trafficking. The emphasis will be to engage a variety of high-risk youth groups including youth in alternative education programs; Aboriginal communities and agencies; youth who identify as LGBTQ; and youth in care. This initiative will help at-risk youth to connect with resources available to them and will focus on increasing self-esteem and self-awareness.

“Education—like I said before. Just knowing what human trafficking is would have helped me. I didn’t even realize I’d been trafficked. They should talk about this from a young age – in schools, etc. They say victims come from broken homes, but I didn’t. I came from a really good family, and this still happened to me.”

- Local survivor, interview responds when asked, “What could have prevented this [sex trafficking]”?  

PACT-Ottawa will work with LINK crews at the secondary school level for peer-driven initiatives to deliver key safety messages about human trafficking of vulnerable girls and young women to school peers and youth groups. PACT-Ottawa will also work with agencies and programs such as YOUCAN, the Fourth R and the John Howard Society’s CHOICES program, focusing on teaching youth to develop healthy relationships. Based on work done by PACT-Ottawa through Project Protect, presentations and materials will include information on recruitment and grooming strategies of traffickers, cybersafety, myths, stereotypes, systemic causes of trafficking, gender inequality, victim-blaming and our role as conscious and conscientious consumers. Presentations will use active learning strategies that invite participation, use interactive materials and include media components, music, small group discussion and activities. While raising awareness among young women in Ottawa regarding their potential risk of being trafficked, facilitators will also engage young male participants in discussions around their important roles in challenging the objectification and the sexual exploitation of women; practical strategies and actions young men can take to end domestic trafficking will also be a focus.
In addition, a visual awareness campaign focused on preventing human trafficking will be created in collaboration with Operation Come Home and Restoring Hope. This visual awareness campaign will be delivered to high schools; its aim will be to offer a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of human trafficking, including the tactics used to recruit youth. The visual awareness campaign will involve at-risk youth who will be active participants in the filmmaking and production of the materials. Throughout the project, youth participants will receive direct opportunities to acquire concrete skills, tools, knowledge and experience in creating and presenting creative work in a professional cultural context while working as part of a team to see multiple projects to completion. This project will also promote the development of at-risk youth’s relationship with positive peers and adults.

3.4. OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIP

Outreach was reported as an important activity for educating and helping trafficking victims reach safety. Clearly, successfully combating this crime requires partnerships. By strengthening collaboration with community stakeholders, such as sex workers, overall efforts to respond to human trafficking in Ottawa will greatly improve. Respondents that are currently working and collaborating with sex work organizations and sex workers have utilized these relationships to access strip clubs, massage parlours and sex trade workplaces. These respondents felt such outreach strategies worked well to support and reach trafficked women. As a result, efforts going forward will include collaboration with sex workers and sex worker’s associations by continuing to develop existing relationships with the program OASIS at the Sandy Hill Community Centre, STORM at Minwaashin Lodge and Operation Come Home. Efforts to engage organizations such as POWER will also continue, including invitations to stakeholder roundtables and community consultations.

Through collaborating with sex workers and raising public awareness about the issue of human trafficking, the realities of the sex industry can be more widely appreciated. Rather than viewing sex workers as criminals or a public nuisance, they must be seen as people with agency who may be facing systemic oppression and the lack of social support such as affordable housing. This collaboration will continue to maximize the inclusive feedback on public awareness campaigns as well as identifying victims, determining needs of victims and providing better services to survivors of human trafficking. This project will include sharing our research and incorporating feedback from the community.

PACT-Ottawa will help create an outreach team of agency staff and experiential peers that reach out to and connect with youth who are sexually exploited and adults who are working in the sex trade. The team will introduce individuals to services that would help them navigate additional government and community services, including crisis intervention, harm reduction, food, housing, clothing, health care, income and court support; as well as provide information about resources where human trafficking victims can find assistance and support. Services will be non-judgmental, inclusive, respectful, culturally appropriate, accepting of diversity and able to respond to emergency situations.

