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Human Trafficking in Calgary: Informing a Localized Response

March 2012

Lara Quarterman, MA,

Julie Kaye, PhD candidate,

and

Professor John Winterdyk



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Centre for
Criminology & Justice Research



Research Team

Lara Quarterman, MA, is the former Coordinator of the *Action Coalition on human Trafficking (ACT) Alberta* in Calgary (2008-2011) where she built a network of diverse stakeholders and facilitated awareness raising campaigns and training sessions for professionals and the general public on human trafficking and provided direct assistance to victims of trafficking. She has also worked internationally with the *International Organization for Migration* to support the prevention, identification, and response to cases of human trafficking and conducted qualitative analysis on the research project: *Human Trafficking in Eastern Africa: Research Assessment and Baseline Information in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and Burundi (2008)*.

Julie Kaye, PhD candidate, is completing her doctoral studies in the Department of Sociology at the University of Saskatchewan. Her doctoral dissertation research is titled *Human Insecurity and Anti-Trafficking Policy: The Experience of Frontline Workers and Trafficked Persons in Western Canada*. Supported by a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada grant (2009-2012), her research examines anti-trafficking initiatives throughout Western Canada. Julie also coordinates the Calgary branch of the *Action Coalition on human Trafficking (ACT) Alberta*.

Professor John Winterdyk, Director of the *Centre for Criminology and Justice Research (CCJR)* at Mount Royal University (MRU), has worked on a cross-national study of human trafficking sponsored by the American National Institute of Justice and is the co-editor of the book *Human trafficking: International issues and perspectives* (2012, Taylor and Francis Pub.). In addition to publishing several related articles in peer review journals, he also co-guest edited a special issue of the *European Journal of Criminology* that focuses on international human trafficking. In 2010, John spoke before the Canadian Senate on legal reforms to human trafficking legislation.



1.0 Executive Summary

Despite increasing awareness about human trafficking in Alberta and Canada, there is insufficient detailed knowledge about how communities are responding to human trafficking and local strategies to address the rights and needs of trafficked persons remain underdeveloped.

This project represents the first Canadian attempt to document how a major Canadian urban centre is addressing the rights and needs of trafficked persons and as such, focuses on Calgary. The project surveyed 53 respondents and conducted five focus group discussions during the fall of 2011.

The report begins by providing an overview of the active role that the Action Coalition on human Trafficking (ACT) Alberta plays in the province as well as an overview of key legislation pertaining to human trafficking in Canada.

The main findings of the report point to a clear lack of clarity around a number of significant issues that individually and collectively speak to the challenges facing agencies and organizations in providing the appropriate responses to victims of trafficking in Calgary. In particular, the following issues were identified:

- Although the number of confirmed cases of human trafficking in Calgary and Alberta is small (especially cases where charges have been laid) and the total number of cases is unknown, almost half of research informants indicated they have been in contact with at least one suspected victim of trafficking.
- Known or suspected victims of human trafficking in Calgary are foreign nationals and Canadian citizens trafficked for sexual or labour exploitation.
- The research revealed that characteristics trafficked persons identified by agencies vary by the type of agency involved, but it is clear that both international as well as domestic trafficking occur in Calgary.
- There is a notable level of confusion surrounding what constitutes human trafficking by frontline service providers.
- There is a call to clarify and improve the common understanding of the definition of human trafficking across government, nongovernment, and law enforcement sectors.
- There is an overreliance on the legal definition of trafficking and incidents of human trafficking are falling outside the criminal justice response.



- Concern was raised about the sensationalism that surrounds the issue of human trafficking and the challenges sensational accounts present in identifying victims of trafficking.
- Improved awareness raising strategies aimed at effective public awareness are needed, specifically to portray realistic and localized information on human trafficking in Calgary.
- Respondents were interested in receiving training on responding to human trafficking, particularly agency-focused training to build their technical skills to identify and support victims of trafficking.
- The establishment of a protocol or standard operation procedures (SOPs) for assisting victims of trafficking would be a welcome element to the existing response to human trafficking in Calgary.
- A network, such as ACT, is seen as an essential platform for creating awareness and facilitating collaboration among agencies involved in identifying and supporting victims of trafficking and/or prosecuting perpetrators of the crime. However, it was suggested that this role should be expanded to include a case manager position that functions independent of government or law enforcement.

The report concludes with ten recommendations that identify potential responses to the key issues highlighted in the report, including reinforcing a victim-centered definition of human trafficking, increasing consultation and coordination among service providers, providing realistic messages and awareness raising campaigns, offering specialized training to support improved victim assistance, and continuing research in the area of human trafficking in Alberta.



2.0 Acronyms

ACT	Action Coalition on human Trafficking
CBSA	Canada Border Services Agency
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
FGD	focus group discussion
IRPA	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
LICP	Live-In Care Giver Program
MRU	Mount Royal University
NGO	non-governmental organization
PSECA	Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SOP	standard operational procedure
TFW	temporary foreign worker
TRP	Temporary Resident Permit



3.0 Introduction and Background

While domestic and international human trafficking is known to occur within and across Alberta’s borders, the actual experiences and needs of trafficked persons remain unclear and poorly defined, as does the way in which communities have responded.¹ This study, the first of its kind in Canada, focused on consulting with agencies from various levels of government and non-government organizations (NGOs) that have or could come into contact with trafficked persons. With this in mind, the study focused on a cross-section of agencies that are involved in the investigations and prosecutions of cases of human trafficking and those that offer services and support to victims of trafficking² or populations that are assumed to be vulnerable to trafficking. The intent of this research is to define the nature and scope of human trafficking in Calgary by drawing from existing knowledge with the aim of enhancing local responses to human trafficking in all its recognized forms.

It is envisaged that the findings of this study will be used to formalize a protocol for responding to the rights and needs of trafficked persons (including domestic and international human trafficking) in the city of Calgary. Other communities wishing to establish or improve their response to human trafficking may also find the information detailed below useful.

3.1 ACT

The Action Coalition on human Trafficking (ACT) Alberta is a non-profit organization with a central office located in Edmonton, Alberta. ACT operates as a coalition of government agencies, NGOs, survivors of trafficking and the general public involved in the response to human trafficking. ACT has chapters in five communities within the province of Alberta (Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, and Red Deer).

Through the networks created by the ACT chapters, collaboration is encouraged between NGOs, specifically social service providers, immigrant serving agencies, healthcare providers, and law enforcement and government agencies to improve responses to human trafficking. ACT Alberta mobilizes stakeholders to identify and respond to human trafficking through prevention efforts, ensuring adequate protection and support for trafficked persons, supporting the prosecution of the criminals involved, and encouraging effective and collaborative partnerships.



ACT broadly defines a response to human trafficking to include any activities aimed at preventing human trafficking from occurring, raising awareness within communities on the issue, building the capacity of service providers to assist trafficked persons, supporting the use of existing laws to prosecute traffickers, and advocating for a victim-centered and rights-based approach.

The ACT Calgary Chapter began in 2008 with the establishment of a network that allows organizations to share information and collaborate while prioritizing activities and strategically developing response initiatives. Since its inception, the network has met monthly in meetings chaired by the ACT Coordinator. As the network grew and evolved, ACT developed two monthly meetings, one for agencies involved in frontline response to human trafficking and a second for concerned and engaged citizens who would like to participate in combating human trafficking.

ACT Calgary has facilitated specialized training for community-based groups and professional associations, provided technical support to those supporting victims of trafficking, and made referrals to relevant agencies when requested. The ACT Calgary Coordinator has acted as a case manager when a victim has been identified, coordinating the provision of services, such as immigration support, legal guidance, health care, shelter, basic needs, transportation, communication (translation and communications technology), and liaised with government and law enforcement agencies to ensure victims' needs are addressed and their rights protected. In doing so, ACT is in the unique position of identifying agencies that are essential to an effective response and where gaps exist in the current response.

Since its inception in 2008, ACT Calgary has developed and gathered expertise on human trafficking and has been called upon to share this knowledge and experience. For example, ACT has engaged with the media and participated in the national dialogue on best practices to combat human trafficking, including exploring promising practices and advising on the development of a national action plan.

3.2 Human Trafficking and the Law in Canada

There are two pieces of legislation that refer to human trafficking in Canada. The first, which became law in 2002, is Section 118 of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) and states:



- (1) No person shall knowingly organize the coming into Canada of one or more persons by means of abduction, fraud, deception or use or threat of force or coercion, and
- (2) For the purpose of subsection (1), “organize”, with respect to persons, includes their recruitment or transportation and, after their entry into Canada, the receipt or harbouring of those persons.

It is notable that Section 118 of IRPA only covers international human trafficking as it specifically refers to crossing the border into Canada.

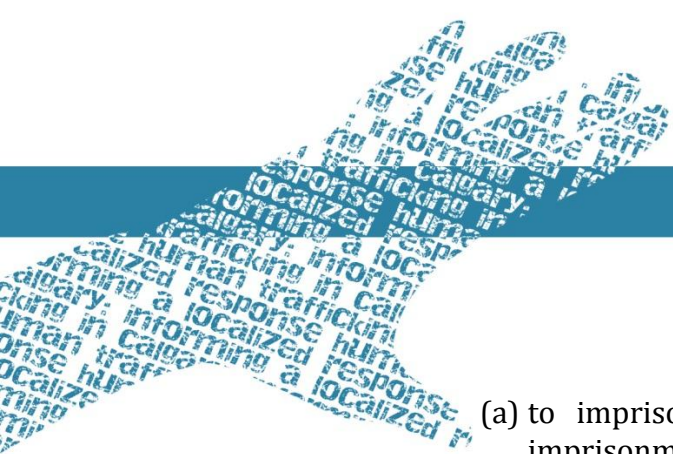
In 2005, Canada ratified the United Nations *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children* (known internationally as the Palermo Protocol) by incorporating Section 279 into Canada’s *Criminal Code*:

279.01 (1) Every person who recruits, transports, transfers, receives, holds, conceals or harbours a person, or exercises control, direction or influence over the movements of a person, for the purpose of exploiting them or facilitating their exploitation is guilty of an indictable offence and liable:

- (a) to imprisonment for life if they kidnap, commit an aggravated assault or aggravated sexual assault against, or cause death to, the victim during the commission of the offence; or
- (b) to imprisonment for a term of not more than fourteen years in any other case.

(2) No consent to the activity that forms the subject matter of a charge under subsection (1) is valid.

279.011 (1) Every person who recruits, transports, transfers, receives, holds, conceals or harbours a person under the age of eighteen years, or exercises control, direction or influence over the movements of a person under the age of eighteen years, for the purpose of exploiting them or facilitating their exploitation is guilty of an indictable offence and liable:



- (a) to imprisonment for life and to a minimum punishment of imprisonment for a term of six years if they kidnap, commit an aggravated assault or aggravated sexual assault against, or cause death to, the victim during the commission of the offence; or
- (b) to imprisonment for a term of not more than fourteen years and to a minimum punishment of imprisonment for a term of five years, in any other case.

(2) No consent to the activity that forms the subject matter of a charge under subsection (1) is valid.

279.02 Every person who receives a financial or other material benefit, knowing that it results from the commission of an offence under subsection 279.01(1) or 279.011(1), is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term of not more than ten years.

