

# Beyond a Snapshot

Learning lessons from the  
Terre des Hommes International Campaign  
against Child Trafficking (2001-2011)





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## Preface

During the last decade, governments have hastened to develop international, regional and national laws to combat human trafficking. From the start of the ten year-long International Campaign against Child Trafficking (ICaCT), Terre des Hommes (TDH) became one source of influence on governments, media and other actors. It contributed in particular by bringing attention to child trafficking, emphasising the need to work on preventing the phenomenon as well as protecting trafficked children and assisting in their recovery and reintegration.

Reviews are a vital way of finding out what has been achieved by a campaign. This review has been entrusted to Mike Dottridge, a well-known international consultant on child rights. In full transparency, the lessons learned from the ICaCT campaign are shared to increase the relevance of the future work of TDH and others. This is not a promotional document but an independent review which gives due weight also to the weak points of the ICaCT campaign. This campaign showed strong relevance, assisted children and represented an extraordinary ten year experience for Terre des Hommes and many others. It represents a wealth of learning opportunities.

Terre Des Hommes does not function with “snapshots” and puts a lot of effort into basing any work on specific evidence from the cases of children who were trafficked or at risk. Fact finding turns out to be vital for effective programming and to avoid dependence on generalisations, anecdotes or snapshots.

The initial responses to child trafficking emphasised the prosecution of traffickers. ICaCT and other civil society actors advocated for years to also include in such legal responses measures to adequately protect trafficked children. Moreover, they also pointed out the need to address the broader socioeconomic conditions that feed the phenomenon. This is a key learning point which was progressively taken on board in the ICaCT campaign and which is developed, among others, in this document. From its field projects, TDH learned by experience that the most appropriate measures to

prevent children being trafficked or exploited included general child protection measures.

Another learning point regarded the link between trafficking and migration. Often children would move within their country or across borders out of their free will and in search of better opportunities. However, once out of the care of their parents and lacking any formal protection, such children would often fall victims to exploitation and abuse. This learning point led TDH to decide on a follow-up campaign on the protection of children on the move: the "Destination Unknown" Campaign ([www.destination-unknown.org](http://www.destination-unknown.org)). The "Destination Unknown" campaign gives a broader perspective to the determinants of child exploitation and gives greater priority to children's "right to be heard" before, during and after projects or other initiatives are implemented.

I wish to thank very warmly all the partners who have taken part in the ICaCT campaign and particularly the Oak Foundation whose support has been truly strategic. All our thanks also go to all the contributors to this "lessons learned" exercise which presents key knowledge acquired during the campaign.

**Ignacio Packer**

*Secretary General*

*Terre Des Hommes International Federation*

The Terre des Hommes International Federation (TDHIF) consists of ten independent non-governmental organisations (NGOs), based in Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Spain and (comprising two organisations: Terre des Hommes Switzerland and the Terre des Hommes Foundation in Lausanne, Switzerland).



The TDHIF conducted its first joint campaign from 2001 onwards on the issue of child trafficking. It consisted of two phases: a first phase of public campaigning (2001 to 2004), which culminated in the STOP international conference against child trafficking, held in the German city of Osnabrück; and a second phase (2005 onwards) in which Terre des Hommes (TDH) organisations focused on improving the methods used in their projects and programmes to reduce child trafficking or improve the protection and assistance available to children who had been trafficked. Taken together, the two phases represented an important opportunity for TDH organisations and the NGOs they worked with as partners to learn more about a specific pattern of child abuse, mainly affecting children who had moved away from home, and how to respond to it. The campaign also offered opportunities for TDH organisations which functioned separately to join forces and achieve more than they could by themselves.

In 2012 the TDHIF invited a consultant who had been involved at various stages of this campaign to assess what lessons could be learnt from this campaign, both for TDH organisations and for others. He reviewed documentation produced during the campaign, including evaluations and publications, and collected comments from nine TDH staff in four different organisations, three regional campaign coordinators and four people from outside TDH who were familiar with TDH and its campaign.

# 1 | The Context in which the Campaign took place

The United Nations (UN) adopted a new international legal instrument in November 2000, the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. This contained a new definition of trafficking in persons and more particularly defined what was to be understood by child trafficking. The issue of human trafficking in general, and trafficking in children in particular, was highly relevant during the subsequent decade and anti-trafficking projects and initiatives attracted a great deal of funding. However, by the end of the decade, when funding declined, it was still not clear how much had been achieved.