PACT-Ottawa will also collaborate with Youth Services Bureau and local LGBTQ programs to reach at-risk LGBTQ youth. This collaboration will help reach LGBTQ youth at-risk of being trafficked and will provide an opportunity to create material and presentations that are inclusive in order to challenge the marginalization of LGBTQ youth. Moreover, PACT-Ottawa will develop gender sensitivity training for both straight and gay youth as part of HT education and awareness; this training will aim to challenge reductionist notions of gender identity and gender expression and encourage more open and inclusive dialogue among all youth.
4. CONCLUSION

Human trafficking for sexual exploitation is widespread throughout Canada, but until now little was known about sexual trafficking in Ottawa. The assumption was made that it was not happening in Ottawa or if cases were exposed, they were few in number. Researchers hope this report proves the inaccuracy of such assumptions, and that a greater understanding of the situation will prevail in Ottawa.

Through nine months of intensive research, input and feedback from community stakeholders, a former trafficker, key informants and trafficked persons, we have discovered a significant number of women and girls being trafficked and at-risk of being trafficked. Thus, contrary to popular belief, trafficking for sexual exploitation occurs in Ottawa; it is happening to Canadian citizens from various backgrounds with youth constituting the most vulnerable group. We have found that recruitment tactics used by traffickers are subtle and strategic, which adds to the problem of identifying victims and prosecuting traffickers. Once victims are recruited and groomed, traffickers exercise tremendous control over them, psychologically and/or physically, and victims are not only fearful for their own lives but also for the safety of friends and relatives, even many years after escaping their trafficking situation. As a result, women and girls often do not come forward or self-identify. In the majority of cases, researchers also heard survivors of trafficking continue to blame themselves and fail to see the extreme manipulation and exploitation they experienced. Researchers also discovered that victims are difficult to find, as they are likely not to be in the commercial sex industry. HT victims are more likely to be sequestered and sold at private parties and in private homes, which makes the OPS task to investigate cases of trafficking significantly more challenging. This challenge underscores the critical importance of community support and partnerships.

Human trafficking is embedded in the complex intersection of poverty, gender stereotyping, sexism, homophobia and racism. With in mind, PACT-Ottawa makes the following recommendations in order that trafficking victims be identified and fully supported: HT training and awareness efforts must continue, youth must be educated with a view to eradicating gender stereotyping and homophobia, and dedicated resources and services must be put in place for HT victims. Emphasis needs to be placed on group homes, high schools, social housing and shelters, as these venues have been identified as recruitment hubs. Education and public awareness is needed, specifically tailored towards youth in schools and addressing the conflation of human trafficking and sex work. Training for frontline staff is also required in order for staff to accurately identify cases of human trafficking and thereby combat it effectively. Finally, long-term housing, a police human trafficking unit, specialized inclusive services and a human trafficking shelter are necessities for answering the needs of the victims and survivors in the Ottawa region. While the action plan going forward is focused on preventing human trafficking, improving support services for victims is crucial to ensuring the provision of immediate and long-term protection to victims. Without specialized services in place, we risk re-victimizing survivors and losing the opportunity to help victims.


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KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

Logistics

Date: __________________________
Location: __________________________

Interview Questions

INTRODUCTION [5 min]

Thank you for meeting with us – we really appreciate it and the information you give will make a huge impact in helping us assess the situation of human trafficking and related sexual exploitation in Ottawa.

• Explain the project, where we’re at, what the purpose is, etc.
• Explain that some of these questions may seem basic, but it is important to ask some broad questions at first in order for us to get a sense of the different perspectives that exist and how each perspective answers these questions differently.
• We would like to ask that if you don’t know the answer to a question, if you don’t have first-hand knowledge about it, or if you don’t think you’re the best person to inform us about that – please don’t answer. You may simply tell us to skip that question. It is very important to us that we get accurate information, and we’d prefer you don’t answer if you don’t know. Also, if your experience is more anecdotal than experiential, please let us know. It may be valuable information, but we will need to distinguish those two types of information.
• Add definition of trafficking – three step/element approach.
  Refer to consent form for full definition.

1. What is the nature and scope of human trafficking in Ottawa? [5 m]
• What experience do you have with human trafficking?
• Do you see human trafficking as prevalent in Ottawa? How many local cases have you seen or deal with, example over one year? Are the numbers increasing do you think?