279.03 Every person who, for the purpose of committing or facilitating an offence under subsection 279.01(1) or 279.011(1), conceals, removes, withholds or destroys any travel document that belongs to another person or any document that establishes or purports to establish another person's identity or immigration status is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term of not more than five years, whether or not the document is of Canadian origin or is authentic.

279.04 For the purposes of sections 279.01 to 279.03, a person exploits another person if they:

- (a) cause them to provide, or offer to provide, labour or a service by engaging in conduct that, in all the circumstances, could reasonably be expected to cause the other person to believe that their safety or the safety of a person known to them would be threatened if they failed to provide, or offer to provide, the labour or service; or
- (b) cause them, by means of deception or the use or threat of force or of any other form of coercion, to have an organ or tissue removed.

In Alberta, there have been five charges of human trafficking laid, one under IRPA and four under the Criminal Code. In four cases, the charges were dropped or the accused pled out on lesser charges and one case, the one involving IRPA charges, has



yet to be prosecuted. To date, there have not been any charges under either piece of Canadian legislation that have led to convictions in Alberta.

Another law that is relevant to the trafficking of children for sexual exploitation in Alberta, although using different terminology, is the *Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act* (PSECA), which was last amended in 2007 and is provincial in jurisdiction. This Act protects children who are sexually exploited due to their involvement, or risk of involvement, in prostitution. The Government of Alberta Ministry of Human Services, in conjunction with relevant police forces, offers protective services to victimized children. The connection or overlap with trafficking exists because minors are, by law, unable to consent to becoming involved in sex work or pornography. Through the course of this research, participants working with sexually exploited minors expressed a desire to better understand the overlap and distinction between trafficking of children for sexual exploitation and commercial sexual exploitation, a theme discussed further in following sections of this report.

3.3 Human Trafficking in Alberta

The awareness of human trafficking in Alberta has grown in recent years, owing both to the efforts of federal and provincial government agencies and the emergence of ACT and other NGOs with mandates to work with victims of trafficking and offer training to professionals and community members. As noted above, ACT has engaged in a number of public awareness raising campaigns as well as specialized training for agencies that potentially come into contact with trafficked persons. Paralleling this work, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Canada's federal law enforcement agency, has a fulltime Human Trafficking Awareness Coordinator for their North West Region Immigration and Passport Section, which includes Alberta. This response was prompted by the emergence of specific reference to human trafficking in Canada's *Criminal Code* and other related legislation in the past decade to criminalize human trafficking and associated activities as well as increased coverage of such cases by international and Canadian media outlets (Winterdyk & Reichel, 2010).

However, there remains insufficient detailed knowledge about how communities are responding to human trafficking across Canada, including



Calgary, and local strategies to respond to the rights and needs of trafficked persons remain undefined. In Alberta, and more specifically Calgary, discussions of human trafficking have focused on the trafficking of women and young girls for purposes of sexual exploitation, including experiences where women and girls from Asian countries have been identified as victims of trafficking after entering the country using visitor, student, or work visas.³ While these cases have been identified by law enforcement and covered in the media, the research team wished to deepen the understanding of the complexities of human trafficking and document the experiences of those who are considered knowledgeable in the area, those who work directly with affected or vulnerable populations. Moreover, both professionals and community members have conflated human trafficking with prostitution, irregular migration, and labour exploitation. This research was designed to reveal the existing contextual knowledge and experiences of those working in sectors that could identify or support victims of trafficking. Moreover, the research aimed to identify the needs of this target population with the intention of improving service delivery through increased capacity of agencies currently involved in the fight against human trafficking in Calgary.

4.0 Methodology

The complexity and diversity of experiences represented by the single concept of ‘human trafficking’ requires the participation of a number of different perspectives as well as the adoption of a mixed method approach to research in the area.

It is necessary to maintain a broad understanding of trafficking that incorporates the various ways individuals are trafficked in Alberta and the unique experiences of trafficked persons in Calgary. With this in mind, a range of agencies and frontline workers that serve trafficked persons were the focus of recruitment efforts for participation in the study. As a result, participants came from federal and provincial government agencies and law enforcement as well as from the non-profit, non-governmental sector (see Appendix A for a breakdown of the sectors represented by participants). For example, agencies that are well positioned to be in contact with trafficked persons through legitimate programs, such as the Live-In Caregiver Program (LICP), Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program, or student/visitor visas were invited to participate, as were agencies that offer services that are assumed to be required by trafficked persons, for instance counseling, health care, and shelter. Additionally, agencies that have institutional knowledge that can inform the



response from perspectives of prevention and assistance were invited to participate. Agencies involved in similar responses, such as to intimate partner violence, labour exploitation, homelessness, and substance use and misuse were also included.

4.1 Procedure and Sampling

The methodology of this research was designed to draw on the strengths of the existing resources in the community and the research team. As such, individuals representing the types of agencies mentioned above were identified as the main informants. Using the ACT Calgary contact list built over three years, a link to an online survey of 28 questions (see Appendix B) was sent via email to 94 individuals.

The questions were designed to gather information about the organizations represented by the respondents, as well as their knowledge of human trafficking, their experience working on cases of human trafficking, including details of the cases they have identified, and how they perceive the existing response to human trafficking in Calgary. The survey questions were also designed to inform the focus group portion of the research. In total, 53 survey responses were received, representing a response rate of 56.4%. The respondents included a variety of frontline service providers, law enforcement agencies, federal and provincial government representatives, faith based organizations, civil society organizations, and members of academia (see Appendix A).

The last question of the survey asked if the respondent would like to be contacted to participate in a focus group discussion (FGD). The purpose of the FGDs was to offer survey respondents the opportunity to expand on their responses to survey questions and to build on the information collected through the survey data. The 34 (57%) respondents who answered yes were then contacted and invited to participate in hour-long FGDs. Five FGDs of between three and five participants were held with a total of 18 individuals participating and were facilitated by two lead researchers, each one following the same format and using the same 13 questions informed by the survey data and designed to encourage discussion between participants (see Appendix C for a list of questions asked in FGDs). While the researchers relied on the interview schedule and asked each of the 13 questions, there was also room for open discussion and additional questions spurred by the



focus group conversations. Each FGD was audio recorded and transcribed by two research assistants.

Due to the unique composition of each focus group, the discussions took different paths and participants were encouraged to contribute from their areas of expertise and speak on behalf of their current position and agency as well as their previous knowledge and experience. Where necessary, the researchers provided clarification on the questions, current legislation and policy on human trafficking, and responded to participants' questions. If there was an interesting and engaging line of discussion that was relevant to the overarching goals of the research, it was allowed to continue prior to returning to the prepared questions.

This research was approved by MRU Human Research Ethics Board and as such, survey respondents and FGD participants were encouraged to share information in confidence and signed consent forms that outlined the research aims and methods (see Appendix D for the consent form signed by each of the FGD participants). At the beginning of each FGD, participants were instructed to be respectful of all views and perspectives expressed and encouraged to speak openly and honestly.

4.2 Limitations of the Study

Because the informants were drawn from the existing ACT Calgary network, it is possible that they have a bias towards supporting the existing model of response that has been established in Calgary. Additionally, the informants may not have felt comfortable critiquing ACT Calgary's structure or function as the two researchers leading the FGDs were the former and current Coordinators of ACT Calgary. That said, the researchers encouraged critical responses and participants did offer critical suggestions that have been included in the analysis.

Furthermore, relying on the existing ACT network may have prevented the participation of some important stakeholders who were not on the ACT Calgary contact list. However, when requested by respondents, additional informants were included in the survey list and we requested that the call for participation be forwarded when appropriate.



5.0 Findings

5.1 Definition: Tool or Obstacle?

Within the literature and dialogue around human trafficking in both Calgary and Canada, the definition of what constitutes human trafficking is often cited as a challenge to developing an effective response.⁴ Similarly, the lack of clarity surrounding the definition of human trafficking and clear misunderstandings of the definition were frequently stated by FGD participants as impediments to identifying and responding to victims. A law enforcement official offered: “if you look at human trafficking, by anyone’s definition...there’s probably about 25 things that could, sort of, fit into that human trafficking definition.” This participant further stated that there are approximately 50 active cases that involve some component of human trafficking, yet only 15 meet the threshold of the legal definition human trafficking.⁵

A key implication of this finding is that if victims experiencing components of human trafficking are not being identified, they may not be able to access services that exist and agencies involved in the response to human trafficking may not be able to identify gaps in available assistance.⁶ One FGD participant representing a civil society organization suggested: “Everybody’s sort of [falling] through those cracks, and the cracks are so big that the bad guys are just walking right through.” At the same time, discrepancies in the definition are also leading to statistics and assumptions that do not accurately reflect the number of cases of human trafficking. A law enforcement officer warned against making such conjectures: “we have to be careful, not every temporary foreign worker or labour[er]...coming into the country is being exploited.”

Inaccurate information based on confusion over what constitutes human trafficking could imply victims of trafficking are not receiving appropriate support in response to their experiences. In particular, individuals being trafficked or exploited through legal programs, such as the LCP or TFW program, may be overlooked as victims of trafficking by agencies, such as Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) or Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), who issues Temporary Resident Permits (TRPs), an important tool of support for international victims of trafficking.⁷ When people enter Canada through these legal means and subsequently experience coercion, deceit, or exploitation, they should be offered support and assistance irrespective of whether enforcement agencies are pursuing charges of a human trafficking offence. According to research participants, this potential oversight is because many agencies, both government and non-government, are unclear on the



definition of human trafficking or how to interpret and apply the legal definition of trafficking in Canada's *Criminal Code* or IRPA. As will be discussed below, law enforcement agencies identify the *Criminal Code* definition of trafficking as particularly onerous when it comes to laying human trafficking charges.

It could also be, as one FGD participant who works directly with TFW populations highlighted, that victims experience elements of human trafficking, but they may not have enough information to determine whether they have been victimized in this specific manner, “[those] who come to our office who are actually being victimized may not... fit in the technical definition of trafficking.” In other words, misunderstanding or lack of awareness of the definition of trafficking by regulatory and support agencies as well as service providers are a hindrance to effective responses.

In fact, there were mentions of suspicions of trafficking for labour exploitation during most FGDs, but these suspicions were accompanied by unfamiliarity with the laws that govern labour standards (particularly matters of labour exploitation) and human trafficking. This unfamiliarity presents a problem for identifying victims trafficked for forced labour, labour exploitation, or domestic servitude and creates barriers to responding to the rights and needs of persons whose experience is caught in these definitional ‘grey’ areas. For instance:

“What comes into my mind based on my experience is...because I work with foreign workers...the ones who come to our office who are actually being victimized may not probably fit in the technical definition of trafficking.” (social service provider)

This observation was further echoed by another participant who commented on the challenge of identifying trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation and other labour and workplace standards violations. The participant mentioned that they were unfamiliar with what distinguishes violations of labour standards from human trafficking. This example of a definitional challenge points to the need to clarify the relationship between labour exploitation and human trafficking. In the words of a social service representative:

“There is a grey area there for me because when someone is exploited, like if they are not being paid well, the contract is not being adhered to, it could be an employment standard issue and probably there is emotional abuse as well,



which is a human rights violation...so as I have said it's not really human trafficking, but I don't know."

Another concurrent FGD participant representing law enforcement continued this line of thinking, again highlighting challenges in applying the definition: "Yeah, and that grey area is huge. Where do employment standards end and human trafficking and criminal investigation begin?"