Some key developments during TDH's campaign are summarised in Table 1 on the next page. In the early part of the last decade, between 2002 and 2006, numerous declarations against trafficking were adopted in specific regions of the world and governments proceeded to ratify the UN Trafficking Protocol and to adopt new legislation (or amend existing laws) to enforce it. Noting various weaknesses in the UN Trafficking Protocol's provisions concerning protection and assistance, various international organisations developed sets of guidelines about the protection of people who had been trafficked, including children. In 2003 UNICEF adopted a set of Guidelines for Protection of the Rights of Child Victims of Trafficking in Southeast Europe, which were developed into a set of global Guidelines for the Protection of Child Victims of Trafficking in 2006.



<b>2000</b>	<p>(May) UN adopts <i>Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography</i>.</p> <p>(November) UN adopts <i>Trafficking Protocol</i> (the 'Palermo Protocol').</p>
<b>2001</b>	<p>(October) Terre des Hommes' International Campaign against Child Trafficking (ICaCT) was launched.</p> <p>(December) 2<sup>nd</sup> World Congress against the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Japan.</p>
<b>2002</b>	<p>(May) UN High Commissioner for Human Rights issues <i>Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking</i>.</p> <p>(June) ILO 'global report' on child labour estimates 1.2 million children had been trafficked.</p> <p>(November) Publication by Asia ACTs of <i>Asia's Children in Peril. A regional study on Child Trafficking</i>.</p>
<b>2003</b>	<p>(May) UNICEF issues 1st version of UNICEF <i>Guidelines for Protection of the Rights of Children Victims Trafficking in Southeastern Europe</i>.</p> <p>(December) 12 December marked as 'anti child trafficking day' for the first time in various regions.</p>
<b>2004</b>	<p>(May) TDHIF published <i>Kids as Commodities? Child Trafficking and What to do about it</i>.</p> <p>(August) TDH Foundation delegation in Albania and partner ARSIS in Greece focus on preventing children being trafficked to beg during the Olympic Games in Greece.</p> <p>(November) TDH STOP international conference on child trafficking in Osnabrück, attended by 200+ from 30+ countries and ending with "Osnabrück Declaration".</p>
<b>2005</b>	<p>TDH Germany passes responsibility for coordinating the ICaCT to the TDH Foundation.</p> <p>UNICEF Guidelines reissued for West Africa.</p> <p>Council of Europe adopted <i>Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings</i>.</p>
<b>2006</b>	<p>(September) UNICEF issues 'provisional' global <i>Guidelines on the Protection of Child Victims of Trafficking</i>.</p> <p>European Union starts marking 18 October as European anti-trafficking day.</p>
<b>2007</b>	<p>(March) Launch of UN.GIFT (Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking), lasting until 2010 (and still active in 2012).</p> <p>(December) ASEAN Ministers endorse <i>Guidelines on the Protection of the Rights of Trafficked Children in South East Asia</i>.</p>
<b>2008</b>	<p>(February) UN.GIFT 'Vienna Forum' conference on human trafficking.</p> <p><i>Philippines Guidelines for the Protection of Trafficked Children</i> adopted.</p> <p>(November) 3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress against the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in Brazil. <i>TDHIF publishes Kids Abroad: ignore them, abuse them or protect them?</i></p>
<b>2009</b>	<p>(February) TDH holds two-day conference in Brussels at the end of the TDH joint project on trafficking in South Asia.</p> <p>European Commission &amp; the International Labour Office issue 'Delhi indicators' (to help identify adults or children trafficked in Europe).</p>
<b>2010</b>	<p>(May and November) TDH workshops in Kolkata (India) and Bangkok (Thailand) to reassess methods used to protect children on the move.</p>
<b>2011</b>	<p>(April) European Union adopts new <i>Directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims</i>, replacing 2002 Framework Decision.</p> <p>(May) Workshop for TDH organisations in South Asia on 'Building futures - Supporting the Recovery and Reintegration of Trafficked Children'.</p>



# 2 | Campaign Plan, Objectives and Activities

The campaign had two main phases, phase 1 from 2001 until 2004 and phase 2 from 2005 until about 2010. When the campaign started, it was intended to achieve four sets of results:

1. Awareness campaigns were expected to have mobilized the general public and others in the 'global North' to become more active in the combat against child trafficking;
2. Awareness campaigns and advocacy work in the global South were expected to be preventing children at risk from being trafficked;
3. Lobbying and advocacy work were expected to have mobilized decision makers and opinion leaders to promote the combat against child trafficking in their respective fields of work;
4. The relations between NGOs in the global North and their partners in the developing world concerning awareness raising, lobbying and advocacy work were expected to have been strengthened.

