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BUILDING A **SAFE AND RESILIENT CANADA**



Public Safety Canada

2018 Human Trafficking Consultations Report

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Cat. No. PS18-47/2019E-PDF

ISBN 978-0-660-30532-5

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1. Executive Summary

Following the formal evaluation of Canada's *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking*, in effect from 2012-2016, the federal government committed to establish a National Human Trafficking Hotline and launch a consultation process to help inform the Government of Canada's efforts toward a new national strategy to combat human trafficking.

As part of this process, in September and October 2018, Public Safety Canada (Public Safety) conducted a series of in-person consultations, with the assistance of Hill + Knowlton Strategies, in Vancouver, Winnipeg and Montreal, a National Summit and a survivor Roundtable in Toronto, and a meeting with sex work organizations in Ottawa. Public Safety also solicited input from targeted stakeholders, including those unable to attend the in-person sessions and those requesting to do so, via an online questionnaire. More than 200 stakeholders, including victims and survivors, took part in the in-person meetings, with a further 42 submissions received via the questionnaire. Stakeholders consulted included representatives from non-governmental organizations, Indigenous organizations, law enforcement agencies, academia, front-line service providers, different levels of government, civil society, and the private sector.

These consultations were intended, in part, to identify issues, gaps and challenges affecting Canada's ability to counter human trafficking and to identify potential actions and initiatives to address them.

This report breaks down the findings of the consultations by key themes identified in participants' responses. For the regional roundtables and National Summit, these are presented within the framework of Canada's current '4-P' approach to combat human trafficking: prevention; protection; prosecutions; and, partnerships. It should be noted that the views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the participants and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Government of Canada. It should also be noted that the report uses the terms "victim" and "survivor" interchangeably to refer to trafficked individuals.

1.1. Key Considerations for a New Human Trafficking Strategy

Overview

Participants at the regional roundtables, National Summit, Survivor Roundtable, and meeting with sex work organizations, and those from the questionnaire identified several challenges and areas of opportunity for consideration toward the development of a new national human trafficking strategy for Canada. One of the most notable was the need for increased trauma-informed and victim-centric supports and services to protect and rehabilitate victims and survivors, including physical, psychological and social supports. Stakeholders highlighted that to maintain these services, sustainable and core funding is needed, particularly to address the unique challenges faced by rural and remote communities in accessing and providing these resources. Victims and survivors at the Survivor Roundtable in Toronto particularly called for officials to continually draw upon their experiences during the development and implementation of a new national strategy.

Participants agreed there needs to be more collaboration and cooperation among all stakeholders for a more cohesive and effective ‘4-P’ approach to combatting human trafficking. Challenges faced by law enforcement, including enforcing existing anti-trafficking legislation, and perceived inconsistencies in legislation, regulations and policies across jurisdictions, also need to be addressed. Training for law enforcement was also identified as a priority in order to improve on communication, namely between law enforcement and victims, to ensure respectful and sensitive language and approaches are used when interviewing and interacting with victims. Participants also identified a need for training for criminal justice practitioners to enhance rates of prosecution under Canada’s human trafficking *Criminal Code* provisions, and for front-line professionals on how to properly identify people in situations of coercion, exploitation and trafficking. Increased public awareness was also highlighted as an important initiative to help prevent and curb the effects of human trafficking. Several participants also noted that a strategy should emphasize addressing the root socio-economic causes of human trafficking, such as reducing the vulnerabilities of marginalized groups and addressing the specific challenges faced by Indigenous women and children.

Supports and Services for Victims and Survivors

The lack of access to and availability of supports and services for victims and survivors was identified by participants as the most common obstacle to combat human trafficking effectively in Canada. A need for sustainable and core funding – especially for grassroots and community-level organizations – was cited by some as an additional constraint. It was noted that many rural, remote and northern communities and organizations face unique challenges due to geography, precarious funding arrangements or varying cultural needs. It was suggested that these challenges could be mitigated through the use of video-conferencing and other technology-based services, where appropriate.

Increasing trauma-informed supports and victim-centric services for survivors was cited as a key consideration in enhancing victim protection. Services should be culturally sensitive and provided through a lens of compassion. Recognizing the lifecycle of trauma, participants emphasized the importance of providing services in the short, medium, and long-term. Some suggestions included physical, psychological and social support through emergency shelters, transition housing, and long-term care and rehabilitation programs. It was also suggested that offering support programs in languages other than English and French may help to reduce barriers for victims whose mother tongue is neither, including migrant workers and recent immigrants. Participants also spoke on the necessity of addressing apparent inequalities in various victim support programs and increasing the availability of sustainable funding and transition services. It was also noted that tailoring services for Indigenous victims would help ensure culturally relevant and victim-focused care. For Indigenous survivors, this could include using Indigenous healing circles and lodges and involving Elders from the community.

These key considerations were reinforced by questionnaire respondents, who emphasized the need to ensure services are provided quickly, in a non-judgmental way, and with victim protection as the primary goal. Support services with flexible hours of operation can help high-risk groups,

while creating a forum for survivors to help newly identified victims can also strengthen the effectiveness of interventions.

Public Awareness and Training

Many participants viewed public awareness and training for professionals and civil society as important factors to increase knowledge of human trafficking and sensitivity in aiding victims and survivors. These efforts can help communities and stakeholders better recognize the signs of human trafficking and respond swiftly and appropriately to incidents. Several respondents suggested implementing general public education and awareness campaigns that would aim to reduce the stigmatization of victims and survivors and increase prevention and harm-reduction efforts, particularly through youth engagement.

Participants especially advocated for more robust, trauma-informed training for professionals who are most frequently exposed to individuals and groups at high risk of victimization. These include front-line service providers such as law enforcement, health workers and helpline operators. It was also noted that training should be more widely available and tailored for other stakeholders including lawyers, prosecutors, and corrections personnel. It was suggested that all training should include information on appropriate language to use when working with victims and survivors of human trafficking. The safety risks faced by victims and survivors should be communicated to them by professionals, in preparation for interaction with the justice system. Participants noted that training is a foundation to a more effective response to human trafficking, and is relevant to other elements of a new national strategy.

Increased Collaboration and Cooperation

Many respondents said that combatting human trafficking effectively in Canada requires an integrated, comprehensive and gender-based approach that applies a combination of legislation, policy and programming to align trafficking prevention with ongoing federal, provincial, territorial, regional and local initiatives. Promising practices developed from local initiatives, such as emergency response protocols, mobile services for outreach workers, and community hubs for prevention, intervention and rehabilitation, could be shared with partners across Canada to provide a more holistic, effective approach to combatting human trafficking. Collaboration among service providers and law enforcement agencies was seen as especially important in ensuring greater victim protection and rehabilitation.

A common suggestion to increase collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders was training to ensure greater awareness of the resources available from engaged organizations for tackling human trafficking. This could be done through an online portal or one-stop database, as well as regular surveys or consultations that use a wide variety of data collection techniques (e.g., in-person interviews, telephone, online or hard-copy questionnaires) to reach marginalized populations, vulnerable communities and victims and survivors. Several respondents noted that enhanced information exchanges could, in some cases, require formal data-sharing agreements or legislative changes, and that privacy concerns must be considered and addressed. Increased collaboration was cited as an important consideration, particularly as it was felt that it would enhance reliable, empirically based data collection and information sharing on human trafficking.

Law Enforcement

Inconsistencies in legislation, regulations, programs and policies across jurisdictions were considered to be another barrier to effectively combat human trafficking nationwide. Participants pointed to challenges in how federal laws are applied at the local level, specifically highlighting inconsistencies in immigration and child welfare policies and in the application of the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act* across Canada.

Some participants suggested that increasing the rate of prosecution and the severity of punishment and/or sentencing for human trafficking would help reduce its occurrence, especially with regard to sexual exploitation. Some proposed measures that may strengthen the number of prosecutions included greater enforcement of existing legislation and/or amending legislation to make it easier to prosecute offenders for human trafficking offences.

Participants noted that many victims of human trafficking are reluctant to cooperate with law enforcement agencies. This was believed by participants to be, in part, due to the perception that the likelihood of a successful prosecution is low, while the personal cost to victims by taking part in the prosecution process is high. Similarly, some felt the threshold for prosecuting under current human trafficking provisions was high, as some police departments pursued complex cases against traffickers under different charges, such as money laundering.

Proposed solutions included reaching out to high-risk communities, making the criminal justice process easier for victims to navigate, enhancing victim safety and protection, and launching an awareness campaign to encourage the public to report suspected cases of human trafficking.

Root Causes

Participants noted that some victims of human trafficking often face considerable trauma before they are trafficked, such as childhood abuse or inter-generational trauma. It was suggested that other root causes may include socio-economic factors such as poverty, lack of adequate housing and other health and social determinants, as well as being placed in protective custody or in the child welfare system.

Several respondents stressed the need to address Indigenous-specific issues, noting ongoing discrimination Indigenous women and children continue to face.

Conclusion

Overall, participants recognized Canada's ongoing efforts to counter human trafficking. They called for a consistent, survivor-centric, data-informed and well-coordinated, collaborative approach that applies the 4-Ps (prevention; protection; prosecution; and, partnerships) and expands it as necessary. The next national strategy should address the root causes of human trafficking and take into account the realities of vulnerable groups such as Indigenous women and girls and foreign workers with precarious status in Canada.