Other sources of confusion surrounding the definition of human trafficking mentioned during FGDs are the potential overlap between human trafficking and individuals experiencing intimate partner violence as well as an overlap between human trafficking and the experiences of children supported by PSECA caseworkers.

One frontline support worker stated: "I think in the whole domestic violence sector there [are] a lot of individuals that would fit that definition." Experiences of trauma and not presenting as a victim were also cited as potential overlaps between human trafficking and intimate partner violence. FGD participants further suggested that the evolving understanding of intimate partner violence (i.e., a shift from victim blaming to taking a victim-centered approach in prevention and response) parallels the need for better understanding of the experiences of victims of trafficking. In particular, prosecuting trafficking cases should not rest on the willingness of victims to testify against their traffickers.

Participants further discussed the overlap between human trafficking and Alberta's PSECA. Although some FGD participants referenced PSECA as an element of their work, they did not make linkages between children who are commercially sexually exploited and human trafficking. However, it is possible that many PSECA cases would also be classified as human trafficking under the legal definition. In light of this discrepancy, these cases are not represented in prosecution or protection figures surrounding human trafficking. Moreover, there could be important information sharing and lessons to be learned by collaborating in response to these overlapping areas of Alberta's system for responding to the sexual exploitation of children.⁸



Similarly, participants also revealed there is general confusion surrounding the relationship between human trafficking and other forms of exploitation. In response to what distinguishes human trafficking from other forms of exploitation, a FGD participant indicated: “I think that the movement piece is the really big sticking factor for me.” Yet, movement is not a requirement, but one of the possible means, of the definition of human trafficking in the *Criminal Code*. In reference to the importance of movement, another participant, a social service provider, remarked: “I would consider it prostitution, pimping, you know, all those kinds of exploitation things, but trafficking doesn't quite fit that for me either.”

Other assumptions were made within FGDs that human trafficking must always include crossing an international border or that movement from one location to another is the central tenant to the criminal activity. As one participant suggests:

“The word traffic...in English, means movement. So you know when you're in traffic, you are in transit; those words are very closely connected. So I think it's the whole exploitation thing that is difficult, if you take the movement out of trafficking then it will be even more fuzzy about what is trafficking and what is exploitation.” (social service provider)

By focusing on the movement of individuals, cases of human trafficking could be missed despite involving one of the other stated methods of human trafficking, particularly recruitment, receiving, holding, concealing, or harbouring for the purposes of exploitation. Where movement is relevant, the distance and means of travel are less important than the circumstances under which the travel occurs. In this way, under Canada's *Criminal Code*, Section 279, it is illegal to exercise control, direction, or influence over the movements of another person.

The expressed belief that human trafficking happens only internationally or to Canada from other countries further prevents law enforcement agencies and service providers from identifying domestic cases of trafficking, including the trafficking of Canadian citizens or landed immigrants within Canada. In fact, since the legislation was introduced in 2002, of the charges laid in Alberta to date, two were domestic and three were international and those that were domestic involved interprovincial travel.

Definitional discrepancies between frontline workers and the laws governing the offence raise important questions, particularly whether or not cases that do not



involve obvious or transnational movement are being accurately identified and if the *Criminal Code* definition reflects the lived experiences of victims of trafficking in Canada.

The definition of human trafficking is not just a challenge for effective response for service providing agencies, but also for law enforcement (both municipal and federal policing agencies) when conducting investigations and laying charges under Section 279 of the *Criminal Code*. One representative of a law enforcement agency expressed this as such:

“[The Criminal Code definition] is so unbelievably onerous, unfortunately, so onerous that we can’t lay charges to actually create the case law that defines the Criminal Code...it’s horrific. It’s one of the first real catch-twenty-twos we’ve seen in the Criminal Code. You know, assault is easily defined and you can lay those charges, case law defines it, very quickly. This [human trafficking] one, it’s been on the books for several years and it is almost to the point where investigators are realizing we really can’t hit that standard and the prosecutors are very reluctant to try to prosecute on that standard. So thank goodness IRPA [the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act] is there, because we’re using that as almost a manipulation to cover off the human trafficking that we’re seeing, and we’re laying those charges.”

This participant went on to share additional detail on why the *Criminal Code* has proven problematic for law enforcement agencies when pursuing human trafficking charges and prosecutions:

“You have to prove a fear, you have to prove that [victims of trafficking] were entirely unwilling or there was no real consent component at any point, or maybe if there was consent it’s a clear delineation of when that consent stopped, and it’s just unbelievably onerous... And it may continue to be until we either get charges and the case law defines it, or parliament realizes that and starts clipping at it. And...if you attribute the threshold, for us, there’s two thresholds: one, do we have the grounds to charge and then the threshold to actually convict.”



This experience of implementing and applying the *Criminal Code* law appears to be countering the actual text of Article 2 of Section 279.01 that reads “No consent to the activity that forms the subject matter of a charge under subsection (1) is valid.” Nonetheless, this problem has also been identified by other research in the area.⁹

5.2 Beyond a Legal Definition of Human Trafficking

Another theme of the FGDs related to the definition was an overreliance on the legal definition of trafficking. As human trafficking is a criminal offence in Canada, stressing the importance of the elements of trafficking based on the *Criminal Code* definition puts the focus on demonstrating that a crime has been committed, which may be to the detriment of offering relevant services and support to victims of trafficking.

In FGDs, both law enforcement and government representatives indicated that human trafficking experiences are potentially falling outside the realm of a criminal justice response. This was, for instance, demonstrated by the following interchange between a government official and law enforcement representative, respectively: “we could be missing a lot of the picture and a lot of them are afraid of law enforcement” ... “and government. The social agencies are probably getting a bigger picture than the enforcement agencies.”¹⁰

It has also been proposed that increased advocacy is needed to ensure the rights of victims of trafficking are the priority of all stakeholders, echoing the move away from a strictly legal interpretation of human trafficking and commonly referred to as a rights-based approach. For example, if a person has self-identified as a victim of trafficking and requests services, the provision of services should not be reliant on ‘proving’ that human trafficking occurred (Goodey, 2012). This perspective would also require a more clear separation between assistance to victims of trafficking and the investigation and prosecution of human traffickers. In the words of a law enforcement representative:

“I’d like the two [support and investigation] split, so there’s still consult between the support group and the investigative group in terms of the best things for the victim, but the investigative group should not be doing the support.”

As this participant suggests, separating the criminal justice aspects of trafficking cases from the victim support enables the response to function in the interest of the



trafficked persons, which should include consultation, but may or may not include criminal investigation or prosecution.

This is particularly significant for cases of international human trafficking when victims of trafficking wish to access the TRP, issued by CIC. If the CIC officer feels there is suspicion of human trafficking, a TRP can be issued that allows the person to remain in the country for six months along with access to health services and income support, in Alberta. After the initial six months, if CIC is confident that trafficking has occurred the TRP can be extended, lengthening the legal stay in Canada of foreign victims of trafficking. However, if the definition used by CIC is derived from the Criminal Code, the focus will be on whether or not the crime is being investigated and can be proven, rather than if the person has expressed they have been victimized and exploited. Yet, self-identification as a victim of human trafficking has been rare in Alberta and this could be due to the continuation of stereotypes of victims of trafficking and what constitutes a case of trafficking. While self-reporting is considered to be rare, it is especially unique for victims to self-identify to law enforcement agencies. In fact, a recent RCMP report suggested that less than 1% of victims they have encountered self-identify (Bruckert & Parent, 2004).

Moreover, victims may use a different language than what appears in the *Criminal Code* or may not offer information essential to assessing a case of trafficking unless specific questions regarding their experience are asked, for instance, how they were recruited into their situation or if they felt their movements were restricted and/or controlled. However, even if these questions are asked, there may be a natural resistance to answering in the affirmative and/or they may not feel as though they have been victimized.

One FGD participant, representing a social serving agency, offered this:

“I think [my clients] wouldn't respond to it well if we said that you are being trafficked... That's too heavy of a label for them to comprehend and they would just not even want to admit to it. Exploitation is even heavy in and of itself but I think trafficking would seem that much heavier for them and they would run from it. And so...I wouldn't plan to give them it and make them feel like they are being labeled.”



Another participant furthered this line of reasoning by stating: “I think it would be hard...to get people to agree that they have become slaves.”

Overall, confusion surrounding the definition of human trafficking has limited effective identification of victims of human trafficking and has created challenges for advancing criminal charges against traffickers. In the absence of a cohesive definition, coordinated responses to human trafficking will remain challenging at best and ineffective at worst. This research points to the need to examine and adopt a comprehensive understanding of human trafficking across government, nongovernment, and law enforcement sectors aiming to respond to human trafficking in Calgary and throughout Canada. It also highlights the importance of employing a victim-centered definition in responding to human trafficking, which allows for service provision regardless of whether a criminal investigation takes place.

5.3 The Effect of Sensationalizing Human Trafficking

FGD participants indicated the sensationalization of the issue of human trafficking creates challenges for appropriately identifying victims of trafficking. Specifically, the imagery that has been presented by media and some NGO awareness raising initiatives, although potentially effective in raising public attention to the issue, has done little to develop appropriate strategies to address the rights and needs of trafficked individuals. Conversely, these campaigns reinforce the idea that human trafficking is little more than the sexual exploitation of women and girls who are forcibly confined in brothels. In fact, sensational media reports and awareness raising campaigns have created a stereotyped image of trafficked persons, which restricts law enforcement, service providers, and the general public from accurately identifying and understanding the lived experiences of trafficked persons. In turn, this further prevents the adoption of a victim-centered approach.

As one participant highlights:

“...it’s easy to ignore, if you believe [human trafficking] is one thing and then you come into contact with someone [and] if you had the correct information, red flags would be going up, but you’re thinking, ‘no, it has to be this. This is what it is.’ You’re missing potential people who are at risk.” (social service provider)



Another participant likened the sensationalized assumptions surrounding human trafficking with those that surround sexual violence and linked the misinformed belief that there is consent involved in sexual violence to the beliefs surrounding human trafficking:

“I know with sexual violence people think a sexual assault is when there’s lots of violence and there’s all these ideas around it, when we know that most of the time that doesn’t happen. And so... you read about... women being stolen... they’re walking down the street and being taken, but...when you look at the realities of situations, like, especially with sexual violence, or child sexual abuse, that person feels almost like they’re participating in it or that they have a say and they’re choosing, because that perpetrator is so skilled at manipulating. I’m assuming it’s the same thing with trafficking.” (social service provider)

Another frontline support worker commented on their experience by stating that sensational images of human trafficking result in service providers failing to ask whether or not a situation is human trafficking, even when it contains the elements of the legal definition:

“We don't ask the question...I'm involved right now with probably six agencies that I do work for and...you know we just don't ask some of those questions. Especially as I think of the domestic violence sector, you know I don't know if it is even thought of that way.” (social service provider)

This overreliance on messages and images of trafficking for sexual exploitation potentially lead to oversight of individuals who have been trafficked for forced labour, labour exploitation, domestic servitude, or other forms of exploitation, such as organ removal, which has yet to be found in Canada, or forced involvement in criminal or gang-related activity, which has been suspected, but not confirmed in Alberta.