To achieve these objectives, a campaign coordinator was appointed at the headquarters of TDH Germany and a set of regional campaign coordinators were appointed. In practice, Phase 1 saw a focus on lobbying governments to ratify the UN Trafficking Protocol and to adopt legislation punishing traffickers. It also saw attempts by Terre des Hommes and its partners to fill an information gap about what was happening in particular countries or regions, with the publication of a series of reports about child trafficking in specific countries or regions or at a global level<sup>1</sup>. To start with, these were based on existing sources of information, some fairly unreliable, but as the campaign progressed, reports presenting the evidence gathered in the course of Terre des Hommes' own projects were made public.

In Phase 2 of the campaign, responsibility for coordination moved to the TDH Foundation in Lausanne (Switzerland) and three issues were selected for special attention:

1. Campaigning and advocacy: particularly securing support for the UNICEF *Guidelines for the Protection of the Rights of Child Victims of Trafficking*<sup>2</sup> and pressing international bodies to encourage the implementation of these;
2. Research and monitoring: focusing on research gaps and working with partners for 'capacity building' purposes;
3. Coalition development and capacity building: strengthening the TDH network on child trafficking and promoting its long-term sustainability.

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<sup>1</sup> Such as *Del abuso al olvido. Tráfico de niños y niñas* (Bolivia y Perú), Terre des Hommes Germany, 2001; Asia ACTS' *Asia's Children in Peril. A regional study on Child Trafficking*, 2002; *The Trafficking of Albanian Children in Greece*, TDH Foundation, 2003; *Kids as Commodities. Child Trafficking and What to do about it*, TDHIF, 2004.

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<sup>2</sup> See UNICEF Guidelines for Protection of the Rights of Child Victims of Trafficking in Southeastern Europe (reproduced in UNICEF, Reference Guide on Protecting the Rights of Child Victims of Trafficking in Europe, 2006, accessed at [http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/protection\\_4440.html](http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/protection_4440.html)) and UNICEF Guidelines on the Protection of Child Victims of Trafficking (global guidelines) at [http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/media\\_1231.html](http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/media_1231.html).





Phase 2 was much more about influencing TDH activities in the course of projects in the global south. This phase saw the publication of some rather more technical reports about methods that could be used in projects to prevent child trafficking or to improve the assistance made available to trafficked children. These included:

- A 42-page 'policy' on the work on one TDH organisation on child trafficking (Child Trafficking. Thematic Policy), issued by the TDH Foundation in 2006<sup>3</sup>. This focused on the TDH Foundation's anti-trafficking programming, offering information to its own staff and others on how to plan anti-child trafficking programmes and emphasising the importance of including a range of complementary initiatives on prevention, assistance, advocacy and networking;
- A handbook on planning projects to prevent child trafficking (TDHIF and TDH Foundation, 2007);<sup>4</sup>
- Combating Child Trafficking: A User's Handbook (Haq [in English and Hindi], New Delhi, 2007);<sup>5</sup>
- In pursuit of good practice in responses to child trafficking. Experiences from Latin America, Southeast Europe and Southeast Asia (TDHIF and TDH Netherlands, 2010)<sup>6</sup> was a report prepared at the end of a European Commission-financed consortium project;
- (Re) Building the Future. Terre des Hommes Projects and programmes working in Asia supporting the Recovery and Reintegration of Trafficked Children. A handbook for project staff and Front-line workers (2011)<sup>7</sup> was prepared as part of another joint initiative, this one supported by the Oak Foundation.

In this phase of the campaign, TDH expanded a website based in Nepal, [www.childtrafficking.com](http://www.childtrafficking.com), which had been set up in 2004. Although other organisations were also running digital libraries about human trafficking in the middle of the last decade, most have ceased functioning, so by 2012 this one was a valuable resource. In 2007 it counted 100,000 unique visitors who downloaded approximately 66,000 documents. During a recent 12-month period (July 2011 to June 2012) a total of 168,722 visits were recorded and 10,327,032 documents were downloaded, suggesting that the website is still having a significant influence. In addition to its visitors, the website also sent routine e-mails to subscribers (1,900 in 2008) about new additions to the library. From 2007 onwards TDH also ran a website dedicated to child protection in South East Europe, reporting on both child trafficking and broader issues concerning the protection of children on the move in this region and within Europe in general.<sup>8</sup>

In Phase 2, TDH also took advantage of the campaign on child trafficking to learn about child protection methods which could bring broader benefits to children, both by contributing to the development of national child protection systems and by identifying methods that could protect children on the move (both unaccompanied child migrants and those moving with their families, either within their own country or abroad). The TDHIF issued a report on the second of these issues in 2008<sup>9</sup> and contributed to other learning exercises subsequently.

3 Available at <http://tdh.ch/en/documents/thematic-policy---fight-against-child-trafficking>.

4 Available at <http://www.terredeshommes.org/index.php?page=res.pub&lang=>. This was preceded by a joint TDH-UNICEF publication, Action to prevent child trafficking in South Eastern Europe. A Preliminary Assessment, 2006).