2. Background

Human trafficking, also known as trafficking in persons, is facilitated by many factors, including the vulnerability of particular segments of the population and the demand for certain goods and services. According to the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*¹ (Trafficking in Persons Protocol), supplementing the *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, human trafficking is defined as:

“(...) the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”

The Trafficking in Persons Protocol – the accepted international framework to address human trafficking – was ratified by Canada on May 13, 2002. Guided by the Trafficking in Persons Protocol and existing federal responses to address human trafficking, the Government of Canada launched the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking* (National Action Plan)² in June 2012. The plan expired in 2016 and underwent a horizontal evaluation of the National Action Plan in 2017³, which highlighted several areas for improvement, including:

- enhanced collaboration with the provinces and territories, as well as domestic and international stakeholders;
- further focus on labour trafficking;
- a centralized data collection process;
- a national referral mechanism; and,
- greater support for victims and vulnerable populations.

Following the completion of the horizontal evaluation of the National Action Plan, in Budget 2018, the Government of Canada announced \$14.51 million over five years, beginning in 2018-2019, and \$2.89 million per year ongoing, to establish a National Human Trafficking Hotline. The government also committed to consult with all levels of government, civil society, as well as other interested stakeholders to develop a new sustainable and comprehensive national anti-trafficking strategy to address human trafficking.

¹ The *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, Supplementary Legislation to the *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, also known as the *Palermo Protocol* was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in November 2000

² <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/protocoltraffickinginpersons.aspx>

³ <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/ntnl-ctn-pln-cmbt/index-en.aspx>

<https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/vltn-nap-ht/index-en.aspx>

To this end, Public Safety undertook a series of in-person consultations across Canada in 2018, with the assistance of Hill + Knowlton Strategies, to inform the development of a new national human trafficking strategy. More than 200 stakeholders, including victims and survivors of human trafficking, participated in regional roundtables held in Vancouver, Winnipeg and Montreal, as well as a National Summit and a Survivor Roundtable in Toronto, and a meeting with sex work organizations in Ottawa. Stakeholders unable to attend these sessions in person, and other stakeholders, upon request, were sent an online questionnaire seeking their input.

Between September 6 and November 1, 2018, 42 online submissions were received from victims, survivors and stakeholders from the private sector, academia, federal/provincial agencies, law enforcement agencies, Indigenous organizations and civil society organizations.

The objectives of the consultations were to identify:

- issues, priorities, gaps and challenges that are key to domestic stakeholders;
- federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) interdependencies in the national anti-human trafficking response;
- environmental changes and emerging domestic and international trends since the implementation of the previous National Action Plan;
- potential actions / initiatives to address changes, trends and gaps;
- best practices; and,
- fact- and evidence-based problems and solutions.

Over the course of the national and regional consultations, these objectives were met through the testimony of victims and survivors, law enforcement, local and regional front-line workers, academics, charities, representatives from Indigenous organizations, private sector representatives and representatives from various levels of government. The following report provides an overview of what participants recommended Public Safety include in the next national strategy to combat human trafficking.

3. Detailed Findings: Survivor Roundtable

At the survivor roundtable, participants were invited to highlight their top considerations for a new national strategy to combat human trafficking. There was strong consensus amongst participants around key considerations for the next national strategy, including:

- ensuring victims and survivors are continually engaged in the development and implementation of the strategy;
- ensuring a comprehensive and collaborative approach to address human trafficking;
- focusing on public education and awareness;
- ensuring the right supports and services are in place to protect and rehabilitate victims of human trafficking;
- enforcing and/or amending existing legislation to increase the rate of prosecutions; and,
- focusing on addressing the root causes.

A summary of the roundtable discussion is below.

Survivor Engagement

Key areas of focus that participants felt should be included in the next national strategy were the need for stakeholders to: recognize the expertise and credibility of victims and survivors; continually engage with them; and provide opportunities for them to share their truths. An example of this would be through the establishment of a national survivor roundtable.

“It starts with us; we need support for all survivors where they can speak their truth.”
-Survivor roundtable participant

Enhanced Collaboration

Participants recognized the importance of collaboration between grassroots organizations and government efforts to ensure the efficacy of harm reduction, prevention and prosecution initiatives. They cited the need for a comprehensive approach to combat human trafficking, which involves a myriad of stakeholders and efforts.

Public Education and Awareness

Participants strongly supported the implementation of additional efforts to educate and build public awareness of human trafficking and the vulnerabilities that can lead to exploitation. Suggested communication topics included:

- the ties between Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and human trafficking, as well as the stigmas that dictate the conversation;

- addressing societal discourse and promoting a cultural shift, specifically around the glorification and normalization of violent sexual acts, violence against women, and the “perceived right to purchase sex”; and,
- ensuring youth and children are taught about consent and healthy relationships in school.

Victim Protection

Participants advocated for increased trauma-informed support for survivors, including: establishing first stage housing (i.e., transition housing and/or emergency shelters); long-term care and rehabilitation programs; addressing inequalities within victim support programs; increasing availability of sustainable funding; and, increasing the availability of transition services.

In drawing upon the expertise of victims and survivors, ensuring that their health and well-being is taken into consideration was cited as a top priority by participants, in order to limit the risk of re-victimization and worker burnout.

Also important was the need to address the lack of trauma-informed human trafficking training for law enforcement, lawyers, judges, corrections personnel, and other related service providers to avoid re-traumatizing victims throughout the investigation, prosecution and care processes. Participants were also concerned about a perceived lack of cohesion among stakeholders engaged in human trafficking issues, and legislation across FPT levels. For example, victim compensation within provincial jurisdictions is not the same across Canada. In Quebec, Compensation for Victims of Crime does not recognize human trafficking as a crime.

Survivor roundtable participants also noted that over the last five years their organizations have noticed an increase in the role that technology has played in facilitating sexual exploitation – whether for luring potential victims or exploitation/trafficking. They discussed the challenges faced by law enforcement and community service providers in keeping up with perpetrators, citing that organized crime groups seem to be more adaptable than law enforcement to changes in technology.

Legislative Considerations

Legislative concerns generated much discussion, particularly around the need to enforce existing legislation, such as the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act* (PCEPA). Participants perceived the implementation of legislation to be inconsistent and inequitable across jurisdictions. They were in favour of increasing the severity of punishment and/or sentencing, as well as the rate of prosecution for offenders, suggesting this would have an impact on reducing the demand, particularly for sexual exploitation.

The need to remove the safety clause within section 279.04 of the Criminal Code of Canada⁴, which requires proof of fear for one's safety to support jurisprudence, was also noted. Participants indicated that this threshold was too limiting and narrowed the definition of human trafficking which, in turn, impacts prosecution and conviction rates.

Finally, some participants expressed concerns that legalizing sex work could have an adverse effect on anti-human trafficking efforts, pointing to examples in Germany and New Zealand which have legalized the industry.

Addressing Root Causes

A central focus of survivors' discussion revolved around the need to address the root causes of trafficking and exploitation. These included addressing socio-economic factors, recognizing oppressive cultural discourse and ensuring the protection of children.

"We need to understand how adverse childhood experiences can lead ... to be trafficked or exploited."