Along with challenges distinguishing trafficking for labour exploitation or domestic servitude, stereotypical images of foreign women trapped in brothels also hinder appropriate responses to persons trafficked for sexual exploitation, particularly because trafficked persons are not exclusively foreign nationals, but can be



Canadian citizens. Furthermore, sexually exploited individuals may have some control over their choices or have consented, or appear to have consented, to the sexual activities linked to their trafficking experience. This perception focuses on the activity of exploitation while dismissing the other components of the legal definition of human trafficking. Additionally, the stereotypical image of foreign women trafficked to Canada ignores the fact that men can also be victims of trafficking, including for sexual exploitation. One FGD participant from a social service agency highlights this by saying: “I know I have worked with young men that have been [trafficked], I’m sure of it, I know that if it happens to girls then it happens to boys.”

These assumptions based on idealized images are also concerning in situations where men or women were first brought into the sex trade as minors because under PSECA legislation in Alberta, minors are not legally able to consent to this activity. Yet, adults who were recruited as minors could be considered victims of trafficking based on the recruitment techniques used and the exploitation suffered before becoming an adult. To date, such historical cases of trafficking have not been investigated in Calgary and the overlap of Canada’s *Criminal Code* and PSECA has not been explored and defined. Without clear guidance on how to proceed with historic cases of recruitment of minors for sexual exploitation, it is possible that adults who have normalized the experience of selling sex or have criminal records based on their involvement in the sex trade may be overlooked as victims of trafficking and their traffickers not identified or prosecuted as such. One FGD participant, representing a social service agency offered one such attitude towards the perception of having control over one’s own choices and situation that could be overlooked by law enforcement and NGOs:

“...a lot of times the women believe that they are very powerful, there is a choice they have made...we want to feel powerful, we don't want to have that removed from us, even if we are in a victimized state.”

Suggested effective responses to counter the stereotypical images included additional training and community awareness campaigns to educate professionals in the position to identify human trafficking as well as realistic awareness raising for community members and the media, representing the full spectrum of trafficking related offenses and the lived experiences of trafficked persons. This could potentially involve an evaluation of the terminology that is used, as one social service provider suggests: “I don’t think [slave] is a good word to use at all, I mean



even words like victim and prostitute, all of those are words that are not helpful to recovery.”

5.4 Improving the Understanding of the Definition of Human Trafficking

Perhaps because of the challenges identified, participants frequently mentioned the need for ongoing, realistic awareness raising campaigns, accurate coverage of human trafficking in the media, as well as agency-focused training on identifying cases and responding to the rights and needs of trafficked persons. Participants felt that training based on previous experiences of case management and direct assistance to victims of trafficking would be beneficial in creating understanding of the local dynamics of human trafficking. Training could include potential warning signs, existing services and referral pathways, and available resources for agencies when supporting a victim of trafficking. In the words of one social service provider:

“I think ideally the response...would be to educate people as to these are the signs, these are the questions you can ask, and this is the response that you can have.”

The response to human trafficking in Calgary can be improved by increasing understanding through agency-specific training that uses existing data and emphasizes the lived experiences of trafficked persons. Furthermore, developing a protocol that outlines who is a trafficked person and what should be done if you suspect a case of trafficking to be used by social service agencies, law enforcement agencies, and other community, faith-based, and government agencies would enhance the existing response. Although it was not fully interrogated in the FGDs, it was suggested the platform created by the ACT networks would be an appropriate forum for this discussion and protocol development.

It should also be understood that there are groups who will continue to use different definitions of what constitutes trafficking and particularly how to define and identify consent and exploitation. This is most notable when discussing perspectives on commercial sex work and the terminology that is used surrounding the sale or trade of sex acts, particularly between ‘prostitution’ or ‘sexual exploitation’ and ‘sex work’ or ‘sex trade.’ This becomes important when programming is developed to respond to the needs of



individuals involved in sex work and typically there are two strategies used: (1) a harm reduction approach, which focuses on protecting those engaging in what is perceived as high risk behaviour; and (2) exit strategies that promote and support those involved in the sex trade to transition out. However, during FGDs, it was recommended that both types of services be available to meet the diverse needs of victims of trafficking or those at risk of becoming a victim of trafficking.

5.5 Characteristics of Identified Trafficked Persons in Calgary

Participants in FGD and survey respondents were asked to describe the characteristics of trafficked persons identified by their agencies. While the characteristics recognized by the individual agencies depends on the type of services the agency provides and the definition of human trafficking they were using, there were some overarching characteristics associated with trafficked persons in Calgary.

Trafficked persons were identified as Eastern European and Asian women trafficked for sexual exploitation into urban centres. Participants also indicated trafficked persons arrive from India, Pakistan, Mexico, and unspecified African countries for labour exploitation. In these instances, traffickers had used existing programs to facilitate entry into Canada, such as the TFW program. In this way, the trafficked person was unaware of the treatment they would receive when crossing the border and believed they were coming to Alberta for a legitimate job with a trusted employer.

Internationally trafficked persons have also entered Canada legally using student visas and the LICP. Upon their arrival, they have been trapped by the provisions, real or perceived, of work permits and immigration status in Canada. In other words, the traffickers coerced or deceived trafficked persons using the promise or lure of permanent residency or citizenship in Canada.

Traffickers also used the refugee system by encouraging or forcing foreign victims to apply for refugee status upon entry into Canada. This is based on the assumption that the victim's application will be unsuccessful and then can be used as a tool of coercion upon arrival.¹¹ While the CIC-issued TRP was designed for such victims who have irregular immigration status, participants indicated TRPs are rarely accessed due to lack of knowledge about the processes of CIC and TRP criteria.



Instead, trafficked persons are potentially falling through the cracks of the refugee system, as one member of academia offers:

“The other problem, when you make a refugee claim, for the most part they are not going to qualify as a conventional refugee, because that’s not what they are. They are not fearing persecution from their government or their country of origin. So they are not refugees. Although, they are definitely exploited, displaced people, but they don’t meet [the] legal definition of a refugee.”

Other characteristics include women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation as well as domestic workers, including housekeepers and nannies, trafficked for the purposes of underpaid and forced labour. In some of these cases, the victim’s movements were controlled and there were elements of physical confinement. Youth were also cited as trafficked for sexual exploitation throughout Alberta and inter-provincially, notably social media and online dating sites were used by traffickers as tools for recruitment.

Survey informants indicated that trafficking also occurs from First Nation reserves to urban centres in the province; this is known as domestic trafficking. Informants further indicated that trafficked persons were moved across the Canada/US border and from other provinces to Alberta, particularly for sexual exploitation. In other words, Calgary and Canada, in general, is known to be a destination point, a transit point, and in some cases, a point or origin for victims of trafficking. However, there are no reliable statistics on the incidence or prevalence rate of either international or domestic trafficking.

Some service providers that had come into contact with trafficked persons reported the victim presented as submissive and overly agreeable to the service providers. They were also reported to exhibit signs of trauma as an anxiety response, which is further explored in a following section.

In addition to these findings, there was differing information about whether or not the majority of trafficked persons in Calgary are male or female, but there was general agreement that those trafficked for labour exploitation were typically male (with the exclusion of domestic servitude) and those forced into sex work were



typically female. There was no conclusive data that determined if there were more cases of trafficking for the purposes of labour, sexual, or other forms of exploitation.

This information should be used to inform responses, but should not be taken as conclusive or exhaustive. Identifying accurate characteristics of trafficked persons remains convoluted by the above-discussed challenges with the definition of human trafficking as well as the underground nature of the crime and the few charges laid in Alberta.

5.6 Identified Trends and Patterns of Human Trafficking in Calgary

This research aimed to determine if trends and patterns are discernible based on information provided by those well positioned to identify cases of human trafficking: frontline workers from both government and non-governmental agencies. While it is not possible to confidently state that a certain type of trafficking or a specific demographic of victims of trafficking are more common or prevalent in Calgary, the information shared by survey respondents and FGD participants was rich with examples of confirmed or suspected cases of human trafficking.

Data gathered on specific cases that were identified by survey and FGD participants included instances of trafficking for both labour and sexual exploitation and involved both foreign nationals and Canadian victims. While participants described popular stereotypes of trafficked persons as young, female, and Asian, trafficked for forced prostitution, their experience working with trafficked persons deviated from such stereotypes.

The survey and FGD respondents were asked whether or not their agency had recognized victims of trafficking in the course of its work. Table 1 outlines the responses collected from survey responses. Slightly less than half (24 out of 54 total responses, 44.4%) of respondents had come into contact with a victim of trafficking.

A question that was not asked in the survey, but was followed up in the FGDs, was how many cases participants had encountered. Responses ranged from one to over 50 cases. While the number of confirmed and/or suspected cases are useful, it is particularly significant that close to half of all the research informants had come into contact with at least one victim of human trafficking. This confirms the suspicion of anti-human trafficking stakeholders that human trafficking is occurring and



identifiable by those working in frontline service agencies, both in government and NGOs.

Table 1
To your knowledge, has your group or agency come into contact with trafficked persons?

	Number of survey responses	Percentage of survey responses
Yes	24	44.4%
Maybe	9	16.7%
No	13	24.1%
Don't know	8	14.8%

Notwithstanding the importance of numerous agencies coming into contract with trafficked persons, one survey respondent, a frontline service provider, brought up the potential confusion on the definition of human trafficking, stating straightforwardly: “I’m wondering if we share the same definition of human trafficking?” This corroborates the findings from the FGDs where participants cited challenges in applying definitions of human trafficking as a barrier to accurately and confidently identifying cases of human trafficking, as discussed in a previous section. Although we cannot be certain that respondents are using the same definition of trafficking, it is notable that over 40% of respondents felt their agency has come across what they characterize as cases of human trafficking.

For those survey respondents who felt they had come into contact with victims of trafficking, 18 were domestic cases of trafficking and 11 were international cases, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
In the case(s) of human trafficking encountered at your group or agency, what was the scope of the trafficking?

	Number of survey responses/percentage
Domestic	18/41
International	11/25
Don't know	15/34
TOTAL	44



While not conclusive, this is an interesting finding given that sensationalized images of human trafficking focus on international victims.

Respondents were invited in the survey to provide more details on the cases they have come in contact with, including providing demographic information on the victims of trafficking they have encountered; responses are shown in Table 3. Because informants were permitted to select all that apply, these numbers give a picture of who has been identified, but cannot be used to compare numbers of victims of trafficking between categories.

Table 3

In the case(s) of human trafficking encountered at your group or agency, what was the scope of the trafficking? Check all that apply.

	Number of survey responses/percentage
Female adults	23/27
Male adults	7/8
Female children	10/12
Male children	5/6
Canadian	9/10
Non Canadian	12/14
Aboriginal	9/10
Don't know	9/10
TOTAL	84

These numbers reflect what is commonly understood and portrayed, that women are the overrepresented gender amongst trafficked persons, followed by girls. The breakdown of nationality of victims is interesting, yet it does not imply that the trafficking was cross border as foreign nationals may have been trafficked after arriving or could be permanent residents of Canada.

Of note is the number of cases that were identified by survey respondents as Aboriginal. This finding was also mentioned during a FGD; in particular, there is a desire to understand how human trafficking affects or includes Aboriginal communities, especially the population living on First Nation reserves. Despite this desire, there is very little research on First Nations' experiences of human trafficking.¹² While this research did not gather specific information to inform these



queries, it would be worthwhile to investigate further the modalities of domestic trafficking in Canada and Alberta.