Victims

2. What is the general profile of victims of sex trafficking in Ottawa? [10 m]
• Demographic info (gender, age, race, etc.)
• Who is most at risk of being trafficked? What are some of the key risk factors that make people vulnerable?
• Do you see homeless and street-involved women as being more at-risk of being trafficked and sexually exploited? What puts them more at risk?
• What services exist that can help these at-risk women from being trafficked?
  What are some other services that you feel are needed?
Recruitment

3. In your experience, how are people recruited for sex trafficking? [10 m]
   • How do traffickers specifically identify and target their victims?
   • How do traffickers recruit victims? What does the recruitment process look like? How do these methods differ for different populations?
   • Are there any particular environments or places that traffickers typically target their victims? (including specific locations, types of venues, neighbourhoods, areas of the city)
   • What do you know about the role social media plays in the recruitment of trafficking victims?

Sex Work

4. As you see it, what is the link between sex work and human trafficking? [10 m]
   • We know they are not synonymous, but they do overlap. What is the connection?
   • Of the women you work with who are involved in the sex trade, what is your sense of how they got involved? What are their reasons for getting involved?
   • For sex workers who have been trafficked, do you get the sense that they got involved with sex work through trafficking, or that they were involved in sex work and then were trafficked?
   • What do you know about the use of social media and other technology in selling sex?

Traffickers

5. How do traffickers keep a hold over their victims? [5 m]
   • What tactics do traffickers use to keep their victims involved?

6. Who is conducting human sex trafficking in Ottawa? [5 m]
   • Is there a “typical” trafficker? Are traffickers in Ottawa diverse? Are they involved with organized crime, gangs?
   • Are you aware of any female traffickers? If so, what are the main differences between them and male traffickers?
   • How do people become involved as traffickers?

7. What is the typical relationship between traffickers and their victims? [10 m]
   • How does this relationship typically start? How does it evolve?
   • What are some characteristics of the relationship between a trafficker and their victim after the initial recruitment period? (Is it typically violent? Is there respect? Etc...)
Services

8. How do you deal and provide support to trafficking victims? Please could you provide us with a step by step approach or give a case example if you can.


10. What do you know about exit strategies for victims of sex trafficking?
   • What prevents victims from leaving?
   • Of the victims you know who have left, how did they do it?
   • What can others in the community do (including professionals and the community at large) to help identify victims and then provide assistance to them?
   • What are the key needs of victims after they’ve escaped a trafficking situation?

SHELTERS:

• Is the number of homeless women in Ottawa increasing or decreasing?
• What is the general profile of homeless women in Ottawa? (demographic info i.e. age, race, where they’re from, etc.)
• How many of these women are living in shelters or supportive housing? Where do the rest live?
• Are these women more at risk of being sexually exploited or trafficked? If so, what puts them at more risk?
• What services exist to protect them from exploitation? What more is needed?
• What does Shepherds of Good Hope do to protect vulnerable women from being trafficked? Do you have enough support/resources? If not, what else is needed?

YOUTH

• How many children and youth are at risk of human trafficking or sexual exploitation because of their home/living situation?
• What puts those young people at risk?
• Are there specific neighbourhoods that have more young people at risk of being sexually exploited or trafficked?
• Are there specific demographic groups of youth who are at more risk than others?
• Explain what the situation of gangs is like in Ottawa. Which gangs are prominent? Which neighbourhoods or areas of the city are they associated with?
• Are gangs involved in Human Trafficking in Ottawa? Please explain how they are involved.
• Are street-involved youth more at risk of being sexually exploited or trafficked?
• What puts them at risk?
• Have you every known another young person who was sexually exploited? If so, can you tell us what happened?
• What services are available to those who are at risk?
• Who provides these services?
• What additional services do you think are required in general for youth to prevent human trafficking and sexual exploitation?
• Do you think that young people are more at risk than adults of being trafficked? Please explain.
ANYTHING ELSE? [15 m]

- Is there anything else you’d like to share with us?
- What else do you think is important for us to know about human trafficking in Ottawa?
- If you could identify 1 or 2 things that need to happen to improve the human trafficking situation in Ottawa (either through prevention or by bettering the situation for those involved) what would you recommend?
- Is there anyone else you think we should be talking to?
- How do traffickers specifically identify and target their victims?
- How do traffickers recruit victims? What does the recruitment process look like? How do these methods differ for different populations?
- Are there any particular environments or places that traffickers typically target their victims? (including specific locations, types of venues, neighbourhoods, areas of the city)
- What do you know about the role social media plays in the recruitment of trafficking victims?
Project imPACT:
Preventing and reducing the trafficking of women and girls through community planning