5 Available at <http://www.haqrcr.org/publications/combat-child-trafficking>.

6 Available at <http://tdh-childprotection.org/documents/in-pursuit-of-good-practice-in-responses-to-child-trafficking>.

7 This was prepared as a draft for comment. A definitive version is due to be published later in 2012. The draft was available in early 2012 at [http://www.terredeshommes.org/pdf/handbook/201204\\_tdh\\_asia\\_reintegration\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.terredeshommes.org/pdf/handbook/201204_tdh_asia_reintegration_handbook.pdf).

8 See [www.tdh-childprotection.org](http://www.tdh-childprotection.org), still operating in mid-2012.

9 Kids Abroad: ignore them, abuse them or protect them? Lessons on how to protect children on the move from being exploited, available at [http://www.terredeshommes.org/pdf/publication/kids\\_abroad.pdf](http://www.terredeshommes.org/pdf/publication/kids_abroad.pdf).

# 3 | General Results of The Campaign

During Phase 1 the campaign was one of a variety of sources of influence on governments, donors, the media and wider public opinion that tried to convince them that human trafficking in general, and child trafficking in particular, constituted genuine problems that merited their attention and demanded a response.

By focusing on children, rather than ‘women and children’ combined together (as in the title of the UN Trafficking Protocol), this phase of the campaign helped focus on the specific situation and rights of trafficked children and the fact that methods that were appropriate to prevent the trafficking of children or to protect or assist them were often different to those developed in response to the trafficking of adult women (or men).

From 2004 onwards, the particular focus that the campaign put on the rights of trafficked children, along with the procedures for protecting and assisting them, resulted in UNICEF’s Guidelines getting a higher profile than would otherwise have been the case. In Southeast Asia the campaign was especially successful in convincing a regional intergovernmental organisation to adopt a regional version of the guidelines. Some governments then adopted national versions (see ‘Southeast Asia’ in 4.4 below). However, in other regions of the world the capacity of child protection officials and others to distinguish between cases of child trafficking and other forms of migration and exploitation was much more limited: specialist guidelines on protecting children who has specifically been trafficked consequently seemed to some child protection professionals to have too narrow a focus to be appropriate for them to call on the government to give priority to implementing them.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the legal requirement in all countries which had ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that the best interests of the child be a primary consideration in actions affecting a child, together with the obligation to take views expressed by a child into account (articles 3 and 12 of the Convention) gave TDH and its partners powerful arguments for arguing that measures to protect or assist trafficked children had to be based on these principles.

A great deal was learned in different projects supported by TDH about what methods were appropriate and effective for enabling trafficked children to recover from the abuse they had experienced. Some TDH organisations also learned valuable lessons about the types of intervention that could help prevent children being trafficked. Rather than being restricted to ‘awareness raising’ exercises that provided young people and their families with information about the risk of being trafficked, these identified specific child protection measures that reduced the likelihood of children being trafficked.



<sup>10</sup> For example, in West Africa UNICEF developed a handbook on turning the guidelines into reality, but government specialists were reticent about investing the resources necessary to implement this.

# 4 | Results of the Campaign in specific Regions of the World



Both phases of the campaign saw efforts to organise regional campaigns in pursuit of the campaign's objectives. The campaign in some regions, such as South Asia, was active in Phase 1, while TDH Germany supported the campaign, but ended in 2005. In other regions, such as Europe and West Africa, regional coordinators were more active during Phase 2. In some regions, such as the Andean region of Latin America, activities in Phase 2 continued under the auspices of specific projects. Two of the regional coordination structures registered as autonomous NGOs and are still active today: Asia Acts against Children Trafficking (Asia ACTs) in Southeast Asia and the Southern Africa Network against Trafficking and Abuse of Children (SANTAC).

**4.1 | Europe (especially Southeast Europe)** During Phase 1, the TDH Foundation's delegation in Albania developed considerable expertise on the issue of minority children being taken to neighbouring Greece and forced to earn money by begging, developing a specific model to respond to such cases (known as 'Transnational Action against Child Trafficking'<sup>11</sup>) that coordinated the activities of NGOs in two different locations—where children were recruited and where they were exploited. This model was replicated with some success between Moldova and Russia and also between Albania and Kosovo, but in other places replication proved difficult. Phase 2 saw a gradual reorientation in Albania and other parts of Southeast Europe from the issue of child trafficking to the development of more general child protection systems. In 2010 TDH and other NGOs working in a joint project (Project Mario) played a significant role in trying to influence the terms of a new European Union Directive on trafficking (adopted in 2011).