Information was also gathered on the purposes of human trafficking in Calgary, including the types of exploitation victims experienced (see responses in Table 4). Like the previous question, respondents could choose as many categories that applied and this should not be used to determine prevalence rates of different types of trafficking because the question did not allow for respondents to break down the total numbers of cases. What is noteworthy is that types of trafficking included for the purposes of labour exploitation, domestic servitude, and sexual exploitation, are types of exploitation that have been suspected by stakeholders, including ACT and its network members, to be occurring in Alberta (i.e. labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, and domestic servitude).

Table 4

In the case(s) of human trafficking encountered at your group, or agency, what type of exploitation was involved? Check all that apply.

	Number of survey responses
Labour	7
Sexual	21
Domestic servitude	3
Other	0
Don't know	9

While this research offers a useful lens into the patterns and trends of human trafficking in Calgary and can be used to inform the response, it should not be interpreted as a reflection of the number of trafficked person in the city.

5.7 Defining and Exploring the Response to Human Trafficking

During the FGDs, the definition of ‘response’ was left open to interpretation based on the participants’ backgrounds and respective sectors. For example, when using the word response, the police may focus on the criminal justice aspects of investigating and laying charges against accused human traffickers, whereas an NGO



providing shelter may define ‘response’ as provision of emergency shelter or long-term housing options.

For the purposes of this study, the discussions about responding to human trafficking, which were rich with information and participant knowledge, can be used to further define and expand the response to human trafficking in Calgary and to inform responses to other cities in Alberta and Canada. The key areas suggested for improving the existing response includes the need for specialized training, the appointment of a case manager, the ongoing importance of developing the network of agencies involved in the response, and the development of a formalized protocol or response system. Each of these elements is discussed below.

5.7.1 Training: Needs and Content

Of the survey respondents, 38.5% reported not having received training on human trafficking, but were interested in training (see Table 5). For the FGD participants, regardless of their level of experience or awareness of human trafficking or previous training, it was agreed that additional training is desirable and in some cases, required, for both the general public and agencies that could identify a victim of trafficking or offer relevant services or support. This was the same regardless of whether or not participants had already received training.

Table 5
Have you received any sort of training on human trafficking?

	Number of survey responses	Percentage of survey responses
Yes, within my group or agency	2	3.8%
Yes, outside my group or agency	16	30.8%
Yes, both within my group or agency and outside my group or agency	11	21.2%
No, but would like training	20	38.5%
No, am not interested in training	2	3.8%
Don't know	1	1.9%



Participants expressed that more can be done to address trafficking and both agencies and individuals would like more information on how to improve their roles in the response. Areas of training that FGD participants require, or are interested in include: basic information on human trafficking, how to identify a victim of trafficking, and what to do if a suspected victim of trafficking requires assistance.

One frontline worker offered: “I think we could benefit from training...training in regards to what to do when you do find somebody, or discover that somebody has been trafficked,” highlighting that the basic concepts of human trafficking are not sufficient when building the capacity of frontline workers to provide specialized care and support.

Furthermore, specialized training was stated as desirable, particularly for those sectors that have specific mandates to carry out aspects of a human trafficking response. For example, law enforcement officials have the responsibility of investigating cases of suspected human trafficking and to do so effectively, require specialist knowledge on investigative techniques to gather intelligence while simultaneously protecting the rights of victims of trafficking. One FGD participant commented on this specifically:

“Well, wouldn’t it be great if every police officer, immigration officer, border officer at every level, part of their academy training was a day or half-day of education on this is what human trafficking and smuggling is and as a responder this is what you have to do. Same with paramedics, firefighters, everybody.” (member of academia)

As expressed in the survey and focus groups, the challenge of conducting specialized training for frontline workers is that there are currently no established response plans or formalized referral networks in place and assistance to victims has been organized *ad hoc* and without an identified case manager, which will be discussed more thoroughly in the following section. As one frontline worker stated:



“If we start educating, that’s very, very important, but then what next? Right, so we need to have services or a system in place to know what to do once you’ve identified someone.”

Without defined response plans or protocols in place, training on identifying victims of trafficking may fall short of expectations and may not equip organizations with the tools to use when referring a victim of trafficking for services that could be as diverse as legal support while participating in a criminal trial or psychological counseling to address the neurological effects of trauma. Without concrete resources on how to make appropriate referrals or provide direct care, opportunities to provide seamless support may be missed. Another FGD participant emphasized this by saying:

“I think training [is needed] around how to deal with clients after they have been identified as victims, because after that what happens next? So, if they keep on coming to our agency, what’s our next step after that?” (social service worker)

With targeted and specialized training, it is possible that the gaps identified in available assistance and support could be filled either by existing services that have yet to be acknowledged for their relevance to victims of human trafficking or by agencies revising their mandate or expanding the intake criteria of their programs to include those who have been identified as victims of trafficking or as vulnerable to becoming victims of trafficking. One example of this is a program that exists to support the integration of TFWs into Calgary was able to provide more intensive support to victims of trafficking identified among their clientele. However, one FGD participant highlighted the challenges of this type of mandate expansion:

“Our mandate is to strictly help [TFWs] adapt to life here in Alberta. So beyond that, we are not allowed to [address]...financial, housing, educational [needs]...that’s what we need really.” (social service provider)

An ongoing discussion in Calgary is required to determine where mandates can effectively be expanded to address the existing gaps in service provision, which can inform the development of an established system of response.



5.7.2 Effective Public Awareness Raising

With regard to public awareness raising, which was brought up in the FGDs, it was noted that awareness is essential, but could take a more pro-active approach to preventing trafficking rather than simply letting the public know that it exists.

Based on the information gathered, it was observed that by targeting populations that are considered vulnerable to becoming victims of trafficking, public education should attempt to decrease the desire to accept offers from others who have the intention to exploit. Moreover, it was suggested that awareness-raising campaigns be directed towards populations suspected of becoming traffickers themselves. In both these instances, the underlying insinuation is that public education could be more effective if it was tailored for specific audiences. Meaningful targeting would also require further research to collect more data on specific source communities.¹³

Suggestions in the FGDs were made that these campaigns focus on junior and senior high school students, but few specific ideas were provided on how best to do this. Thus, effective prevention methodology remains an important area for future research. Such investigations could borrow from promising practices, messages, and message delivery mechanisms established to prevent other criminal activities, including deterring youth participation in gang or drug-related activities.¹⁴

This discussion of targeted prevention parallels much of the dialogue around targeting the so-called 'demand side' of the equation whereby the consumers of services and products that are sold for the profit of the trafficker be the focus of awareness campaigns as a preventative measure.¹⁵ While this research did not delve into how this could be implemented or the effectiveness of targeting end-user or demand-side populations, the area warrants further study to determine if this approach has been effective and how it could be localized to the context in Calgary or Alberta and the rest of the country.

Another comment made during FGDs is that public awareness raising should not be done without accompanying programming for victims of trafficking



and effective investigation and prosecution of human traffickers. Without this consideration and appropriate outlets for engagement, public awareness runs the risk of creating a sense of frustration and helplessness among those wishing to take action. One FGD participant underscored this, saying:

“Social marketing and prevention awareness is a real challenge. I think... prevention awareness campaigns don’t have any impact unless they have programming attached to them, so unless you can actually offer some direct linkages around your prevention awareness materials, it’s tough...[be]cause people just look at it and go ‘that’s great,’ but they still don’t understand what the issues are and aren’t able to have questions answered.” (social service provider)

In addition, the FGD discussions uncovered a concern that continuing to promote a stereotypical view of who victims of trafficking are and what they have experienced could be damaging, as discussed above, to creating a sustainable and effective response to victims that are identified by law enforcement and service providing agencies. If stereotypical images are not going to be accepted as representative of the experiences of actual victims of trafficking, trafficked persons will not consider themselves as a victim of a crime or feel as though they are in a position to report or disclose information regarding their treatment at the hands of a trafficker.

One such reality that was shared in a FGD is this description of young womens’ experiences and the lack of self-awareness and/or manipulation that prevented them from believing that what was happening was against the law and, in fact, human trafficking:

“There is also...the heavy label of exploitation...or even being a victim that some of the young women I know have been trafficked. So they are not [making their own] choice, they are not in control, being moved from place to place. They actually think they play a part in it, they see...they actually think they deserve it. They didn't make enough money in Edmonton so their punishment is that they are being moved somewhere else. Or they are being [sent] somewhere else so that they can make more money. So they are actually being trafficked but they don’t see it as being trafficked they see it as being moved into a new opportunity where they are still dependent on the person who is trafficking them. But they still have the idea that if I work a little bit



harder and make a little more money then I will actually get what want, which in the cases I've worked with is love.” (social service provider)

By describing human trafficking as a “heavy label” this participant further points to the importance of creating realistic messages of what constitutes human trafficking, rather than relying on sensationalized images and stereotypes. In the absence of realistic portrayals, individuals such as the young women described above, will not be recognized as victims of trafficking.

5.7.3 Identifying Necessary and Available Services

The survey informants indicated that a number of services are required for establishing an effective response for the needs of trafficked persons in Calgary. Some of the cited services are likely to be ones that are easily recognized and assumed to be desirable for victims of trafficking and others may not be initially recognizable as a part of a comprehensive response.

When using a victim-centered approach, each case should be handled independently and services accessed when requested or agreed to by the victim of trafficking. In other words, the same package of services will not be necessary or appropriate for every victim of trafficking and in fact, may be highly dependent on the type of exploitation suffered or the age, gender, socio-economic status, and nationality of the trafficked person.

The initial need identified by survey respondents is removal or exit of the trafficked person from the location where the exploitation is taking place, along with safe movement to secure premises. One exchange by FGD participants describes some of the other services that should be part of a short-term and long-term response after the researchers asked the question: What are the main services required and/or requested by trafficked persons in Calgary?

FGD Participant 1: “I would definitely say housing, life skills, financial support, counseling services, parenting.”



FGD Participant 2: "I think...from my experience, basic necessities for everyday living."

FGD Participant 3: "I agree with that as well."

Basic needs were defined in the FGDs as food, clothing, health services, and identification retrieval or replacement. Another FGD conversation followed a similar path in response to the above question:

FGD Participant 1: "Translation and legal support, housing, and basic needs."

FGD Participant 2: "Safety, addiction and trauma counseling."

Particularly when dealing with international cases of human trafficking, communication and translation may be essential to ensuring consent to services and support of the victim as well as continued participation in choices that affect their lives. This was brought up by a FGD participant from a service providing agency who said: "in our experience we had approximately four to five that I feel could be cases of human trafficking, all of these five people came from the same country and of course all of them don't speak English."

Shelter was a clearly identified need of trafficked persons. In cited examples during FGDs, organizations with existing shelter services were utilized, but there is a belief that shelters catering to homeless populations or only for women and young children may not be sufficient for the demographics of victims of trafficking as outlined above in Table 3.

The overall safety and security of trafficked persons, including perceived freedom from reprisals of traffickers, is essential in the provision of any services. This can also have an effect on the willingness of a trafficked person to participate in criminal proceedings against their trafficker. One FGD participant from the social service sector offered: "I think safety [is important], move them out of the area to another area." Individuals who are involved in criminal prosecutions against their traffickers should also be offered legal assistance and support to make an informed choice about the level of participation with law enforcement and court proceedings.

During FGDs, there was also substantial discussion about the effects of trauma on human psychology and behaviour and the need for counseling that uses methods aimed at uncovering and addressing the longer-term effects of



trauma. One FGD participant put it succinctly, saying: “we are not equipped to counsel them on the trauma that they have been through as well,” thereby recognizing the need for this specialized counseling, but without clarity on where it can be accessed.