-Survivor roundtable participant

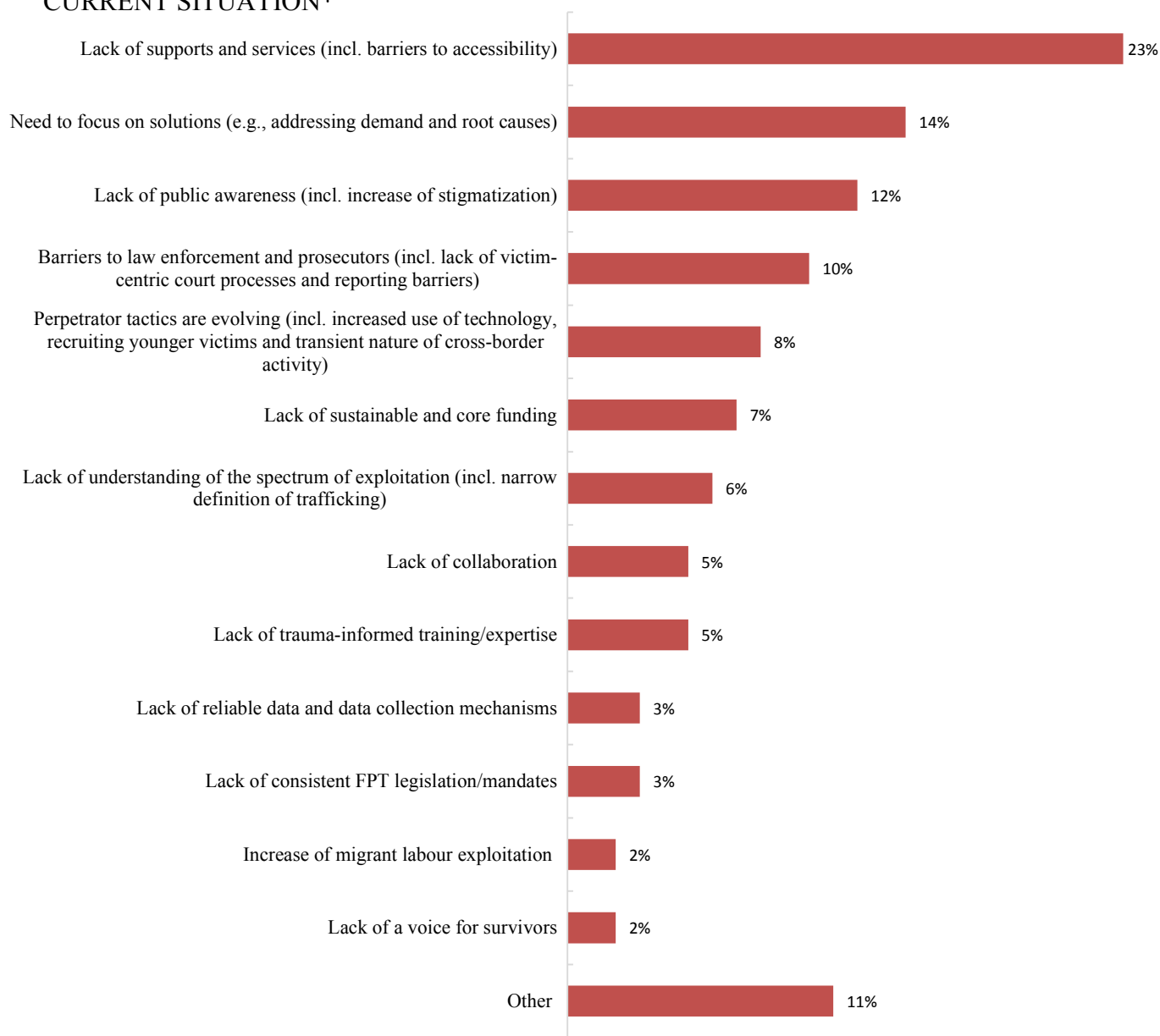
⁴ Criminal Code of Canada, Part VIII, Offences Against the Person and Reputation, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/page-62.html>; An Act to amend the Criminal Code (trafficking in persons), S.C. 2012, c.15 https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/annualstatutes/2012_15/page-1.html

4. Detailed Findings: National Summit & Regional Roundtables

4.1. Evolving Canadian Context

Participants at the National Summit and regional roundtables contributed their understanding of the evolving Canadian context of human trafficking by providing insight into the current situations faced by their organizations and communities. They discussed the challenges and gaps they experienced in responding to human trafficking while offering possible solutions moving forward (Section 4.2). At the National Summit in Toronto, participants observed the current (2018) challenges and gaps to be as follows:

CURRENT SITUATION*



N=288

*Results are not mutually exclusive.

From the 288 submissions received at the National Summit, 13 common challenges and gaps faced by organizations and communities in combatting human trafficking were identified. The issues raised mirrored those discussed by participants at the regional roundtables in Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Montreal, which are discussed here in tandem with the National Summit results. These collective challenges and gaps can be considered within the framework of Canada's '4-P' approach to combat human trafficking: prevention, protection, prosecution and partnerships.

4.1.1 Prevention

With regard to ongoing prevention efforts to combat human trafficking, participants noted the need to focus on solutions (14%). This was the second most common challenge identified, and included addressing the demand for human trafficking as well as its root causes.

Participants also identified the lack of public awareness of human trafficking (12%) as a challenge negatively impacting collective prevention, intervention, and prosecution efforts. Furthermore, it was highlighted that the current lack of awareness can deepen stigmatization, which can impact whether victims self-report to law enforcement or service providers.

Prevention efforts are further challenged by the increasing number of vulnerabilities faced by migrant workers. Despite the recognition that governments have undertaken initiatives to decrease these vulnerabilities, such as the open work permit pilot in British Columbia or the Migrant Worker Support Network, participants highlighted several structural barriers that leave migrant workers in precarious situations. These included employer-specific work permits, unclear immigration status and their lack of access to supports and services.

4.1.2 Protection and Assistance for Victims

Victim identification is inextricably linked to prevention and disruption; however, it is further challenged by shifting trends in victimization. Participants observed an increase in migrant labourers being exploited (2%), including sexual and labour-based exploitation. Participants attributed this increase to a greater demand for labour in Canada, as well as the lack of employer oversight and review/enforcement mechanisms. Organ trafficking was also highlighted as a growing trend that could become increasingly challenging, if not addressed.

Other participants discussed their further observation that perpetrators of trafficking offenses may have also been victims of trafficking and exploitation themselves. Community service providers are challenged in offering adequate support to these individuals, pointing to the need for tailored, trauma-informed care to meet each person's unique needs. Participants also discussed whether there should be alternatives to incarceration for victims who become perpetrators. The range of victims' needs is wide, highlighting the importance of adequate victim support and care.

The largest overall challenge in combatting human trafficking was identified as the lack of supports and services (23%) to meet the health and care needs of victims and survivors. Victims of human trafficking have a diversity of health and care needs, which are not always met. Even when such services are available, accessibility is a concern, particularly around eligibility. For

example, if a victim does not identify as such, they may be precluded from access to services. Participants also discussed how difficult it can be for victims of human trafficking to access services, such as emergency shelters, during evenings or weekends, or after they turn 18 years old (i.e., the risk of aging out of the system). The lack of accessible services was identified as a barrier for victims who are trying to exit situations of trafficking and seek help.

Other notable gaps identified in the area of victim and survivor support were the lack of sustainable and core funding for resources (7%) and the lack of trauma-informed and human trafficking expertise (5%).

4.1.3 Detection, Investigation and Prosecution of Traffickers

Barriers faced by law enforcement and prosecutors (10%) in pursuing and prosecuting traffickers were identified as one of the most common challenges facing Canadian organizations and communities in responding to human trafficking. Particularly, participants noted the:

- reluctance of victims in reporting to law enforcement, including potential re-victimization, i.e., the number of times a victim has to recount their story;
- stigmatization and accessibility of reporting mechanisms (both from a safety and technology/method perspective);
- lack of a victim-centric criminal justice system to empower victims to proceed with prosecution; and,
- prosecutorial challenge of meeting the necessary threshold of “trafficking.”

Overall, training for professionals was identified as important to address the lack of understanding of the spectrum of exploitation and of the definition of trafficking (6%). This knowledge gap hinders effective action and may lead to victims ‘falling through the cracks’. This is particularly important as participants have observed that perpetrator tactics are evolving (8%).

Participants also raised a number of challenges pertaining to Canada’s legal and legislative landscape. They highlighted an apparent lack of consistent FPT legislation and mandates (3%) and a poor understanding of how they should be applied across the country. The PCEPA, which came into force in 2014 and prohibits the purchase of sexual services, may have had the unintended effect of limiting “the ability of law enforcement to track activity” as perpetrators move further underground.

4.1.4 Partnerships and Knowledge

Participants noted how the increasing complexities of human trafficking cases have impacted their workloads and the skills required to address these types of cases. In responding to these challenges in a timely, trauma-informed and efficient manner, participants highlighted the importance of enhanced inter-agency and interjurisdictional collaboration (5%), as well as dedicated resources (funds and/or employees).

Strengthening partnerships and addressing the lack of survivor engagement (2%) was identified as a common challenge needing attention. Participants raised the importance of continually engaging survivors and ensuring they have a voice among stakeholder consultations.