**4.2 | Latin America (the Andean region)** The campaign focused on Bolivia and Peru and, to a lesser extent, on Colombia, collecting data about cases of trafficking and trying, in Phase 2, to influence the way that journalists reported on cases of child trafficking. UNICEF's Guidelines were translated into Spanish in 2008 but were not the focus of substantial advocacy by either UNICEF or TDH's partners.

### 4.3 | South Asia

The campaign was initially organised in India by one of TDH Germany's partners, the New Delhi-based NGO, Haq. The campaign in India helped ensure that, when a National Plan of Action for Children was adopted in 2005, it addressed all forms and purposes of child trafficking and provided for suitable strategies to be adopted in response. Haq followed up the campaign by publishing *Combating Child Trafficking: A User's Handbook* in English and Hindi in 2007 (it was translated into Telugu and continues to be used in Andhra Pradesh). TDH continued

supporting projects against child trafficking in Bangladesh, India and Nepal, but there was relatively little coordination between them in Phase 2.

**4.4 | Southeast Asia** During Phase 1, Asia ACTs developed a network in seven countries and registered as an autonomous NGO. The network achieved notable successes, getting 12 December marked in most Southeast Asian countries as an annual 'day against child trafficking' from 2003 onwards and persuading ministers of the main regional organisation, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), in 2007 to adopt a regional version of the guidelines to protect trafficked children (national guidelines were subsequently developed and adopted in Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines). In comparison to UNICEF's original guidelines, these gave extra attention to issues of care and protection for the staff of organisations looking after trafficked children.

An initial focus on 'community education' (about child trafficking) was regarded by Asia ACTs as a strategic way of encouraging local level NGOs to become better informed about child trafficking. Once they received information about the cases of individual trafficked children, NGOs generally recognised that they needed to learn how to assist children in an appropriate way, how to participate in a wider referral system, etc. The initial priority given to child rights also enabled the network to introduce the concept of child participation, which was not well-known among NGOs in the network. In 2009 Asia ACTs summarised the lessons it had learned in a publication, *Aspirations and Explorations. Good practices of the Campaign against Child Trafficking in Southeast Asia*.<sup>12</sup>

11 For information on TACT, see <http://tdh-childprotection.org/projects/tact/description>.

12 Accessed at: [http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/asia\\_acts\\_09\\_exploration\\_0710.pdf](http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/asia_acts_09_exploration_0710.pdf).

#### 4.5 | *Southern Africa*

The Southern Africa Network against Trafficking and Abuse of Children (SANTAC) started as part of a Southern Africa Regional Campaign against Child Abuse launched in June 2002, developed into a specific network of organisations working against child trafficking in 2005 and later became an autonomous NGO. The World Cup in South Africa in 2010 gave it special new opportunities and led to a '2010 World Cup Regional Awareness Campaign'.



#### 4.6 | *West Africa*

There had been a focus on child trafficking in this region from the late 1990s onwards, as a result of publicity about child workers working in harsh conditions in countries other than their own, notably in domestic work and in cocoa cultivation. TDH's special contribution was to identify the counter-productive effects of the blanket assumption that all such children were being trafficked and to develop an alternative analysis with other organisations concerned with child rights, including a recognition that migrant children benefited from 'indigenous child protection practices' as much as (or more than) national, government-run child protection systems.<sup>13</sup> This moved the focus from providing assistance to exploited and abused children in a few reception centres based in cities to prevention initiatives in rural areas and at work sites.



<sup>13</sup> See *Quelle protection pour les enfants concernés par la mobilité en Afrique de l'Ouest? Nos positions et recommandations. Rapport régional de synthèse - Projet «Mobilités», 2011*, issued in 2011 by the Projet régional commun d'étude sur les mobilités des enfants et des jeunes en Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre, which included the Terre des Hommes Foundation.



# 5 | Lessons learned from the Campaign



The experience of this campaign resulted in some lessons on the specific issue of child trafficking and some about the way that TDH organisations should organise their work in future, particularly in joint campaigns.

## 5.1 | *Lessons about child trafficking*

### 1. A simple or a complex issue?

At the beginning of the campaign, the issue of child trafficking appeared relatively straightforward. Crimes were being committed against children, which were going largely unnoticed, so governments needed lobbying to persuade them to take action. As the years went by, however, the complexity of the issue became more obvious, along with the risk that certain messages linked to the campaign could have unexpected or even counter-productive effects for children. It also became clearer that trafficking cases represented an extreme along a continuum involving children who moved from one place to another—the most abusive end of the continuum—so, measures to prevent trafficking needed to be supplemented by a range of other measures to protect unaccompanied children and other children who had left home, whether they remained in their own country or went abroad.