One particular area that was identified is sexual health and reclaiming one’s sexuality for those who have suffered sexual exploitation.

“I think...coming from a sexual health background...especially for young women that have been trafficked in the sex trade, trying to get a healthy view of their sexuality is required. And for older women as well, not just women that are young, actually for people in general that have been victimized in that way.” (social service provider)

This concept was expanded upon by another FGD participant:

“There is a lot of discrimination around, specifically women who are coming out of the sex trade, they are seen as much less than valuable. So often they are brushed aside and not given any sort of chance to get away from that, I think that that is a really big barrier in the whole justice system area.” (social service provider)

The following are some additional key services participants felt trafficked persons required: income assistance support (such as access to financial assistance from Alberta Works)¹⁶; support to identify and pursue education and employment options (especially for foreign nationals); access to financial services such as bank accounts; assistance with family reunification and social reintegration; and transportation both within the city and to return to places of origin.

One area, according to the FGD participants, that is needed is education about unscrupulous third party recruiters posing as legitimate employment agents in other countries. This was suggested as a mean of preventing trafficking and re-exploitation or re-trafficking if a victim of trafficking returns to their country of origin. As such, there was a desire expressed during FGDs to learn more about how to address this phenomenon in light of the growing TFW



and LICP programs. Furthermore, education is needed on the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and provincial and federal labour standards and workers rights to ensure that foreigners and Canadians are able to advocate for themselves with future employers if they stay in the country. A member of academia offered the following:

“[Victims need] access to the legal system...[and] the notion that although everyone is covered under the Charter. It's one thing to be protected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, it's a whole other thing to have knowledge, the comfort and the ability to access services.”

Another FGD participant followed this same line of thought, saying:

“[Perhaps] they came from a country where the government is not as friendly compared to the Canadian government. So...we would always emphasize that the Canadian government is much different than the government back home. So that's one of the things we would emphasize, that you are safe. In fact one of the reasons that they come here is safety, because they feel it here in Canada. So we keep emphasizing that. And we emphasize that there is a lot of people and other agencies that you can go to for support. It is something that we are really trying to emphasize every time.” (social service provider)

This type of education could also be useful for individuals who are in a position to exploit the entry of others into the country. As one government agency representative offers: “It amazes me how quickly the exploited become the exploiters in these situations.” This highlights the need to protect victims, but also to engage in meaningful prevention that is targeted at would-be traffickers.

It was widely acknowledged that there is a gap in services available for males who have been trafficked, which is potentially linked to the misrepresentation of trafficking in media and common beliefs that women are the only victims of trafficking. This was touched on during one FGD with a social service provider saying: “there [are] minimal services [available]. In my experiences working at [a shelter], it is strictly for women, no allowance



for men or boys to come in. So even the resources that are available are ridiculously limited.”

In addition to these services, participants indicated there are significant gaps in funding and mandates to respond to the needs of international victims of trafficking with irregular immigration status in Canada, who have been denied or are awaiting the issuance of a TRP. Moreover, participants suggested services are lacking for victims that are not identified as trafficked persons by law enforcement agencies. One FGD participant from a government agency offered:

“[There is] a gap in service provision funding from the time period it takes a foreign national...to get that TRP. The time period it takes to get that TRP, there is no federal or provincial agency that can step in within their mandate to fulfill those needs.”

While the TRP was expanded to meet the unique needs of foreign victims of trafficking in Canada and to fill a substantial gap in basic service provision by regularizing the immigration status of those who would otherwise be considered irregular migrants, participants have found the program to be challenging to access.

In addition to the needs trafficked person face after their experience of trafficking, some of the identified needs and associated services may pre-date the trafficking experience and could have been factors that initially made individuals vulnerable. For instance, addictions, mental health, or developmental disabilities counseling and/or support may be desirable not only to address the trafficking experiences, but also to address conditions or challenges that existed before the trafficking experience. This is important for preventing the re-trafficking and continued exploitation of victims. One social service provider acknowledged this particular gap in their agency’s service by offering:

“[We need] front line education for [our] social workers, some times we find that [knowledge of] minor counseling is helpful. Some mental disability education, especially with our clientele [as] there is a lot of that.”



Continuing with this concept, isolating the trafficking experience and only offering services that address that particular experience is inadvisable for meaningful healing and sustainable reintegration.¹⁷ An experience of exploitation and trafficking is part of a person's life and not their entire identity and should not be treated as such by service providers offering assistance.

While some participants are already engaged in offering services required by the alleged trafficked persons, some of the required services were outside the existing mandates or programs offered by agencies. For example, a TFW support program was asked to go beyond its existing mandate to provide services to trafficked persons. In this way, agencies require additional capacity or funds in order to expand their mandates and thereby meet the needs of trafficked persons in Calgary. For example, one FGD participant, representing an immigrant support agency, commented on mandate limitations saying: "We can't turn foreign workers away, but we can't move around because of our hands being tied." To respond to the needs of trafficked persons, this participant further stated that the agency would need external support in the areas of housing, finances, education, and counseling.

The various services required by trafficked persons further points to the need for effective case management to navigate these services to meet the diverse needs of individual cases and to act as an advocate for trafficked persons whose needs might fall outside the existing mandates of agencies.

In light of this, we now turn to the issue of case management, as discussed by participants.

5.7.4 The Role of Coordination and Case Management

Informants in the study were in agreement that having a network to coordinate efforts to address human trafficking is beneficial. The stated benefits were both to share information and to create learning opportunities for those who are in the position to identify or provide services to victims of trafficking. A network provides the platform to coordinate activities to respond to cases of human trafficking by creating linkages between agencies that would otherwise not be in contact and by providing regular opportunities for face-to-face contact between stakeholders.



The network that currently exists in Calgary is coordinated and chaired by ACT and for those who have participated in the network, there was recognition of the value of the network and ACT's role as its secretariat. A recognized strength of the network in Calgary has been the provision of a neutral platform for agencies with diverse mandates and interests in human trafficking to come together and engage in open dialogue.

The ACT-chaired network brings together stakeholders working in various sectors and encourages a reflective and constructive look at their work using a lens of human trafficking. This is pertinent as human trafficking responses can involve individuals and agencies that do not have direct entry points or regular contact. For instance, municipal police may not be aware of how to support a victim of trafficking to apply for a TRP, which is issued by CIC, a federal agency. Having the experience around the table, so to speak, creates ongoing learning opportunities between and among the participating agencies where ideas can be generated and best practices or lessons learned can be shared. One FGD participant commented on the necessity of having such a system that encourages this constructive dialogue:

“ACT and [other] coalitions in Manitoba and BC...what they're doing is this massive education piece to, not just law enforcement, but to service groups, to interested individuals, to universities, to schools, so what's occurring, hopefully, is that the majority of our population is aware of the issue and when they recognize it, they make the contact, and support the individual, the victim, and they're sort of the conduit towards the enforcement side and the government machine side.” (law enforcement representative)

One representative of a service providing agency pointed out that simply holding regular meetings is of value to those who attend because they can share information and strategize on how to address human trafficking in their respective roles: “I think also just the fact that we are having regular meetings that will keep us updated [is good] as well.”

When discussing the current state of the response, FGD participants also outlined the role that a case manager could play when a case of human



trafficking is identified, either by law enforcement or a social service agency. The case manager could be an individual or organization that would ensure that all available services and support are offered to the victim of trafficking.

The case manager would navigate the sometimes confusing and unfamiliar pathways through the immigration, emergency shelter, income support, health care, and the criminal justice system. In the words of one FGD participant from law enforcement: “We’re realizing that a case manager [is] absolutely necessary.”

Having a dedicated case manager would allow for the unique experiences and needs of victims of trafficking to be recognized and addressed as well as ensure that their participation in criminal proceedings is completely voluntary and unconnected to their ability to access services and support. A law enforcement representative put it this way:

“At present time what we have is unbelievable relationships [with] the groups, organizations, and individuals that can support a human trafficking victim... So we have a tremendous partnership and we are functioning a little bit ad-hoc based on that partnership.”

While there were limited recommendations provided in the FGDs on the specifications of the role of case manager, it was noted that participants believed the role should be developed outside the realm of the criminal justice system, which would provide assurance that the case manager can advocate for the victim and represent his or her wishes. This is especially important in instances where the stated needs of trafficking persons are incongruent with the priorities of law enforcement and government agencies, particularly for those involved in the trials of their traffickers, foreign nationals identified in Canada, and/or those with their own criminal past. Put succinctly, one FGD participant said, “[the] investigative group should not be doing the support piece.”

Whether the case manager role falls to the secretariat of a stakeholder network, which is currently ACT in Calgary, was not explored in FGDs and is an area that requires more consultation and study. However, the ACT stakeholder network was suggested during FGDs as a potential forum for providing formal case management, especially as it has and is currently fulfilling this role on an as-needed basis.



One FGD participant, representing a law enforcement agency, commented on the role of ACT as a case manager, saying “I think an organization like ACT is so incredibly important, to be the sort of conduit...to the support portion.” Continuing with this notion, a government agency representative specified: “for us, it would be [beneficial] to have a place like the ACT meetings to go and learn about services so that we can make good referrals... having an expert, knowing that if we came across a case, there would be someone who would know what to do.”

Notwithstanding the successes of the current network, one of the key limitations expressed by participants was the improvised nature of the existing response. While agencies appreciate the training they have received to both understand and identify human trafficking, in the absence of an established system for responding, some participants expressed they are unaware how to respond once a victim is identified. With this in mind, one FGD participant identified the importance of building inter-agency connections and relationships with others working in related areas:

“There’s definitely a conscientiousness about, and I speak for all of us here, that we make sure bases are covered. So if we can’t provide it, we’re seeking out people we know can help, and we’re not letting go of the issue until we know it’s being addressed. So, you know, you’re unbelievably connected, and you’re saying, ‘okay, I know for sure this service is needed, and I know this is my contact for that.’ And you make sure that liaison is established.” (law enforcement representative)

One proposed solution to this problem, as presented by the respondents, is to develop a formalized protocol or standard operating procedures (SOPs) that can be followed when a victim of trafficking is identified. Such a system would ensure that the relevant authorities are contacted and services identified and accessed while safeguarding a human rights-based approach, meaning the individual most affected by the experience, the trafficked person, is protected. Protection should refer to both the trafficked person’s personal safety and sense of security and to their wishes to ensure their choices are respected and honoured. This is also referred to as a victim-



centered approach and should be codified in any protocols or SOPs developed by ACT or others involved in a response.

As previously discussed, in the absence of a protocol or SOPs to guide the response, training for agencies and public awareness raising fail to adequately equip those involved in the response to effectively address the rights and needs of trafficked persons.

6.0 Recommendations for Responding to Human Trafficking in Calgary

Based on the information gathered and analyzed in the survey responses and FGDs, the authors offer recommendations that can be included in the current and future iterations of the response to human trafficking. The following ten recommendations are presented in no order of priority and can be discussed using the current ACT platform to ensure the continued involvement of a variety of stakeholders from multiple sectors of the response.