Project imPACT is part of PACT-Ottawa’s human trafficking prevention initiative. This project aims to prevent and reduce trafficking of women and girls in Ottawa through community planning. Collaborating closely with Crime Prevention Ottawa, the Ottawa Police Service and St. Joe’s Women’s Centre, and engaging additional community partners from a variety of sectors, PACT-Ottawa will work to develop and implement a community plan that addresses the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation, including its root causes. The project will address the range of institutional barriers and the factors that limit community efforts to deal with the issue of trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation. This research is conducted in accordance with PACT-Ottawa’s vision to recognize the human dignity and promote the well-being of all trafficked persons and with PACT-Ottawa’s Code of Ethics (attached).

This interview is intended to help inform the policy approach to preventing and reducing the trafficking of women and girls for the purposes of sexual exploitation. The purpose of this interview is to come to a better understanding of the particular views of your organization. Since this interview is intended to draw out the views of the organization to which you belong, your comments will be attributed to your organization within the final research paper. Should you wish to be identified in a different way, or not identified at all, you may indicate this below.

The interview will last approximately one and a half hours. An audio recording of the interview will be made for reference. This recording will be accessible only to the researcher, the Project Manager and the Project Director (“the supervisors”). The recording will be stored on a password locked computer, and a copy will be saved to a memory stick that is encrypted. The recording will be destroyed by June 1st 2014. Should you wish that the interview not be recorded, you may express this below.

The interview will be centered on the sensitive topic of human trafficking. Since the interview is intended to gain a greater understanding of your organization’s standpoint on the issue of human trafficking it should not pose any questions that could result in a risk greater than that to which you are exposed in your position at your organization. However, feelings of discomfort may arise. For this reason, you may withdraw and/or discontinue participation at any time without negative consequences. Should you choose to withdraw, all previous data collected will be destroyed. You may also choose not to answer any question posed.

Definition of Human Trafficking:

For the purposes of this research project, the definition of trafficking is based on the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. According to the Protocol, trafficking in persons has three constituent elements:

1. **THE ACT // What is done:**
   - Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons

2. **THE MEANS // How it is done:**
   - Threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim

3. **THE PURPOSE // Why it is done:**
   - For the purpose of exploitation, which includes exploiting the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or similar practices and the removal of organs.

1. I _____________volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by ... from PACT-Ottawa. I understand that the project is designed to gather information about human trafficking in Ottawa. I will be one of approximately 27 people being interviewed for this research.

2. My participation in this research will help provide relevant and comprehensive information on the state of human trafficking in Ottawa. My participation will help to support women and community partners in working together to develop and implement a community action plan that addresses the issue of trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation.

3. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will be offered an honourarium for my organization (or, if participating as an individual, an honourarium for myself) as a thank you for my contribution. Should I feel uncomfortable receiving this gift, I have the option to refuse it.

4. I may feel emotional or psychological discomfort due to the topic area of the interview. Therefore, I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without negative consequences. I may also choose not to answer any question posed to me by the researcher. If I do answer questions that make me feel uncomfortable, the researcher will take care to treat me with dignity and respect and she will provide a safe and constructive environment for me.

5. The interview will last approximately one and a half hours, during which time:
   o I consent to note taking and an audio recording of the interview.
   o Yes, I consent to my interview being recorded.
   o No, I do not wish to be recorded.
I understand that the researcher and her supervisors will be in sole possession of the interview recordings, which will be kept on a password locked computer, and stored on a memory stick that is encrypted. The researcher will delete these recordings no later than June 1st  2014.

6. I understand that my comments will be attributed to the organization that I represent.
   o I consent to my comments being attributed to the organization that I represent;
   o I consent to my comments be attributed to ___________________________________ instead;
   o I would like to remain anonymous.*
*In the case that I prefer to remain anonymous, I will be referred to as a participant or respondent, or by any pseudonym... and I agree upon.

7. I wish to receive an e-mail with the final product of this research paper.
   o Yes
   o No

8. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

9. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

____________________     _____________
Signature of participant     Date

____________________     _____________
Signature of researcher     Date