### 2. The importance of accurate information and evidence

Much information available about human trafficking at the beginning of the last decade (at the time the UN Trafficking Protocol was adopted) has been shown to be inaccurate or exaggerated and not particularly helpful when designing specific trafficking-related interventions. So, it was not surprising that effective programming was found by TDH organisations to depend on obtaining case-specific evidence about children who had been trafficked (and also about children in similar situations who were not trafficked). This made it possible to ensure that initiatives to stop trafficking related directly to the specific circumstances of the children concerned. In turn this confirmed the importance of including a period of fact-finding in the preparation of any campaign or focus on a new topic (and avoiding dependence on generalisations or anecdotes). It also highlights a particular obstacle to effective programming which occurs if and when government agencies or organisations caring for trafficked children put such tight restrictions on access to them that little or no information is made available

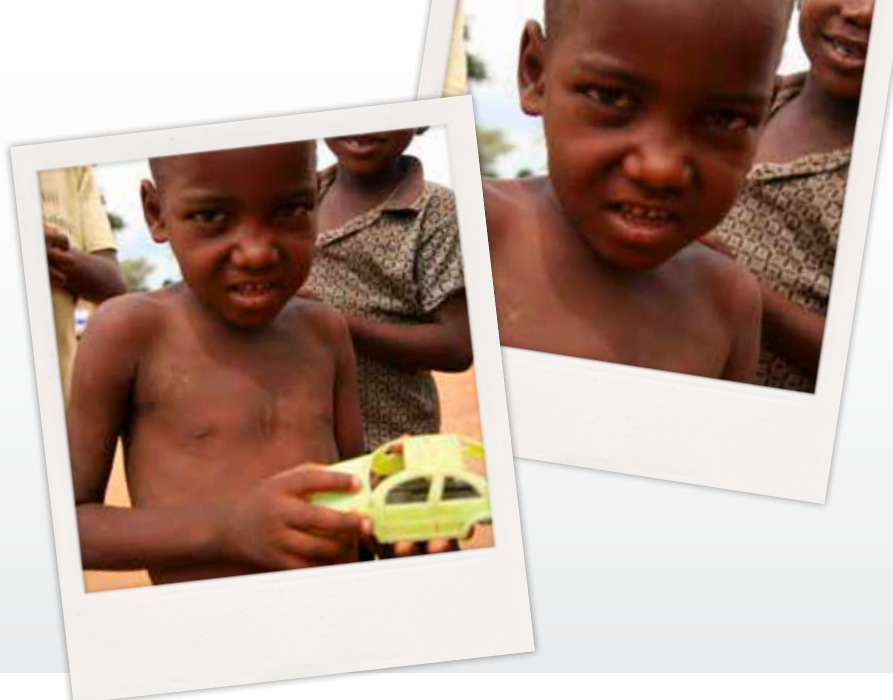
about their specific circumstances (even when restrictions are imposed in order to protect the children concerned). It is clearly vital to protect the identity and privacy of the children concerned, but TDH programmes found it relatively easy to make details about individual children's cases anonymous and found it was possible to share such information for programming purposes without causing further harm to the children who provided information.

### 3. Moving to a broader child protection approach

In some countries, while TDH continued to focus on the predicament of children who were trafficked or otherwise to be exploited by earning money for someone else, the most appropriate measures to prevent such children being trafficked or exploited were found to be general child protection measures. So, for example, in Albania TDH first worked with local government-run services to improve child protection in a local area and later made it a priority to support the development of the State's child protection system in general. As conventional child protection systems were shown to be weak at protecting unaccompanied children (either in their own country or abroad), ensuring government-run systems benefit children on the move in an appropriate way remains a priority.

### 4. Working with others

The experience in both Southeast Europe and other regions showed that much more could be achieved if TDH worked together with other organisations, either in coalitions against child trafficking established at national level or networks such as Asia ACTs. This lesson is unsurprising in view of the benefits from coordination and collective approaches, which were pointed out by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) from 2002 onwards. However, working with other organisations with different priorities and working methods was usually time-consuming and, in initial stages, often frustrating.



### 5. Identifying harmful side-effects

Once governments enacted the legislation against human trafficking that the campaign called for, this was not necessarily implemented in a way that respected children's rights. In the worst cases, responses that appeared at first sight to be justified in order to stop children being trafficked, such as intercepting them at international borders or while travelling to a city to seek work, turned out to be abusive (and sometimes to put children into greater danger than before).<sup>14</sup>

An obvious conclusion is that campaign advocacy messages need to be carefully tailored to ensure they will not generate harmful effects for children, such as policies that prevent them from migrating or getting ahead in life. A second lesson is that special attention is needed in the course of monitoring and evaluation to identify unexpected or even counter-productive results for children. Recognition that there was a risk of counter-productive effects for children that needed to be checked did not translate easily into a standard method to identify such effects. However, it emphasised the need to seek feedback from children in a much more systematic way than either Terre des Hommes or its partners had been doing. This means giving greater priority to children's 'right to be heard' before, during and after projects or other initiatives are implemented which are intended to benefit them.