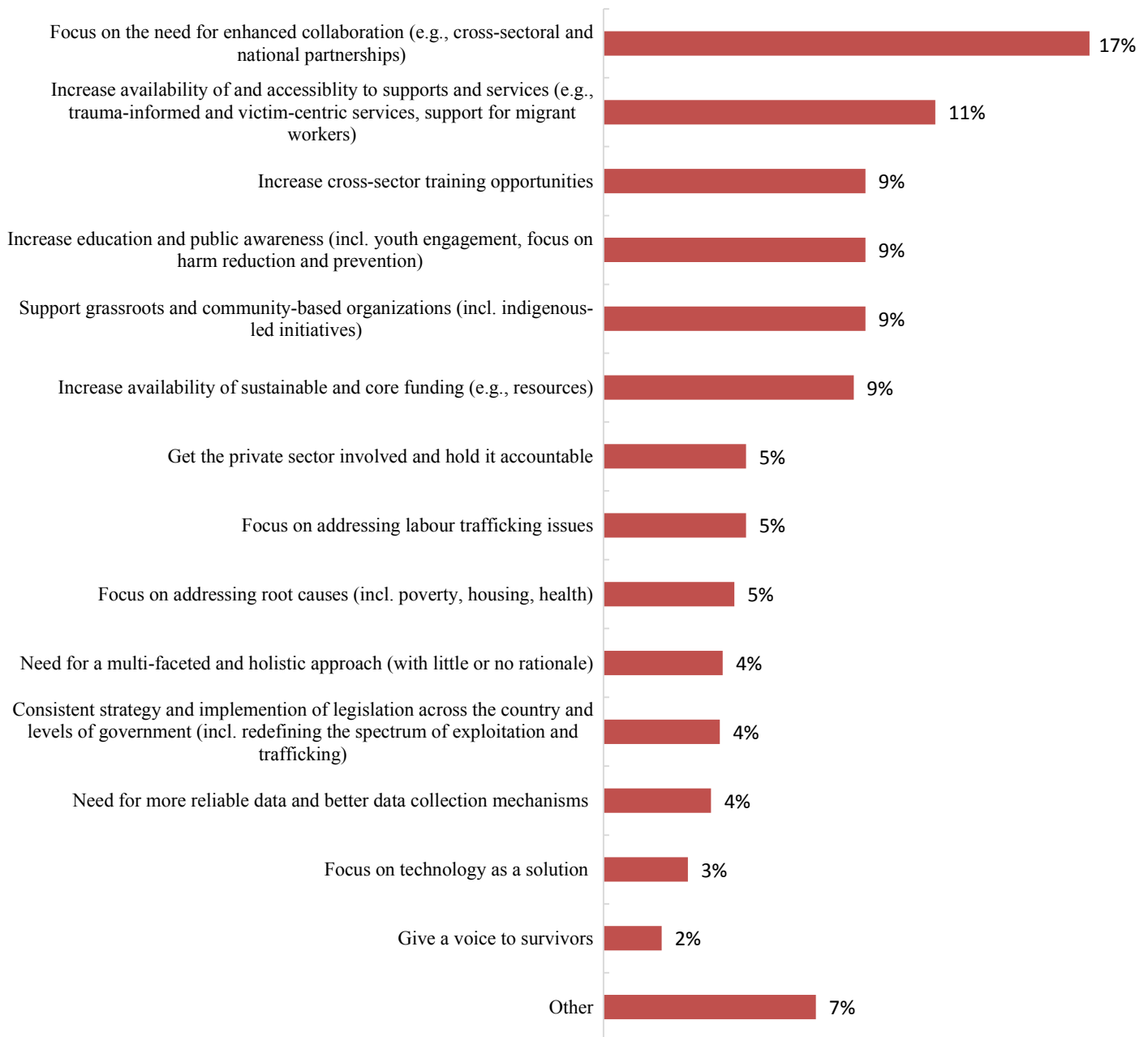
Developing empirical evidence of human trafficking was another key concern shared by participants; the lack of reliable data and data collection mechanisms (3%) has an impact on all areas of the response to human trafficking, particularly funding, prevention and intervention efforts.

Participants articulated that the lack of private sector accountability poses a challenge to tackling human trafficking. Private industry has a responsibility to ensure their supply chains are free from exploitation. Without private sector engagement in Canada's national strategy to address human trafficking, participants stated that stakeholders will have difficulty eradicating trafficking in sectors such as hospitality, technology, entertainment and transportation.

4.2 Possible Solutions & Areas of Focus

Beyond simply identifying current gaps and challenges in the response to human trafficking in Canada, participants proposed possible solutions and areas of focus for stakeholders moving forward. At the National Summit in Toronto, there were 245 submissions from participants on improving the response to human trafficking moving forward. These were as follows:

FORWARD-LOOKING SOLUTIONS*



N=245

*Results are not mutually exclusive.

4.2.1 Prevention

Participants from both the National Summit and regional roundtables expressed the importance of strengthening Canada's prevention efforts moving forward, namely through education and awareness, addressing the root causes of human trafficking, and enhancing the focus on research.

Education and Awareness

Focusing on increasing the general public's education and awareness of human trafficking (9%) was identified as a key prevention initiative that could strengthen the collective effort to combat human trafficking in Canada. Education was described as a powerful tool to help prevent the victimization of young people, dispel myths around human trafficking, and facilitate consistent standards of care. Participants also felt that education would be an important tool to address the demand side of human trafficking, particularly during large events like the Formula 1 Grand Prix in Montreal or the Olympics. Four audiences specifically identified as requiring additional education and/or training were young people, temporary foreign workers, service providers and front-line workers.

For young people, human trafficking education could take the form of a school-based curriculum. Participants discussed that learning plans should include the signs of internet luring and grooming, broader inter-systemic issues such as racism or gender equality, how to identify exploitative behaviours and what healthy relationships may typically look like.

A key consideration was to provide outreach to those in the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program to let them know about their rights and the services available to them, especially if they become victims of trafficking. For both service providers (e.g., legal practitioners, child and family service agencies, media) and front-line workers (e.g., healthcare, law enforcement), participants recommended trauma-informed training and education on how to spot the signs of human trafficking; and ensuring there are consistent and efficient standards of practice implemented across Canada.

In addition to education, awareness initiatives can play an instrumental role in shifting societal discourse on human trafficking. Increased awareness of the issue could help to reduce stigmatization of victims and survivors, and promote normalization of the issue as well as increase prevention and harm reduction efforts, particularly when focusing on youth engagement. Participants spoke of the need to find effective methods of communicating to the public on the realities of all forms of human trafficking, including sexual, labour and organ trafficking; and the impact trafficking has on victims, survivors, and communities at large. Through awareness initiatives, a greater overall understanding of human trafficking, signs of potential victimization, and core issues such as consent and labour rights can be achieved. Awareness building could help address negative societal behaviours towards trafficking that may be rooted in attitudes towards buying and selling sex, as well as helping to curb demand for sexual services and cheap labour.

Participants at both the regional roundtables and National Summit identified the importance of focusing on addressing the root causes of human trafficking (5%) moving forward. The vulnerabilities facing certain sectors of society, including women, people suffering from mental

impairments, or those at the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum (SES), can make these individuals particularly susceptible to becoming victims of trafficking. To that end, participants noted that measures should be in place to study the issues facing these groups and to reduce their vulnerabilities to exploitation, including:

- implementing gender-based analysis to assess how different genders are impacted by human trafficking. This could include recognizing the impact of pornography and explicit imagery on the sexual exploitation of women;
- increased funding for individuals who are mentally impaired in order to facilitate recovery or help protect these individuals from being trafficked; and
- understanding the link between SES and exploitation. Many lower SES individuals are vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking due to a range of factors, including a fluctuating economy.

Emphasis was also placed on looking at the role of poverty, housing, health and other social determinants, as well as the impact of the intersection between poverty, racism and economic opportunities on susceptibility to human trafficking. Participants at the Winnipeg roundtable noted the importance of addressing issues with child and family services and providing a basic income in vulnerable communities. To tackle many of the challenges facing communities vulnerable to human trafficking, participants advocated for upstream investments to counter women and children's vulnerability to human trafficking in the areas of health, housing, child welfare and protective custody.

In response to the exploitation of migrant workers, participants called attention to addressing structural deficiencies leading to labour trafficking (5%), such as employer-specific work permits, residency status, language barriers and work-site inspections. The current system of employer-specific work permits can lead to exploitation for workers brought to Canada through the TFW program.

Participants emphasized that temporary foreign workers are likely to face vulnerabilities due to the lack of knowledge of their labour rights; lack of access to supports and services due to their precarious immigration status; and their work permit which is tied to a specific employer. Abusive employers may take advantage of migrants' reluctance to report their exploitation to authorities, a reticence rooted in the fear of deportation or loss of employment.

Removing the single-employer visa rule and transitioning to an open-style work permit, or facilitating access to permanent residency, could increase access to services for workers in the TFW program. It may also lead to increased reporting of exploitative employers by workers, who would have less reason to fear deportation.

Participants discussed how the precarious immigration status of individuals who come into Canada through an irregular border crossing can lead to further marginalization and a susceptibility to human trafficking. These vulnerabilities can be especially pronounced for women who arrive in Canada after escaping traumatic situations.

Social Planning and Research

The impact of resource extraction sites and large sporting and cultural events on human trafficking can be especially disruptive for remote, northern and Indigenous communities, which are often the most impacted by camp workers. These camps can be problematic for local communities, as workers may fuel the demand for sexual services, contributing to the possible sexual exploitation of women and children. Participants called for more robust social planning as a requirement for these camps. They also called for more research to be done on any connection between special events, such as large music or sporting events, and human exploitation.

With the recent legalization of cannabis in Canada, some participants expressed concerns that any resulting displacement of income for organized crime groups may result in increased trafficking in persons in order to replace lost income. Participants suggested the government should study this relationship further and implement a safety net to counter these, or any other, nefarious impacts stemming from the legalization of cannabis.

4.2.2 Protection and Assistance for Victims

Participants discussed at length the comprehensive approach to service delivery that could be taken across Canada. In particular, participants highlighted the need for funding to support “wrap-around”, long-term and comprehensive services, such as emergency and/or safe housing or care specifically targeted to children aging out of protective services.

Delivery and Access of Services

To address the lack of resources available for victims and survivors of human trafficking, participants spoke at length about how to increase supports and services (11%), particularly those that are trauma-informed and victim-centric. A proposed solution was to provide greater support for grassroots and community-based organizations (9%) with the aim to more effectively aid harder to reach groups, such as temporary foreign workers. Some victims and survivors may be hesitant to reach out to authorities due to their residency status, a decision which limits their access to key services, like legal aid. Participants discussed ideas to enable victims and survivors to access a greater number of services, including:

- increasing the range and scope of services offered in languages other than English or French, particularly as many TFWs may encounter difficulties in communicating in one of Canada’s official languages;
- redefining the threshold of “trafficking.” Currently, many workers in the TFW program may not qualify for the Temporary Resident Permit⁵ because of the difficulties in being defined as trafficked; and,

⁵ <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/permits/considerations-specific-victims-human-trafficking.html>

- educating workers and employers about the rights of workers in the TFW program so that they are aware of workers' legal rights and the services available to them.