Victim-Centered Service Delivery

- 1) Encourage the use of a victim-centered understanding of human trafficking that allows for definitions that are not derived strictly from the legal understanding of human trafficking. This will ensure that services can be provided to victims of trafficking regardless of whether a corresponding criminal investigation is underway.
- 2) Ensure that criminal investigations of human trafficking are independent from service provision to victims of trafficking. Support to victims should be facilitated by non-government organizations that are in a position to advocate on behalf of victims. The availability of services should not be contingent on participation in criminal proceedings or cooperation with the criminal justice system.
- 3) Develop a localized protocol to provide guidance in assistance to victims. The protocol should include a criminal justice framework and standard operating procedures for those offering services to victims of trafficking on how to identify and navigate existing services and make appropriate referrals.

Awareness Raising and Specialized Training

- 4) Provide consistent messaging and realistic images of human trafficking in Alberta through targeted awareness raising campaigns aimed at agencies, communities, identified vulnerable populations, and would-be traffickers or exploiters.



- 5) Design and deliver specialized training to agencies that could come into contact with trafficked persons that includes information on localized protocols, standard operating procedures, and the role of a case manager.

Case Management and Coordination

- 6) Develop a case manager position that will provide oversight or direct support for identified victims of trafficking by navigating available services and the criminal justice system. The case manager will advocate on behalf of victims of trafficking to ensure a victim-centered approach.
- 7) Continue direct consultation with service providers, law enforcement, and government agencies through the use of the existing ACT network to coordinate action in the areas of prevention and response to human trafficking in Calgary.
- 8) Maintain regular networking platforms for all anti-trafficking stakeholders in Calgary to meet to share information, take advantage of learning opportunities, establish linkages and referral pathways, and strategize for future action in prevention and response to human trafficking.

Continued Research on Human Trafficking

- 9) Develop research agendas to examine the following areas that have been identified as gaps in the existing knowledge on human trafficking in Alberta: domestic trafficking in Alberta; trafficking of Aboriginal Canadians and the effects of human trafficking on Aboriginal communities; use of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and the Live-In Caregiver Program by traffickers; the involvement of third party recruiters in international human trafficking; the overlap between the Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act and human trafficking legislation and programming in Alberta; and the establishment of prevention strategies to effectively fight human trafficking.
- 10) Expand the current research by replicating the model of inquiry in other communities in Alberta, particularly where existing responses to human trafficking exist, to explore and inform province-wide knowledge and response.



7.0 Conclusion

Although Calgary has a well-established and arguably extensive range of services and stakeholders in the response to human trafficking, many of which are linked through involvement in the ACT Calgary network, this research reveals there are significant gaps in the process agencies utilize to identify and assisting suspected and/or confirmed cases of human trafficking. Some of the fundamental problems revolve around the lack of a clear definition of human trafficking, a lack of resources and appropriate training to better identify and serve victims of trafficking, as well as a lack of realistic messaging and available depictions of the crime in Alberta.

The recommendations offered are considered both realistic and manageable and if used to inform the existing response, it is hoped the findings of this report will spur future research and informed discussions with various stakeholders so that ACT and its network members can move forward with a clearer purpose and agenda that will ultimately lead the way towards effectively responding to human trafficking in Calgary and throughout Alberta. The findings of this research can also inform provincial and national discussions on responding to human trafficking by providing detailed knowledge of local responses, offering suggestions of best practices, and sharing challenges experienced by frontline actors in Calgary.



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Appendix A: Breakdown of Survey Participants by Sector

Sector	Number of Participants
Counseling	12
Basic needs support (shelter, food, housing, health care, etc.)	11
Education, advocacy, partnership development, referrals, academics	9
Services for sexually exploited persons and/or individuals involved in sex work/prostitution	5
Law enforcement, legal support, criminal justice	7
Faith-based organizations	2
Immigration support/resettlement agencies	2
Children's services	2
TOTAL	38

Appendix B: Survey Questions

1. I have read and understood the above text (background to study and consent/ethical information).
2. What type of services does your group, or agency, provide? Please describe.
3. What is your position within this group, or agency?
4. How long has your group, or agency, been operational?
 - a. Less than 1 year
 - b. 1-2 years
 - c. 3-4 years
 - d. 5-10 years
 - e. 10+ years
 - f. Comment
5. Do you feel as though your group, or agency, offers services or programming that would be relevant to addressing the needs of trafficked persons?
 - a. Yes
 - b. Maybe
 - c. No
 - d. Don't know
 - e. Please explain.
6. Approximately how many employees work in your group, or agency?
 - a. Less than 5 individuals
 - b. 5-10 individuals
 - c. 10+ individuals
 - d. Comment
7. What do you consider to be the necessary skills/educational background needed to work with your group, or agency? Please describe.
8. Does your group, or agency, have any staff or personnel dedicated specifically to human trafficking work or programming?
 - a. Yes
 - b. Sort of
 - c. No
 - d. Don't Know
 - e. Comment
9. Is your group, or agency, currently involved with the Action Coalition on Human Trafficking (ACT) Calgary?
 - a. Yes
 - b. Somewhat

- c. No - But have heard of ACT
 - d. No - Have never heard of ACT
 - e. Don't know
 - f. Comment
10. If your group, or agency, is NOT involved with ACT, would there be interest in being involved in a coalition for responding to human trafficking?
- a. Interested - with ACT
 - b. Interested - outside of ACT
 - c. Somewhat interested
 - d. Not interested - Not relevant
 - e. Not interested - No interest
 - f. Don't know
 - g. Comment
11. At what level would your group, or agency, be interested in participating in a coalition for responding to human trafficking? Check all that apply.
- a. City-wide
 - b. Province-wide
 - c. Nation-wide
 - d. International
 - e. Don't know
 - f. Comment
12. To your knowledge, has your group, or agency, come into contact with trafficked persons? (If no, please skip to question 18)
- a. Yes
 - b. Maybe
 - c. No
 - d. Don't Know
 - e. Comment
13. How many trafficked persons has your group, or agency, been in contact with? Please specify the number and time period (e.g., 4 persons over 2 years)
14. In the case(s) of human trafficking encountered at your group, or agency, what was the scope of the trafficking? Check all that apply.
- a. Domestic (Canadian/local)
 - b. International (Outside of Canada)
 - c. Don't know
 - d. Please explain if the cases were mostly domestic, mostly international, or an equal mix of both.
15. In the case(s) of human trafficking encountered at your group, or agency, what was the demographic group of the trafficked person(s)? Check all that apply.
- a. Female adults
 - b. Male adults
 - c. Female children
 - d. Male children
 - e. Canadian
 - f. Newcomer/not Canadian

- g. Aboriginal
 - h. Don't know
 - i. Please explain if the cases were mostly of one demographic (e.g. children).
16. In the case(s) of human trafficking encountered at your group, or agency, what type of exploitation was involved? Check all that apply.
- a. Labour
 - b. Sexual
 - c. Domestic servitude
 - d. Other (please specify below)
 - e. Don't know
 - f. Please explain if the cases were mostly labour, mostly sexual, mostly domestic servitude or some mix of the three.
17. What type of services were provided to the trafficked person(s) your group, or agency, has been in contact with? Please explain.
18. What were the strengths/limitations of your ability to respond to the needs of the trafficked person(s) you have served? (Proceed to question 19)
19. If you have NOT had confirmed contact with trafficked persons, have you ever suspected a case of human trafficking?
- a. Yes
 - b. Maybe
 - c. No
 - d. Don't know
 - e. Comment
20. How confident would you feel in identifying a victim of human trafficking?
- a. Very confident
 - b. Confident
 - c. Somewhat confident
 - d. Not confident
 - e. Don't know
 - f. Please explain.
21. Have you received any sort of training on human trafficking?
- a. Yes - Within my group or agency
 - b. Yes - Outside of my group or agency
 - c. Yes - Both within my group or agency and outside of my group or agency
 - d. No - But would like training
 - e. No - Am not interested in training
 - f. Don't know
22. What was involved in the training you received? Please explain.
23. Are you aware of any funding for addressing human trafficking in Calgary?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

- c. Don't know
 - d. If yes, please describe.
24. Are you aware of any (other) resources available for addressing human trafficking in Calgary?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know
 - d. If yes, please describe.
25. Would your group, or agency, be interested in applying for funding or resources to respond to human trafficking?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know
 - d. If yes, please specify/provide the context.
26. Are you aware of other services locally, provincially, or nationally, that work with trafficked persons, or specifically address the issue of human trafficking? Please list/explain.
27. Are there any other observations you would like to share with us about the services/resources available to victims of human trafficking locally, provincially, or nationally?
28. As part of the project design, we are planning to conduct several focus groups, which will allow participants to provide richer feedback and insight into some of the issues and responses provided in the survey. The focus groups will serve to inform the survey. As we very much value your input, we would like to invite you to participate in one of the focus group sessions. The focus group will be a discussion between you, other community service providers, and a member of the research team. The focus groups will last approximately one hour and will be held at a convenient time and location. Would you be interested in participating in the focus group portion of this study?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know
 - d. Ask me later
 - e. Comment

Appendix C: Focus Group Discussion Questions

Background

- 1 – In your opinion/experience, what are the trends of human trafficking in Calgary?
- 2 – What are characteristics of trafficked persons in Calgary?
- 3 – How many confirmed or suspected cases have you seen?
- 4 – What are the main services required and/or requested by trafficked persons in Calgary?

Primary Questions

- 5 – What should be done to enhance the current model/response to human trafficking in Calgary?
What are the strengths/limitations of existing responses?
- 6 – What is your main role in responding to trafficking in Calgary?
- 7 – What kind of support and from who does your agency need to better respond to trafficking?
- 8 – What kind of support, if any, can your agency offer other agencies in responding to human trafficking?
- 9 – What type of training do you feel you require to better respond to human trafficking?

Additional Questions

- 10 – How would describe the relationship between human trafficking and other forms of exploitation in Calgary?
- 11 – For those agencies that have specific personnel dedicated to trafficking, how has this worked? Have there been improvements to service delivery/investigations? Has this introduced challenges to the agency?
- 12 – For those agencies that have not identified specific personnel dedicated to trafficking, do you feeling having someone in this role would benefit your organization? If so, what are the barriers to having dedicated staff?
- 13 – Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix D: Focus Group Discussion Consent Form

Interview Consent Form – Pilot Study on Human Trafficking: Formalizing a Calgary-Based Response Model

Dear [organization/participant],

You previously participated in a survey for a research project entitled *Pilot Study on Human Trafficking: Formalizing a Calgary-Based Response Model* funded jointly by Mount Royal University and ACT. At the end of the survey, you indicated that you were interested in participating in the interview portion of the study. Please read the following information carefully, and feel free to ask any questions you might have.

Research Coordinator:

Anne Miller, MPA
Centre for Criminology and Justice
Research
Mount Royal University
Phone: (403)440-8565
E-mail:

Primary Researcher:

Dr. John Winterdyk, Director
Centre for Criminology and Justice
Research
Mount Royal University
Phone: (403)440-6992
E-mail: jwinterdyk@mtroyal.ca

Purpose and Procedure:

This research project comprises the first phase of a multi-phase research program intended to establish a response mechanism to address human trafficking (HT) in Alberta and eventually throughout Canada. By conducting a baseline assessment of HT in Calgary, the research will inform a response model that is unique to this city. Drawing on the findings of this study, we propose to expand the research to assess the state of HT throughout southern Alberta, the findings from which can be used in the development of action plans for responding to the issue of HT in individual communities throughout the region and across the province. Following this, the long-term aim of the research program is to expand the analysis to examine the state of HT in individual provinces across Canada with the goal of developing a much needed response mechanism at the national level.