### 6. UNICEF Guidelines are not necessarily a priority for every country

At the end of its exercise in 2006 to design a set of global Guidelines for the Protection of Child Victims of Trafficking, UNICEF itself appeared unsure about the extent to which it wanted to press governments to implement these guidelines. Not surprisingly, in pressing governments to consult the guidelines and to adopt procedures to protect trafficked children based on them, TDH and its partners experienced varied results. In places where, for a variety of reasons, the distinction between trafficked children and other migrants or exploited children were not well understood or were not even clear in practice, convincing the authorities to agree to apply the Guidelines was not necessarily an appropriate priority. One lesson is that some preliminary steps need to have been taken before more sophisticated instruments to protect specific categories of children are adopted (steps such as acquiring enough evidence about patterns of human trafficking in a particular country to enable the authorities and NGOs to distinguish between children who are trafficked and children who are migrating in other circumstances).

<sup>14</sup> E.g., in Burkina Faso, where adolescent girls who had previously travelled in public transport in groups to seek work in the city started travelling alone or in smaller groups to avoid being identified by traffic police as 'trafficked'.



## 7. Contacts with the media

During their child trafficking campaign, TDH organisations learned a great deal about the need to manage public information and their relations with journalists in ways that avoid abused and exploited children from coming to further harm. Once journalists recognised that Terre des Hommes was focusing specifically on child trafficking, they were quick to approach TDH offices with requests to visit countries which were the subject of reports about child trafficking, where they wanted to interview trafficked children (this was usually reckoned not to be appropriate for the children concerned). This required careful coordination between TDH offices in Europe and those working in the country which journalists visited. As the internet has grown in influence, the chance that information made public on one side of the world will be noticed and have an effect on the other side of the globe has increased, also requiring better coordination between press officers based in Europe and their partners elsewhere.

This increased the importance of knowing what the media was saying, particularly about countries where TDH or its partners were running child trafficking-related projects. Various methods were found for monitoring and influencing the quality of media reports on the issue of child trafficking, most of which could be replicated on other child rights issues. For example, in Southeast Europe, TDH and its partners developed a 'Grading system for press reviews', a method for objectively assessing the quality of newspaper reports.<sup>15</sup> Methods for promoting better quality reporting including organising short courses for journalists (e.g., in Bolivia) and awarding prizes to the authors of good quality articles (e.g., in Southeast Europe). However, as the campaign progressed, new media continued to expand (e.g., on internet), and it was harder to monitor television, radio and internet methodically than print media. It also proved more difficult to persuade editors and media proprietors than regular journalists that they should give priority to ensuring that children did not suffer further harm from public exposure in the media under their control.

<sup>15</sup> For further information, see <http://tdh-childprotection.org/reviews> and also 'Influencing the Media' in *In pursuit of good practice in responses to child trafficking. Experiences from Latin America, Southeast Europe and Southeast Asia* (TDHIF and Terre des Hommes Netherlands, 2010).





## 5.2 | *Lessons about organising an international campaign*

Many of the lessons learned from the campaign related to the way in which a set of autonomous organisations should organise any joint action—relating to the campaign’s aims, governance and planning methods. At the internal organisational level, TDH organisations learned about the difficulties of running a single campaign across the world, not only among TDH organisations which use different methods, but with their independent NGO partners. It was clear that doing so requires considerable effort, whether to secure agreement from the headquarters of the various TDH organisations based in Europe, or to hammer out specific campaign messages and advocacy targets in particular regions or countries.

## 8. Speaking a common language

Some lessons were clear. In order to avoid misunderstandings, ensuring that all the organisations participating in a campaign understand technical terms in the same way is helpful. This means developing a glossary which defines and explains any technical terms which are used (including words which appear to have a standard international definition, such as ‘trafficking’, ‘exploitation’ or even ‘protection’<sup>16</sup>), so as to ensure that everyone involved means the same thing.

## 9. One message with many voices or a variety of messages on a common theme?

Other conclusions are less clear, in particular concerning the extent to which an effective campaign should be planned or coordinated centrally or rather run at local (or regional) level. While it is easy, as a matter of principle, to encourage local ‘ownership’ and management of a campaign, TDH secured most of the funding for campaign activities and related projects from donors in Europe. The largest of these, the European Commission, requires projects to be centrally managed (and, usually, to be designed in such a short time that there is little room for consultation with partners across the globe). Further, devolving responsibility for the campaign to regional level potentially means that campaigns in different parts of the world adopt different priorities or even contradictory messages. Ensuring some coordination at global level among many different organisations is therefore essential.