Collaboration among service providers and law enforcement agencies was identified as a potential solution to ensure greater victim protection and rehabilitation. It was suggested that providing community service providers the opportunity to integrate with law enforcement could lead to more victims disclosing and reporting cases of exploitation or trafficking. Representatives at the Montreal roundtable highlighted the work being done by the Integrated Health and Social Services Centres⁶ in Quebec as a model for effective service delivery.

The complexity of working with victims who have also been perpetrators of human trafficking was also raised. Participants suggested a framework should be created to help service providers navigate the challenges of providing effective care in these cases. The unique case of child soldiers was raised and participants suggested policy makers could learn from this unique issue to assess how, in the Canadian human trafficking context, criminalizing victims could be avoided.

Participants also noted that some organizations have implemented local initiatives that could benefit from national expansion, such as: emergency response protocols and mobile centres for outreach workers; community hubs for prevention, intervention and rehabilitation; and the open work permit pilot in British Columbia. Other forms of supports and services discussed included: housing; after-hours services; improving the accessibility of temporary residency permits for victims of labour trafficking under the Victims of Trafficking in Persons⁷ guidelines; and, improving the accessibility of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC) Student Direct Stream Program⁸.

Many participants reinforced the importance of preventing the revictimization of survivors of exploitation after they come forward to law enforcement or other authorities. This could be achieved by offering victims the choice of how they would like to proceed through the judicial system (e.g., offering the use of restorative or healing approaches). Participants also mentioned other victim-centric approaches, such as providing better access to judicial aids, particularly for young adults, and improving how victims are treated when moving through the courts, such as incorporating learnings from the Angela Cardinal inquiry⁹.

⁷ <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/permits/considerations-specific-victims-human-trafficking.html>

⁷ <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/temporary-residents/permits/considerations-specific-victims-human-trafficking.html>

⁸ IRCC's Student Direct Stream Program replaced the Student Partners Program in June 2018 to ensure consistency and efficiency in the student application process. However, the Program currently remains available only to students applying for a study permit from China, India, Vietnam and the Philippines, with the hopes of expanding to other countries. <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit/student-direct-stream.html>

⁹ Independent Report on the Incarceration of Angela Cardinal.
<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/independent-report-on-the-incarceration-of-angela-cardinal>

Holistic and Culturally Sensitive Services

Participants emphasized the importance of providing long-term services for victims through a lens of compassion and trauma-informed service delivery. Many compounding factors make it important for survivors to receive long-term services to ensure their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. They noted that victims often experience trauma before they are even trafficked, such as during childhood or as a result of inter-generational trauma. To meet the complexity of their resulting care needs, “wrap around” support for victims should include physical, psychological and social support. Care must be recognized as a long-term endeavour, as the impact of exploitation and trafficking on a person may reverberate throughout the victim’s life (‘the lifecycle of trauma’). Particular attention should be paid to children in care, who are particularly vulnerable and may require specialized services.

Of particular importance to participants was the development of more Indigenous-centric services. The impacts of intergenerational trauma, systemic racism and discrimination, and the lifecycle of trauma are compounding factors in the recovery of Indigenous victims, making it especially important that survivors receive comprehensive, long-term services that consider their unique culture and heritage. Participants highlighted the current shortage of culturally relevant services for Indigenous survivors and noted that improvements could be made by increasing Indigenous healing circles and lodges as well as involving Elders from the community in services for Indigenous victims and survivors.

In ensuring that Indigenous victims and survivors are able to access these services, participants emphasized the importance of education and awareness specifically targeted at these communities. Some participants discussed the need to “decolonize” the work being done in this field and the need to integrate Indigenous principles in policy development and decision-making around human trafficking care for Indigenous victims and survivors.

Funding for Services

Current funding for programs and services largely focus on addressing short-term needs. Increased sustainable and core funding (9%) that is not solely on a per project basis, but is rather accessible over time, was identified as an important solution to the lack of adequate supports and services for victims and survivors of human trafficking. Sustainable funding is required in order to support the long-term specialized and trauma-informed care that victims need. This includes funding for training, to ensure that care providers and public and private stakeholders are equipped to meet the complex needs of human trafficking victims.

4.2.3 Detection, Investigation and Prosecution of Traffickers

Training

In order to better identify victims of human trafficking, enforce existing laws and address shortfalls in the prosecution of perpetrators, participants outlined the role that training should play

in countering human trafficking. Participants noted that training for justice officials, Crown prosecutors, law enforcement and border protection agents is particularly important to help identify victims of trafficking and direct them to the appropriate supports. Training could also help Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers clarify their mandates as it pertains to human trafficking, which in turn could help expedite the prosecution of perpetrators. CBSA agents, in particular, play an important role on the front lines to detect international human trafficking. Due to the clandestine nature of trafficking, the only encounter many victims may have with law enforcement could be at a border crossing. The importance of ensuring the discourse around human trafficking involves all forms of exploitation (sexual, labour and organ) was also highlighted.

Participants also raised the importance of ensuring that front-line workers and professionals who engage with victims and survivors, such as prosecutors and law enforcement, have sensitivity training and a victim-centric approach to their work. This may help mitigate the revictimization of survivors, particularly through the court process, and may simultaneously encourage victims to come forward if there is a more sensitive and aware environment. This also applies to migrant workers, who may not come forward and disclose information out of fear for deportation. Ensuring that front-line workers and professionals are equipped to do their jobs in a way that takes into account the fears, traumas, and challenges that victims and survivors face, may likely contribute to the more robust detection, investigation, and prosecution of traffickers.

National Human Trafficking Hotline

Participants in Toronto discussed how the National Human Trafficking Hotline was a good initiative to centralize data collection; however, they emphasized that its primary objective should be to help victims of exploitation and human trafficking, as opposed to an emergency dispatch centre.

“Data collection should not be the primary purpose, it should be connecting the survivor to services. Too many questions and victims may hang up.”
-Participant

It was noted that a national hotline might benefit from provincial and/or regional operations to ensure local coordination and referral to service providers (e.g., 2-1-1). Participants also spoke of the importance of vetting the network of service providers to ensure the best care possible if provided to victims.

With regards to the operations of the hotline, participants also noted how accessibility and safety should be prioritized to allow victims or concerned citizens to report issues and seek help. This could include expanding the national hotline to include an online chat function or an application. Participants also pointed to the need to ensure hotline operators are trauma-informed and trained to tackle issues of language and cultural differences, as well as to distinguish nuances over the phone. The last example was discussed in reference to a past situation where a 9-1-1 operator was able to decipher that a victim was in close vicinity to her captor, when she pretended to order pizza to signal that she was in trouble. Participants also suggested looking at the U.S. and Mexico to learn from the hotline models they have implemented.

Finally, participants discussed various data points that could be captured secondarily to best serve the needs of victims, survivors and other intervenors, including:

- standard demographics: age, gender, language, residency status, etc.;
- geographical information, i.e., location of caller;
- service-related data: needs met/unmet, service needs (e.g., detox, counselling, funds to exit, etc.), immediate safety needs; and,
- crime-related data: type of trafficking/exploitation, identity of exploiter and/or identifying characteristics (tattoos, piercings, car/license plate, etc.).

Legislative Changes

Participants highlighted how ensuring legislative consistencies across Canada could enable greater interjurisdictional collaboration, aid the prosecution of traffickers and better meet the needs of victims. If legislation pertaining to human trafficking was standardized across Canada, participants felt that police forces would be more empowered to work across jurisdictions to build successful cases against traffickers. This would potentially simplify the task of prosecuting offenders, as would standardizing the definition of human trafficking and exploitation. For instance, participants discussed the difficulties associated with section 279.04 of the Canadian Criminal Code¹⁰ which, in their view, makes it difficult to prosecute perpetrators with the current narrow definition of “exploitation.”

In identifying potential legislative gaps or needed changes, participants pointed to apparent inconsistencies in the application of the PCEPA and the incongruity of federal and provincial child protection legislation. Participants described PCEPA as detrimental to counter-trafficking efforts, particularly regarding sexual exploitation. Some participants believed that PCEPA pushes offenders of sexual exploitation to be more clandestine in their criminality in order to evade prosecution. It was suggested that maintaining a database of individuals charged with purchasing sexual services, if not already existing, may aid the detection of offenders of human trafficking. According to participants, the irregular application of PCEPA across Canada should be examined and opportunities for improving its use identified.

Discussions also included legislative changes which would enable the same level of protection to victims and survivors in care, namely the alignment of federal and provincial immigration/child welfare laws. Participants provided the example that Quebec laws protect youth and provide services to individuals 18 and under, while Ontario laws only extend those same protections to youth who are 16 and younger. While the age threshold for receiving services in Quebec is higher, participants identified that in Quebec the *Crimes Victim Compensation Act*¹¹ does not currently recognize trafficking as a criminal act. As such, victim agencies that pursue particular legal action against offenders are inconsistent across Canada.