Responses will be critically analyzed to determine if there are common or significant themes. Themes will be compared with existing anti-trafficking documents and literature in order to explore the strengths and limitations of current practice and approaches in the Calgary area and develop suggestions for improving anti-trafficking policies. The collected data are intended to inform the research explained above, and will potentially impact policy in the issue area. Direct quotes from the interview may be used in the report, however there will be no individual identification of interview participants.

As a participant, you will be asked to take part in an interview that will last approximately one hour. This interview will be one-on-one and will be designed to resemble an extended conversation between the researcher and yourself. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary; therefore, it is your right to end your participation at any time or refuse participation altogether. The study is intended to allow you to openly describe your opinions, working knowledge and perceptions of human trafficking in the Calgary area and, more generally, in Canada. The researcher will make every effort to ensure that all those who choose to participate and be interviewed are treated with respect, consideration and patience.

Potential Benefits:

As a participant, you will receive no direct benefits such as compensation or remuneration for participating in the study. However, this is an important field of analysis and participants may help, albeit indirectly, to develop and enhance anti-trafficking policies and initiatives in Canada. There is no guarantee that you will personally benefit from your involvement in the study.

Potential Risks:

The topic of human trafficking is sensitive. The interviews are designed to allow you to discuss your opinions about human trafficking policies and initiatives in Calgary, and Canada. Nonetheless, you may have strong feelings or opinions that arise during the interview and are invited to contact the researchers regarding counseling referral.

Storage of Data:

Only the researchers and their assistants will have access to the interview data. Audiotapes and transcripts will be labeled with a pseudonym you choose or that the researcher selects for you. The interview transcripts and tapes will be locked in a secure cabinet or will be stored in a secure file on the researcher's private computer. The transcripts will be kept for as long as there remains interest in the research topic, and the audiotapes will be destroyed within two years of the completion of the study. The pseudonym codes that link your real name to the interview transcript will be kept for the purposes of follow-up interviewing or future research.

Confidentiality:

The information that is shared will be held in strict confidence and discussed only with the research team. The interviews are confidential and you will not be directly identified in the write-up of the results. In the analysis, the researchers will omit particulars on occupational position; however, general occupational titles (e.g. frontline worker) as well as organization names will be included. To protect your anonymity, you are invited to choose a pseudonym; if you decline to do so the researchers will assign a pseudonym when they write-up the analysis. Although pseudonyms are present to protect your identity, the possibility exists that individuals working in the field may be able to recognize you based on the information you provide.

Dissemination:

The researchers may publish any of the collected data and findings in scholarly journals and present the findings to scholarly and public audiences. As the confidentiality section (above) indicates, your responses will not be individually identified in any reports, write-ups or presentations, however direct quotes may be used.

Right to Withdraw:

Participation is completely voluntary and confidential. You are free to discontinue participation at any time or answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. Withdrawal from the research project can happen for any reason, without penalty of any sort. If you decide to withdraw, the partial interview data will be destroyed upon request. Otherwise, data collected to the point of withdrawal will be retained and analyzed.

Questions:

If you have any questions concerning the research project, please feel free to ask at any point; you are also free to contact the researchers at the numbers provided if you have other questions. This research project has been approved on ethical grounds by the Mount Royal University Human Research Ethics Board on [[INSERT DATE]]. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Human Research Ethics Board Office (403-440-6299).

Follow-up:

Please inform the researchers if you would like to receive an Executive Summary, or full report from this project.

Consent to Participate:

I have read and understood the description provided; I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. I consent to participate in the research project, understanding that I may withdraw my consent at any time. A copy of this Consent Form has been given to me for my records. In the event that you suffer injury as a result of participating in this research, no compensation will be provided to you by Mount Royal College or the Researchers. However, you still have all of your legal rights and nothing said in this consent form alters your right to seek damages.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature of Participant

Signature of Researcher

Appendix E Survey Consent Form

Survey Consent Form – Pilot Study on Human Trafficking: Formalizing a Calgary-Based Response Model

Dear [organization/participant],

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled Pilot Study on Human Trafficking: Formalizing a Calgary-Based Response Model funded by Mount Royal University. The survey should take around 15 to 20 minutes and will help provide the initial information needed for the project. Please read the following information carefully, and feel free to ask any questions you might have.

Research Coordinator:

Anne Miller, MPA

Centre for Criminology and Justice Research

Mount Royal University

Phone: (403)440-8565

E-mail:

Primary Researcher

Dr. John Winterdyk, Director

Centre for Criminology and Justice Research

Mount Royal University

Phone: (403) 440-6992

E-mail: jwinterdyk@mtroyal.ca

Purpose and Procedure:

This research project comprises the first phase of a multi-phase research program intended to establish a response mechanism to address human trafficking (HT) in Alberta and eventually throughout Canada. By conducting a baseline assessment of HT in Calgary, the research will inform a response model that is unique to this city. Drawing on the findings of this study, we propose to expand the research to assess the state of HT throughout southern Alberta, the findings from which can be used in the development of action plans for responding to the issue of HT in individual communities throughout the region and across the province. Following this, the long-term aim of the research program is to expand the analysis to examine the state of HT in individual provinces across Canada with the goal of developing a much needed response mechanism at the national level.

Responses will be critically analyzed to determine if there are common or significant themes in addressing HT in the Calgary area. The survey will be a general assessment of the anti-trafficking services and responses in Alberta and will provide the opportunity to indicate interest in participation in an interview or focus group that would further explore HT issues in Calgary and the surrounding area. The collected data are intended to inform the research explained above, and will potentially impact policy in the issue area. Direct quotes from the survey may be used in the report, and may also be used to inform the interview questions for the interview and focus group portion of the study.

As a participant, you will be asked to take part in a survey that should take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The survey will be distributed electronically, but can also be filled out in hard-copy or via telephone. Should you choose to complete the survey, you will be asked at the end of the survey whether you might also be willing to also participate in a one hour focus group interview. If you are interested in participating in one of the focus groups, a separate consent form will be provided.

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary; therefore, it is your right to end your participation at any time or refuse participation altogether.

Potential Benefits:

As a participant, you will receive no direct benefits such as compensation or remuneration for participating in the study. However, this is an important field of analysis and participants may help, albeit indirectly, to develop and enhance anti-trafficking policies and initiatives in Canada. There is no guarantee that you will personally benefit from your involvement in the study.

Potential Risks:

The topic of human trafficking is sensitive. The survey is designed to allow you to indicate your involvement with trafficked persons and some opinions you might have about current responses and initiatives in the Calgary area. Nonetheless, you may have strong feelings or opinions that arise during the survey and are invited to contact the researchers regarding counseling referral.

Storage of Data:

Only the researchers and their assistants will have access to the survey data. Surveys will be kept electronically in a secure file at Mount Royal University, and will not be associated directly with you but will retain an identification number corresponding with your name. The document linking names and ID numbers will be kept in a separate secure location for the purposes of follow-up interviewing or future research. The survey data will be kept for as long as the research topic is of interest to researchers.

Confidentiality:

The information that is shared will be held in strict confidence and discussed only with the research team. The surveys are confidential and you will not be directly identified in the write-up of the results, although direct quotes may be used. In the analysis, the researchers will omit particulars on occupational position; however, general occupational titles (e.g. frontline worker) as well as organization names will be included.

Dissemination:

The researchers may publish any of the collected data and findings in scholarly journals and present the findings to scholarly and public audiences. As the confidentiality section (above) indicates, your responses will not be individually identified in any reports, write-ups or presentations, although direct quotes may be used. Although no names will be used in order to protect your identity, the possibility exists that individuals working in the field may be able to recognize you based on the information you provide.

Right to Withdraw:

Participation is completely voluntary and confidential. You are free to discontinue participation at any time or answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. Withdrawal from the research project can happen for any reason, without penalty of any sort. If you decide to withdraw, the partial survey data will be destroyed upon request.

Otherwise, data collected to the point of withdrawal will be retained and analyzed.

Questions:

If you have any questions concerning the research project, please feel free to ask at any point; you are also free to contact the researchers at the numbers provided if you have other questions. This research project has received ethics approval from the Mount Royal University Human Research Ethics Board on [[INSERT DATE]]. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Human Research Ethics Board Office (403-440-6299).

Follow up:

Please inform the researchers if you would like to receive an Executive Summary, or full report from this project.

Consent to Participate:

I have read and understood the description provided; I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. I consent to participate in the research project, understanding that I may withdraw my consent at any time. A copy of this Consent Form has been given to me for my records. In the event that you suffer injury as a result of participating in this research, no compensation will be provided to you by Mount Royal University of the Researchers. However, you still have all your legal rights and nothing said in this consent form alters your right to seek damages.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature of Participant

Signature of Researcher

Notes

¹ See Winterdyk et al., (2012)

² While the term ‘victim of trafficking’ is used in this report, the authors recognize the varying opinions surrounding its use. While we recognize the agency of trafficked persons, we have opted to use the term ‘victim’ to reinforce the concept that human trafficking is a crime in Canada and those who are exploited by traffickers are victims of crimes.

³ See, for example, CBC (2009):

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/story/2009/12/02/calgary-human-trafficking-charges.html>

⁴ See Winterdyk et al., (2012).

⁵ This observation is consistent with the issues and concerns raised by Smith and Kangaspunta in Winterdyk et al. (2012; Ch. 2).

⁶ For example, Copic & Simeunovic-Patic in Winterdyk et al., (2012: Ch. 12).

⁷ For more information on the Temporary Resident Permit (TRP) and its relevance to combating human trafficking, see <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/trp.asp>

⁸ Significantly, recent cases of child and youth sexual exploitation have been charged using Section 279 (human trafficking) under the Criminal Code in other Canadian cities: Toronto and Vancouver. See, for example, CTV (2012):

<http://toronto.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20120117/toronto-pimp-human-trafficking-charge-120117/20120117/?hub=TorontoNewHome> and The Province (2012):

<http://www.theprovince.com/news/charged+with+pimping+underage+girls+human+trafficking/6051695/story.html>. For further discussion on the implications of the Vancouver case, see CTV (2011):

http://www.ctvbc.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20111223/bc_human_trafficking_reza_moazami_111223/20111223/

⁹ For example, Perrin (2010): <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/swedens-fix-jail-the-johns/article1735817/>

¹⁰ See Winterdyk and Sundberg (2010).

¹¹ See the Canadian Council of Refugees for more details about the relationship between human trafficking and refugee experiences: <http://ccrweb.ca/en/trafficking>

¹² An important exception is Sethi, Anupriya (2007). “Domestic Sex Trafficking of Aboriginal Girls in Canada: Issues and Implications.” *Policy*, 3(3): 57-71.

¹³ Similar views have been expressed by Danurand in Winterdyk et al. (201: Ch. 10).

¹⁴ See Diplock & Plecas (2012).

¹⁵ For example, Perrin (2010).

¹⁶ Alberta Works is a Government of Alberta, Human Services, Employment and Immigration program that aims to “help unemployed people find and keep jobs, help employers meet their need for skilled workers, and help Albertans with low incomes cover their basic costs of living” by offering income support, employment and training services, health benefits, and child support services (Government of Alberta, 2011). For more information see

<http://employment.alberta.ca/FCH/3171.html>

¹⁷ See Copic & Simeunovic-Patic in Winterdyk et al. (2012: Ch. 12).