<sup>16</sup> In the context of trafficking, ‘protection’ generally refers to actions to protect an individual who had been trafficked from further harm, specifically to the actions taken under the authority of the State (e.g., granting temporary residence status to a foreign adult or child who has been trafficked, undertaking a best interest determination, etc.), a significantly different meaning to the term ‘child protection’ which has the potential to cause confusion when child protection measures are used as a method to prevent a child being trafficked.



## 10. Coordinating the campaign at regional level

Developing a regional campaign was easier when it was possible to build on a pre-existing network or on existing expertise, rather than starting from scratch. For example, it was helpful in India that Haq, the NGO which coordinated India's Campaign Against Child Trafficking, had played a leading role in the country's Campaign Against Child Labour. In the absence of any coordination structure at national or regional level, it was not possible to develop collective advocacy strategies and the campaign consequently had less impact. When coordination structures are perceived to be based locally (rather than imposed by donors or international organisations), they usually have more legitimacy and prove more effective. The fact that two of the regional coordination structures established during the campaign, Asia ACTs and SANTAC, remain active today suggests that the issues they are working on remain relevant and still need to be addressed.

## 11. Improving project methods with advice on 'good practice'

Maintaining a digital library on the topic that is the subject of a campaign potentially enables all the organisations involved to obtain publications on the topic and to deposit their own publications there. However, in Phase 1 of the campaign relatively few of TDH partners had easy access to internet and to digital libraries. The situation (of internet access) has improved in many areas since 2004, though there is still a danger of some NGOs being excluded if all or most information is made available on internet.

The publication of a series of handbooks and other technical advice on how to design and implement projects to reduce child trafficking demonstrated that TDH organisations knew how to develop their expertise and to distil it for others to consult. However, the influence of these publications on new initiatives designed by TDH organisations or their partners is less clear. A possible conclusion is that TDH knew how to develop and present its expertise, but not how to ensure that this expertise came to the attention of programme and project planners within TDH organisations or other NGOs. This in turn has various implications. First, it suggests that publishing

and disseminating reports on good practice is not sufficient in itself, but needs to be supplemented by suitable training programmes (possibly on-line training, preferably interactive in some way). Secondly, it may be that NGOs are more inclined to pay attention to 'lessons learned' or exercises to identify good practice if they themselves have taken part in the exercise. This conclusion leads to a conundrum, for programmers and project managers are usually busy people who have no spare time to dedicate to such exercises unless they are convinced at the outset that it will be beneficial for their work and for the children they seek to benefit, rather than only for the work of others. One way of coping with this is to follow the example of the handbook on the recovery and reintegration of trafficked children that TDH issued in 2011 as a draft,<sup>17</sup> encouraging organisations which had not been directly consulted in the preparation of the handbook to review and comment on it before a definitive version is issued.

<sup>17</sup> See (Re) *Building the Future. Terre des Hommes Projects and programmes working in Asia supporting the Recovery and Reintegration of Trafficked Children. A handbook for project staff and Front-line workers* (2011 – as a draft for comment), accessed in early 2012 at [http://www.terredeshommes.org/pdf/handbook/201204\\_tdh\\_asia\\_reintegration\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.terredeshommes.org/pdf/handbook/201204_tdh_asia_reintegration_handbook.pdf)



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The Terre des Hommes International Federation (TDHIF) is a network of ten national Terre des Hommes organisations, whose mission is to provide active support to children, their family and their community without racial, religious, political, cultural or gender-based discrimination, in the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The TDHIF has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), UNICEF, ILO and the Council of Europe.

The Terre des Hommes organisations mobilise political will, advocate for appropriate government policies and run 1043 development and humanitarian aid projects in 72 countries in close partnership with local and national NGOs. They also carry out research and evaluations to document the impact of interventions and uphold project quality. Projects are run in close partnership with the beneficiaries who are the primary actors in their own lives, including children.

The author of this study is Mike Dottridge, an independent human rights consultant. He is the author of several other publications issued by Terre des Hommes: *Kids as Commodities. Child trafficking and what to do about it* (2004) and *A Handbook on planning projects to prevent child trafficking* (2007), as well as one joint Terre des Hommes – UNICEF publication, *Action to prevent child trafficking in South Eastern Europe. A Preliminary Assessment* (2006). He was the director of a London-based non-governmental organisation, Anti-Slavery International, from 1996 until 2002. He lives and works in the United Kingdom.

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**Project manager:** Eylah Kadjar, TDHIF

**Photo credits:** Bruno Neri, Terre des Hommes Italy

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