¹⁰ Criminal Code of Canada, Part VIII, Offences Against the Person and Reputation, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/page-62.html>; An Act to amend the Criminal Code (exploitation and trafficking in persons), S.C. 2015, c.16 https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/annualstatutes/2015_16/page-1.html

¹¹ *Crime Victims Compensation Act*, <http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/fr/showDoc/cs/I-6> / <http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showDoc/cs/I-6>

In addition to the concerns with standardizing legislation, participants also discussed the need for a national legislation or policy to coordinate best practices, training and sustainable funding models. A range of areas should be addressed in such a policy, including: protection for vulnerable and temporary foreign workers; mandatory reporting on human trafficking within the Occupational Health and Safety sector; and, addressing the overrepresentation of Indigenous children and youth in care. For victims of labour trafficking, it was outlined that future amendments to labour and immigration policies should help facilitate the residency process for workers in the TFW program and further protect workers.

Participants also identified a desire to develop new legislation aimed at targeting human trafficking in the hospitality industry. Legislative examples were drawn from Canada's international partners, such as the United States, which focuses on holding the hospitality industry accountable for facilitating trafficking.

The importance of making relevant legislative changes across Canada as part of the next national strategy to combat human trafficking was repeated across a number of discussions. Particularly, participants believed that by ensuring legislative consistencies across Canada, there could be greater interjurisdictional collaboration and coordination, thereby strengthening the investigation, detection, and prosecution of offenders.

Enforcing Legislation

In pursuing offenders of human trafficking, participants identified a need for cross-border partnerships and industry-wide codes of ethics to counter the proliferation of trafficking across jurisdictions. Participants were of the view that law enforcement should support community-based responses to ensure a holistic, collaborative solution:

“Law enforcement needs to support the work that communities are doing and not always take the lead.”

-Participant

From a response perspective, data privacy and information sharing were also discussed as important considerations moving forward. Particularly, how to ensure privacy legislation is respected while allowing the safe sharing of information.

Overall, participants indicated a desire to see a consistent and streamlined approach to prosecuting perpetrators of human trafficking. Measures to strengthen the prosecution of perpetrators might include:

- enforcing existing legislation, particularly IRPA and PCEPA;
- amending other legislation to make it easier to prosecute perpetrators; and,
- implementing harsher penalties for offenders.

Impacts of Technology

Across the National Summit and regional roundtables, the impacts of technology on both facilitating and combatting human trafficking were discussed. Technology plays a role in the normalization of hyper-sexualized young women and girls as well as sexual violence. Pornography, in particular, was identified as a tool that can further the objectification of women and girls, thereby potentially contributing to the demand for sexual services which a trafficking victim may be forced to provide. Technology can also lead to the revictimization of survivors, who may have images and videos available online that they are unable to take down. Social media can also play a role in the recruitment of potential victims, while mobile applications (apps) can facilitate the clandestine nature of these crimes.

Technology can also facilitate human trafficking via money laundering, aiding the purchase of forced and exploitative labour and/or services, as well as covering a trafficker's proceeds of crime. Project PROTECT¹², a public-private partnership targeting human trafficking by focusing on money laundering, was highlighted as a good example of collaboration between the public and private sectors to combat human trafficking. However, participants also discussed how digital currencies, like crypto-currencies, are now adding new challenges.

“Crypto currencies have created some challenges for us; traffickers are moving to chat rooms, virtual currencies and off the grid.”
-Participant

The evolving nature of technology and its application by criminals highlights the importance of law enforcement and community agencies to “stay ahead” of perpetrators by interfering with technologies that help facilitate human trafficking. Examples like the iamnot4sale.ca app and website were touted by participants as initiatives that could continue to shape the response to address human trafficking. Technology was also acknowledged as a useful tool for awareness building, including the use of social media and other online spaces to raise awareness among the public about the realities of human trafficking and the dangers of Internet luring. It was also seen as enabling safe disclosure mechanisms to make it easier and safer for victims to report trafficking. For example, this could include geolocation tools to track the movements of potential victims, or the development of mobile apps to track the buying and selling of sex.

The difficulties associated with policing the online space were broadly acknowledged. The anonymity offered by the internet and the antiquated nature of some of the laws governing the online space can be challenging for law enforcement to pursue potential offenders. Some participants raised this using the example of social media.

Working with the private sector and holding Internet service providers accountable for online content was proposed as one solution, as well as raising general awareness about the safe use of technology. It was noted that increased relationship building with the private sector may assist law enforcement in receiving information or data pertaining to human trafficking to aid in an investigation.

¹² A unique public-private partnership that targets human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation by focusing on the money laundering aspect of the crime. <http://www.fintrac.gc.ca/emplo/psr-eng.asp>

Funding

The need for sustainable funding was highlighted as a challenge that cuts across prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership initiatives. Participants were adamant that stable funding is a critical element to ensure successful collaboration between partners and provide more effective services for victims and survivors. According to regional roundtable participants, funding models should be structured in a way that are long-term and sustainable, in order to support the ability for grassroots organizations to foster meaningful community-based collaboration. The establishment of integrated service hubs and peer programming were all identified as models that could maximize funding and foster collaboration among community-based organizations.

Participants also suggested two key areas requiring additional funding, which would improve the response to human trafficking in Canada. These included technological advancements to keep up with perpetrators and long-term programming beyond four-year electoral cycles.

“The timeline for meaningful systemic change must be held up against politics... we need to be patient and keep to our goals.”
-Participant

4.2.4 Partnerships and Knowledge

Strengthening Co-operation and Collaboration

Overall, participants felt that enhanced collaboration and cooperation (17%) would be the most impactful solution in addressing some of the current shortfalls practitioners and communities face in combatting human trafficking. To accomplish this, participants identified the need for partners to adopt a multi-faceted and holistic approach (4%) to ensure the inclusivity of certain aspects, such as perspectives, cultures, and genders, among others.

Ensuring the private sector is involved and held accountable (5%) was a key suggestion by participants for more integrated collaboration. Key sectors identified included the hospitality, technology, entertainment, and transportation industries. Emphasis was placed on engaging with supply chain member companies to ensure they are held to a higher level of accountability. For example, removing pornography from hotels, holding parent companies responsible for their supply chains, supporting fair trade initiatives, and reducing vulnerabilities of migrant workers overall. Opportunities for engagement with the hospitality industry, in particular, were discussed at length. Participants suggested greater outreach and collaboration with hospitality member associations and franchises to implement and enforce a code of ethics and/or corporate responsibility pertaining to human trafficking, and to ensure that employees at all levels are properly trained to identify and report signs of exploitation and trafficking. Participants spoke of the need to increase reporting, auditing and enforcement mechanisms and regulatory bodies/third party watchdogs to ensure greater oversight of the private sector overall. In addition, incentivizing good behaviour through tax breaks and other methods was seen as an opportunity to include employers as part of the solution.

For community-based and grassroots organizations partnering with the private sector, this could mean partnering with a technology company to leverage their software/hardware and expertise to track activity or data and collaborate on solutions. For technology companies, the partnership piece was cited as being equally important.

“We need to know what the language is and the typical methods of recruiting, so we can add all that to algorithms to help identify victims.”

-Participant

Participants also discussed the need for partners to increase collaboration and engagement opportunities with victims and survivors of human trafficking (2%), in particular, NGOs, community service providers, justice officials, and government officials, as well as ensuring cross-border initiatives (i.e., between Canada and the United States). Participants suggested that one way this could be achieved is by the government undertaking a collective mapping exercise at the national level to identify support providers. From there, a national network of service providers could be established, which would aim to ensure victims are provided all the support they require and government agencies and partners are held accountable.

It was acknowledged that rural, remote and northern communities and organizations face unique challenges due to geography, precarious funding arrangements or varying cultural needs. Participants noted solutions to help mitigate these challenges, including the provision of video conferencing or other technology-based services to help support collaboration, as well as additional funding and ensuring services are available in the community.

Resources, Knowledge Building and Sharing

According to participants, the effectiveness of partnerships across Canada could be improved by increasing opportunities for cross-sectoral training (9%). By enhancing the capabilities of professionals to handle the complexities of cases and victims' needs, the overall response to human trafficking in Canada would likely improve. Training would potentially benefit several response areas, including information sharing, partner-to-partner collaboration, the quality and continuity of care, and addressing the lack of victim-centricity of the criminal justice system, including court processes.

Additionally, participants expressed that training and the development of best practices should be informed by reliable data and data collection mechanisms (4%). Participants from the Vancouver and Montreal roundtables noted the lack of data available for the Canadian context, which can often lead to an over-reliance on data from the United States or Europe. This reliance may contribute to an inaccurate picture of the realities of human trafficking within Canada. Participants recommended that the group(s) tasked with collecting data in the Canadian context should consult with survivors while forming their research agenda, as survivors may be able to offer insight into knowledge gaps that could be explored in greater depth. Front-line services that interact directly with victims and survivors, such as the national hotline being developed, were also highlighted as an opportunity for data collection. However, participants emphasized that victim protection, not data, should be the hotline's priority.

