

Ukraine Situation: Slovak Protection Working Group Task Force on Trafficking in Persons

Terms of Reference

I. Background

In line with the Refugee Response Plan to the Ukraine Situation, Protection WG in Slovakia, chaired by UNHCR, and composed of UN and other international organizations and other stakeholders involved in the response, ensures efficient situational information management and supports country efforts in close collaboration and consultation with relevant government counterparts. Furthermore, at the country level, thematic groups/task forces have been established to address critical issues (e.g. child protection, gender-based violence, health, etc.), with the aim of maximizing the effectiveness of responses and avoiding gaps and duplication. It is widely acknowledged that trafficking in persons (TiP) has been an existing protection concern. With the crisis and forced displacement, the vulnerability of the affected population against exploitation is exacerbated. Establishment of a task force on TiP, operating under the Protection Working Group, is proposed to support coordinated action to address these risks and ensure respect for victims' rights throughout the response.

IOM has expressed interest chairing this TF, with active involvement of UNHCR, Slovak Catholic Charity (the national counter-trafficking hotline operator) and the Ministry of Interior's (MoI) Centre for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and for Crime Prevention, as well as other UN Agencies, relevant NGOs involved in the TiP topic, municipalities and other relevant state actors.

II. Objectives of the task force (TF) on TiP

- a. To facilitate the **compilation and sharing within the TF on TiP of situational information and evidence** on risks of trafficking among the refugee population. Such information may be and shared with other partners for the purpose of informing and supporting government-led efforts to combat TiP and ensure respect for the rights of survivors/victims and people at risk, at country and regional level.
- b. To **support effective and coordinated action** of partners involved in anti-trafficking responses at country level, in support of efforts of Government of Slovak Republic. This may include, among other things, work among TF participants on coordinated gaps and needs assessments, joint advocacy, coordinated and/or joint awareness-raising, capacity development, technical assistance and operational responses.
- c. To **provide practical recommendations and advice at the operational level** to inform responses to identify, prevent, address and respond to risks and incidents of TiP, with a focus on ensuring respect for the rights of survivors and people at risk. This may also include supporting non-protection actors' efforts in addressing vulnerability to exploitation.

III. Main tasks and responsibilities

The participants will be jointly responsible and accountable for achieving the objectives of the Task Force. Each participant will seek to share relevant information in a timely fashion and contribute actively to the collective work of the Task Force, bringing to its attention areas of need, opportunities and other developments that could strengthen the effectiveness and coordinated nature of action to address TiP and related risks.

Working in close coordination with other participants, main tasks of the co-chairs include:

- Preparing Task Force meeting agenda, chairing meetings and ensuring secretariat support;
- Ensuring ongoing information sharing and encouraging active participation of all Task Force members;
- Monitoring responses to address TiP-related issues and leading on the drafting of situational and data updates and ensuring their timely dissemination;
- Regularly liaising with and informing the Regional Protection Working Group;
- Representing the TF in its interaction with external responders, together with other TF participants as relevant;
- Providing technical support and guidance to the protection actors, as well as to partners, and promote capacity building on counter-trafficking;
- Providing support and participation in other thematic groups/ task forces, focusing on mainstreaming of counter-trafficking efforts and identification, referral and assistance of potential victims of trafficking among refugees;
- Identifying common advocacy messages on prevention and response to human trafficking and ensure together with the protection working group that they are informing discussions in inter-sector meetings;
- Developing and/or revising communication/ outreach strategies on counter-trafficking targeting affected populations.

The (Co)Chair(s) are responsible for convening the sub-working group meetings, monitoring the implementation of its objectives and tasks, and for reporting to the Protection Working Group on progress and achievements. Furthermore, the (Co-)Chair(s) will strive to ensure coordination with other existing initiatives.

IV. Meeting schedule: In its initial phase of work, the TF meets on monthly basis. In case of urgent matters, additional meetings may be convened by the co-chairs or upon request from a TF member.

V. Chairing

The TF will operate under the chairing of IOM and/or other stakeholders when agreed.

VI. Membership

The TF will comprise agencies with expertise and/or operational capacity involved in the response. It will be open to UN System Organisations and NGO networks working on TiP. Flexible options for participation will be provided, such as regular attendance and contribution, ad-hoc participation to contribute expertise or knowledge, debriefing opportunities.

Related matters

TF Suggested Membership

- **UN agencies:** IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UNFPA, INTERPOL
- **Other mechanisms** (*to be discussed*)
- **Regional organizations** (*to be discussed*): OSCE, incl. ODIHR, CoE GRETA (in view of its monitoring and urgent intervention role?)
- **NGOs networks:** Human Right's League, People in Need, CARITAS and other relevant NGOs
- **EU institutions** (*to be discussed*)

Draft Agenda for the 1st meeting (to be convened on 23 May 2022)

- I. Introduction of the sub-working group on TIP and discussion on the TF TOR
- II. Structured tour de table on main anti-trafficking responses
- III. Sharing of risk, gap, challenges in anti-trafficking responses
- IV. Proposal for meeting schedule
- V. AoB