Participants across all of the regional roundtables and National Summit discussed the steps that must be taken to ensure that data collection proceeds without revictimizing survivors of human trafficking. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission approach was referred to as one which provided residential school survivors with a safe place to disclose experiences of sexual and physical abuse.

Following the collection of more reliable data, participants recommended the creation of a national service provider database of some kind to disseminate relevant information among stakeholders. Information sharing could aid in fostering FPT collaboration; however, it was recognized that stringent rules around data and privacy can create obstacles for data collection and sharing. Participants recommended instituting memorandums of understanding between partners to aid data sharing while protecting victim information.

5. Detailed Findings: Questionnaire

A questionnaire was designed by Public Safety in tandem with Hill + Knowlton Strategies, in order to maximize input from the Canadian public on Canada's next national human trafficking strategy.

From September 6th - October 12th, 2018, stakeholders were invited to fill out an online questionnaire, covering eight key areas of consideration for Canada's next human trafficking strategy. These included: framework for a new national strategy; enhanced collaboration; victim protection; data collection; labour trafficking; law enforcement and prosecutions; industry/technology solutions; and, further comments or views. These areas of consideration were identified, through prior consultations with federal partners, as requiring particular attention.

A purposive sampling method was used to identify an initial batch of participants (organizations and individuals) chosen for their engagement in the fight against human trafficking in Canada. These included participants of past consultations on human trafficking, organizations and individuals who were either actively or previously engaged with Public Safety on the issue, organizations identified in the media as working on anti-human trafficking efforts, and regional organizations and agencies identified through an online search. A snowball method of increasing the sample size was then used. The questionnaire was circulated to FPT partners, as well as members of the federal Human Trafficking Taskforce for distribution to their known stakeholders. The questionnaire was also advertised on Public Safety's website, which posted an open call for submissions from Canadians in order to maximize input into the next national strategy. Over 450 questionnaires were distributed. From these, Public Safety received 42 responses, of which a small portion also attended an in-person consultation. The diversity of respondents was wide, including: relevant regional and national charities; non-governmental organizations, private sector stakeholders; academia; criminal justice practitioners; Indigenous organizations; federal government departments; health practitioners; and, individual advocates. Not every questionnaire was fully answered; however, partially completed questionnaires submitted to Public Safety were still included in the consolidation of feedback.

Many respondents recognized the progress Canada has made in countering human trafficking, while making informative suggestions on the path forward. Respondents largely recommended that the next national strategy continue to follow Canada's current 4-P approach to human trafficking: prevention, protection, prosecution and partnerships, and to expand on them as necessary. Overall, respondents called for a consistent, survivor-centric, data-informed and well-coordinated approach to combatting human trafficking. Concurrently, the strategy should promote initiatives that address the root causes of human trafficking, taking into account the realities of vulnerable groups such as Indigenous women and girls, and foreign workers with precarious work or immigration status in Canada.

The feedback from questionnaire respondents did not differ largely from the concerns and suggestions raised by participants at the National Summit and regional roundtables. In alignment with the structure of the questionnaire, each key area in which feedback was solicited will be discussed below.

5.1 Framework for a New National Strategy

Many organizations expressed support for the continuation of a 4-P approach in a new national strategy; however, respondents identified areas in which it could be improved. Some respondents felt that the previous strategy was too prescriptive and should be expanded to include healing and empowering survivors as well as tailored community-based responses. While the previous National Action Plan did include enhancing engagement between civil society, Indigenous organizations and all levels of government, questionnaire respondents commented that in practice collaboration needs to improve moving forward. As such, the 4-P approach should ensure that partnerships encompass all sectors and stakeholders, from community groups to industry and government.

In exploring these concerns further, respondents identified six priority areas for addressing systemic issues related to human trafficking (e.g., racism, poverty, oppression, and gender inequality) that they believed should be included in a future national human trafficking strategy:

- 1) raising public awareness;
- 2) empowering vulnerable populations;
- 3) resource allocation;
- 4) adopting an integrated, comprehensive and gender-based approach;
- 5) addressing indigenous-specific issues; and,
- 6) engaging communities and stakeholders.

Raising public awareness currently falls within the 4-P framework; however, respondents felt it was essential to continue investing in awareness efforts moving forward, as it is an area that underpins success in other areas of the collective response to human trafficking. When the public is more aware and educated on the signs, vulnerabilities and realities of human trafficking, overall efforts to prevent victimization; identify possible trafficking situations; investigate leads; and prosecute offenders are made easier. Respondents noted that any national public awareness campaign should identify the systemic issues affecting human trafficking in Canada so that there is a better overall understanding of how these factors exacerbate the problem. Awareness campaigns should be tailored to specific audiences and vulnerable groups, such as Indigenous communities, women, immigrants and youth.

Some respondents advocated including a directive to empower vulnerable populations in the next national human trafficking strategy, as a way to help prevent their potential exploitation. This would include addressing poverty, gender and wage inequality, racism, and the lack of education and employment opportunities in communities with vulnerable populations.

Resources should be allocated to address and eliminate the root causes of human trafficking once they are identified. Many respondents suggested that investments could be made directly to services that address these systemic issues and the not-for-profit organizations that deliver those services. To protect vulnerable populations and identify victims and survivors of human trafficking, there should be sufficient resources allocated, including funding, to meet their care and support needs.

Many respondents wrote that tackling human trafficking effectively in Canada requires an integrated, comprehensive and gender-based approach that uses a combination of legislation, policy and effective programming across FPT partners. Prevention efforts should be aligned across FPT initiatives, including the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, the National Housing Strategy, the federal poverty reduction strategy (“Opportunity for All”), and regional newcomer settlement strategies.

The need to address Indigenous-specific issues was referred to by several respondents, noting the ongoing discrimination Indigenous women and girls continue to face, which contributes to the high rates of Indigenous women and girls being trafficked. Indigenous communities should be consulted so their specific concerns can be addressed through culturally-based understanding and Indigenous-specific approaches.

“At a national level, an Indigenous-specific strategy to end human trafficking is needed in order to address the root causes and impacts of human trafficking of Indigenous women.”
– Questionnaire respondent

Several respondents suggested that risk factors could be addressed at multiple levels by engaging communities and stakeholders and ensuring representation of human trafficking concerns are addressed at forums discussing systemic issues.

5.2 Enhanced Collaboration

There was a general consensus among questionnaire respondents on the need for a well-coordinated, partnership-driven structure of collaboration between partners in responding to human trafficking in Canada. To enhance current collaboration efforts, one respondent suggested the establishment of a coordinating body with the mission of performing research, ensuring continuous communication and updating stakeholders on developments in best practices. Another respondent suggested the development of a similar coordinating body or centre to be staffed with employees with expertise from across the community of practitioners and professionals responding to human trafficking. This coordinating body could provide leadership on FPT collaboration among civil society, government and the private sector.

Another respondent proposed that collaboration could be improved through the creation of a federal advisory council on human trafficking. Such a committee would work with similar provincial-territorial level committees, and additional sub-groups or task forces in communities where specific issues cannot be addressed at the provincial or territorial level. Some questionnaire submissions from non-governmental organizations said such FPT partnerships would need to be adequately supported, including sufficient funding, to be effective.

Enhanced information sharing was a common suggestion among respondents to improve collaboration, as well as ensuring all front-line workers and professionals alike are being trained and are aware of the resources available to them from other organizations and stakeholders.

Tools to increase coordination and collaboration could include an online portal or one-stop database, regular surveys or consultation meetings, and an annual summit including all relevant partners.

5.3 Victim Protection

The questionnaire asked respondents to share their knowledge and experiences of successful interventions and programs for groups at high-risk of human trafficking. In addition, feedback was sought on how victims of human trafficking are currently identified. In response, participants provided examples of successful initiatives that could be included in a future national human trafficking strategy to continue to help protect victims and survivors.

Ontario's Victim Quick Response Program was highlighted by some respondents as an example of supporting victims positively by improving access to specialized, trauma-informed services such as treatment, tattoo removal and the replacement of government documents to meet the immediate and specific needs of survivors. Similar programs could be implemented by partners across Canada, where they do not already exist.

Respondents outlined the importance of providing services quickly, in a non-judgmental and trauma-informed way. Victim protection should be the primary goal of programs, according to some respondents. Some responses included the possible use of mobile interventions with varying hours of access, to provide successful interventions for high-risk groups. Engaging survivors who have received long-term care to support newly-identified victims was also cited as a potential way to strengthen victim protection.

Other respondents noted the importance of seeking input from front-line workers, noting that victims are often identified by front-line workers such as municipal police forces and community partners working with high-risk groups. The healthcare system was also seen as a means of identifying human trafficking victims.

“An effective national strategy must include the significant mental health needs of victims of human trafficking... A highly skilled clinician should be the first point of contact (separate from police who may need to be the first responders...in that situation, the police should partner with a skilled therapist) with the victim. The first person [in contact with the victim] often plays such a critical role that it is imperative that the professional be trained and skilled in working with victims of human trafficking.”
– Questionnaire respondent

5.4 Data Collection

Respondents were asked to identify the data sources known to them, which could help establish a more complete picture of human trafficking in Canada. Additionally, feedback was solicited on how current data collection tools could be improved in order to ensure that marginalized populations are included in data collection mechanisms.

Data sources identified by respondents included governmental sources at the national, provincial/territorial and municipal levels, such as education services, health care providers, police, courts, CBSA, IRCC, Employment and Social Development Canada, and Statistics Canada. Non-governmental sources included universities, social service providers, legal service providers and health workers. More information could be gathered from women's shelters, emergency and homeless shelters, Indigenous friendship centres, child protection services, drop-in centres and front-line service providers for victims. Other suggested sources of data were the media and even transportation systems, where closed-circuit television systems can be monitored through a database for evidence-based research.

Respondents suggested several strategies to improve data collection and use. One such suggestion included the idea of developing a standardized data collection tool, setting up common metrics that can be easily collected across stakeholders, and establishing a service provider initiative for consistent data collection and reporting.

It is imperative that marginalized populations, vulnerable communities, and victims and survivors are included as sources in the collection of data. Enhanced outreach could be carried out by providing appropriate alternative ways to access questionnaires, such as through in-person interviews, over the telephone, online or hard copies.

Some respondents noted the need for increased collaboration between organizations and agencies on data collection, including across all levels of government. Increased collaboration might improve the quality of data on human trafficking in Canada, although respondents acknowledged that this might require formal data-sharing agreements or legislative changes. Respondents highlighted that the confidentiality of those reporting human trafficking must be protected, perhaps by making participants of data collection anonymous or giving people the option of anonymity.

“Current initiatives against human trafficking are primarily aimed at combatting sex trafficking... Other forms of trafficking, such as trafficking for labour exploitation, domestic servitude, fraudulent adoptions, and forced marriage, are not getting the attention they require.”
- Questionnaire respondent

5.5 Labour Trafficking

Feedback was sought from respondents on their awareness of services and programs which target the demand side of labour exploitation, the role of the private sector in reducing this demand, and the links between the Canadian economy, international labour dynamics and trafficking in persons for labour exploitation.

Several respondents called for employers to be held responsible for using exploitative and abusive recruiters. Some respondents placed blame for labour exploitation on economic and employment conditions in other countries and called for Canada to adopt policies on ensuring a global supply chain free of labour and human trafficking. Emphasis was placed on preventing labour exploitation domestically, which most often involves migrants or other foreign victims.

“There is no incentive for private sector to help or reduce forced labour as there is little to no impact to them. They are not currently sanctioned in any effective manner.”
– Questionnaire respondent

5.6 Law Enforcement and Prosecutions

On law enforcement and prosecutions, respondents were asked to comment on the type of training available to police in their locality to help identify cases of human trafficking. Respondents were also asked to provide suggestions on how to build trust between the criminal justice system and high-risk communities.

There are several training programs available to help police identify cases of human trafficking across Canada. Participants highlighted several examples, including: the Action Coalition on Human Trafficking Alberta; the Canadian Police Knowledge Network; and the Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking Liaison of Ontario Native Women’s Association in Thunder Bay, Ontario. From 2014 to 2017, the Integrated Vice Unit in Nova Scotia trained police agencies on new prostitution provisions, human trafficking and best practices for working with victims.

Several respondents called for the implementation of effective training to rebuild public trust in the criminal justice system, particularly by victims and Indigenous communities. This training could include information on appropriate language to use when working with survivors of human trafficking, the safety risks survivors face when interacting with the justice system and the realities of systematic and institutional discrimination against Indigenous peoples, particularly Indigenous women.

Other suggestions for increasing trust in the criminal justice system included: increasing the visible diversity among police, lawyers and judges; enhancing and/or establishing access to first-language resources and translation; community policing approaches; and, establishing trauma-informed services at all levels of the criminal justice system.

Respondents also commented on the prosecution process, with some stating that the burden of proof should not lay with victims of human trafficking. Similar to Canada’s domestic violence policy, investigators should be able to provide all contributing factors and supporting evidence for a case, without necessarily requiring the victim to testify. One respondent called for the establishment of a court with a specialization in human trafficking.

According to several respondents, such changes are needed for Canada’s criminal justice system because victims are not offered sufficient protection. Victims are then reluctant to cooperate with law enforcement in bringing their traffickers to justice. In the experience of respondents, victims tend to believe that the likelihood of a successful prosecution is very low, while the personal cost to them for taking part in the prosecution process is very high.

The definition of trafficking under the *Criminal Code* and the complex burden of proof on the prosecution is a challenge to law enforcement as well as victims. Some contributors postulated that some law enforcement agencies may also have largely given up on building cases against

human traffickers because they, like the victims, assume their efforts will have a very low chance of success.

To address these challenges, some respondents suggested examining and addressing systemic barriers to prosecuting offenders and harmonizing provincial child and youth protection laws across Canada.

5.7 Industry/Technology Solutions

The questionnaire posed three targeted questions on industry/technology solutions: 1) What are the most effective approaches to help build public awareness about internet luring and the risks of ‘sexting’? 2) What resources are available to support these efforts? 3) How can various industries (e.g., travel, tourism, hospitality) best develop strategies to help counter human trafficking?

Respondents identified several programs that have been effective in building public awareness about the role internet luring and “sexting” can play in human trafficking. These include “Resist Buy,” a website in Vancouver that educates potential sex procurement buyers about crimes and the impact it has on victims. The Children of the Street Society is another organization based in British Columbia which implements related education programs for Grades 4 to 12.

More formal engagement of the education system was recommended by several respondents, who called for age-appropriate school campaigns on topics such as online safety, human trafficking and modern slavery. It was also suggested that manuals be made available for parents, teachers and school boards to explain how traffickers could target school-aged children and what could be done to prevent it. Parents should be encouraged by school systems to speak to their children about the risks of human trafficking.

Respondents also suggested engaging university students to raise awareness of human trafficking on their campuses. Learning sessions facilitated by key stakeholders such as community police officers and technology/Internet service providers could be beneficial for raising awareness on human trafficking.

The media were identified as a resource that can be used to inform the public about human trafficking, while smartphone applications and interactive tools can make education and prevention accessible, along with curriculum activities for school campaigns. Respondents felt that social media platforms, in particular, should be more engaged to prevent human trafficking. Public awareness campaigns could also be offered through TV, print, billboards, presentations, conferences and websites.

“The key to stopping human trafficking will be education (raising awareness), combined with deterrents (law enforcement) for the buyers of sex. ... There needs to be a national public awareness strategy; Canadians do not believe that human trafficking happens here.”
– Questionnaire respondent

Some respondents called for enhanced collaboration between industries and government agencies, especially law enforcement, to combat human trafficking, while others said industry should conduct screening at hiring to determine whether potential staff are being trafficked.

One proposal recommended establishing a regulatory body or review committee to coordinate advisories on social media and review social media terms of use to enable companies and service providers to prohibit their platforms to be used to facilitate human trafficking.

6. Detailed Findings: Meeting with Sex Work Organizations

For the sex work organizations meeting, participants were invited to provide recommendations on how to combat human trafficking and provide their considerations in the development of a new national strategy to counter both sexual and labour trafficking. The Discussion Paper prepared by Public Safety, *The Way Forward to End Human Trafficking*, was provided prior to the meeting in order to inform the contributions provided. Overall, there was strong consensus amongst participants around key considerations, including:

- addressing the conflation of human trafficking and sex work;
- focusing on definitional clarity;
- ensuring enhanced collaboration with law enforcement;
- focusing on addressing the root causes; and,
- ensuring legislative concerns are addressed surrounding PCEPA.

A summary of the discussion is included below.

Conflation of Human Trafficking and Sex Work

A key consideration raised by sex work organization representatives was surrounding the persistent conflation between human trafficking and sex work. There was consensus among the participants that the conflation between the two perpetuates a belief that sex work is inherently exploitative and that it fuels a misconception that those in the industry are not in a position to choose their line of work.

Additionally, participants identified that there lacks a consistent definition surrounding human trafficking throughout organizations in Canada. This lack in a national accepted definition, in turn, skews data collection.

Enhanced Collaboration

During the meeting, there was agreement among the participants that the relationship between sex workers and law enforcement is often adversarial and that it hinders the potential collaboration that could be used in detecting instances of human trafficking. There is also the fundamental issue of fear of the police which leads sex workers to under-report incidents of violence due to lack of trust. Participants described anti-human trafficking police operations as highly disruptive and that these operations infringe upon their workplaces. A common suggestion to promote enhanced collaboration was having sex work organizations provide police officers with training to provide perspective, approach methods, and generally accepted terminology among the sex work community. Additionally, it was suggested that the current policing approach in anti-human trafficking operations be replaced with community policing in order to build trust and relationships between law enforcement and sex workers.

Legislative Considerations

Legislative issues generated much discussion, particularly around the need to repeal PCEPA. There was consensus among participants surrounding the idea that when sex work is criminalized, operations are driven underground where sex workers have little control over their work conditions, thereby increasing their vulnerability to violence, abuse and stigma. Criminalizing the purchase of sexual services, in their view, also makes it difficult for sex workers to access police protection.