

Strengthening the Positive Youth Development Capacities  
of Civil Society Organizations to Improve their Effectiveness  
in Countering Trafficking in Persons

# Countering Trafficking in Persons Policy Gap Analysis.





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**PGA  
Report in  
Nigeria.**

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## List of Abbreviations.

<b>CJTF</b>	- Civilian Joint Task Force
<b>COVID-19</b>	- Coronavirus Disease of 2019
<b>CRA</b>	- Child Right Act
<b>CSO</b>	- Civil Society Organization
<b>CTIP</b>	- Countering Trafficking in Persons
<b>EASO</b>	- European Asylum Support Office
<b>ETAHT</b>	- Edo State Task Force against Human Trafficking
<b>FDFA</b>	- Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
<b>FGD</b>	- Focus Group Discussion
<b>IDP</b>	- Internally Displaced Persons
<b>KII</b>	- Key Informant Interview
<b>NACTAL</b>	- Network Against Child Trafficking, Abuse & Labour
<b>NAPTIP</b>	- National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons
<b>NIS</b>	- Nigeria Immigration Service
<b>PGA</b>	- Policy Gap Analysis
<b>TIP</b>	- Trafficking in Persons
<b>TIPPEA</b>	- Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act
<b>TIPPEA</b>	- Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act
<b>UN</b>	- United Nations
<b>UNODC</b>	- United Nations Office on Drug and Crime
<b>USDOL</b>	- United States Department of Labour
<b>USDOS</b>	- United States Department of State

## Introduction.

Nigeria's triple status as a major source, transit, and destination country for trafficking of women, men and children poses a global challenge. According to the Nigerian Government, trafficking in persons could range from an individual being sold in exchange for money, being put in debt or bondage, having his/her travel documents seized by employers or traffickers, being assured a job without full knowledge of its exploitative nature, among others (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2015).

Nigeria stands out as one of the first African countries to initiate concrete measures towards countering trafficking in persons and has made some progress at the national and state levels. At the National level, the Federal government of Nigeria adopted the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act in 2003. The law introduced severe penalties for perpetrators of trafficking in persons. Following the amendment of the Act in 2015, more stringent penalties for trafficking crimes were introduced - including a minimum penalty of between two to seven years' imprisonment and a fine of between 250,000 to 2 million naira for both sex and labour trafficking. At the state level, Edo state - which is widely acclaimed as Nigeria's sex trafficking hub - launched the Edo State Trafficking in Persons Prohibition Law in 2018 and a state anti-trafficking taskforce to address TIP in the state. The Nigerian government has also supported the formulation of state anti-trafficking task forces in at least 13 other states<sup>1</sup>. In 2020, NAPTIP received 943 cases for investigation, completed 210 investigations, prosecuted 64 suspects, and convicted 27 traffickers. In addition, the Edo State Task Force Against Human Trafficking (ETAHT) investigated 38 cases and initiated prosecutions in 22 cases and are yet to gain conviction<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report, the government has assisted in setting up anti-trafficking task forces in Edo, Delta, Ondo, Ekiti, and Borno states before 2020. Post-2020, 9 task forces were established by NAPTIP in collaboration with state governments in the following states: Rivers, Cross Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Ogun, Oyo, Enugu, Anambra, Ebonyi and Lagos (re-established). Full report available here: <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-trafficking-in-persons-report/nigeria/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-trafficking-in-persons-report/nigeria/>

Despite these efforts, Nigeria currently ranks as a Tier 2 country in the US Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report (2021), implying that although the government has made significant efforts to address trafficking in persons, the country does not currently meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The report pointed to some policy implementation gaps such as sex-trafficking in government-run IDP camps, using children to man IDP checkpoints, corruption within judiciary and law enforcement agencies, among others. Some of the areas where the government has made progress include increased convictions of traffickers with significant prison terms; prosecuting complicit government officials; creating a new National Action Plan against Human Trafficking, establishing multiple state task forces on human trafficking, improving intra/intergovernmental coordination on anti-trafficking investigations, among others.

Human trafficking occurs both within and outside the country. A confidential report accessed by European Asylum Support Office (2021) estimates that domestic trafficking accounts for two-thirds of Nigerian human trafficking victims. Common forms of domestic human trafficking in Nigeria include child labour (including forced begging), 'baby' factories, sexual exploitation and forced labour (especially of victims from rural areas), among others. Traffickers also exploit Nigerian victims across neighboring countries including Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Niger, and farther destinations in North Africa, the Middle East, and Europe (especially Spain, Italy, France, and Russia). It is noteworthy that even during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown from March to April 2020, unsafe migration continued from Nigeria.

Historically, the majority of Nigerian trafficking victims in Europe have come from Edo State, via Libya; however, French authorities reported

an increasing number of Nigerian trafficking victims originating from northern states. Media and an international organization reported traffickers recruited women and girls from IDP camps in Northeast Nigeria for ostensibly legitimate jobs in Europe but exploit them in commercial sex in Niger, North Africa, the Persian Gulf, and Europe. (US Department of State, 2020).

Human trafficking in Nigeria is enabled by a complex web of actors ranging from highly organised criminal groups/confraternities involved in sex trafficking to terrorist groups like Boko Haram and ISIS-WA, and even complicit aid workers, government officials, family members and security forces. In addition, there are several often interrelated factors that make certain groups of people vulnerable to trafficking; poverty, unemployment, underemployment, large family sizes, parental pressure, eroded mindset/values, cultural norms, limited education, lack of basic social and welfare support, economic decline, and uncertainties. Unfortunately, young people, women and girls are generally disproportionately affected. In fact, the average age of persons trafficked in Nigeria is 15 years (NAPTIP, 2017).

Stemming from the above, the PGA takes a holistic and contextual approach towards understanding the existing gaps between policy and implementation of CTIP policies in Nigeria, thus the rationale for the research on the Policy Gaps Analysis (PGA). Specifically, this research proposes an analysis of the existing gaps in CTIP policies in Nigeria both nationally and regionally - with a focus on six priority states in southern and northern Nigeria: Lagos, Akwa Ibom, Edo, Adamawa, Borno, Bauchi and the Federal Capital Territory where the Headquarters of relevant government Agencies are domiciled.

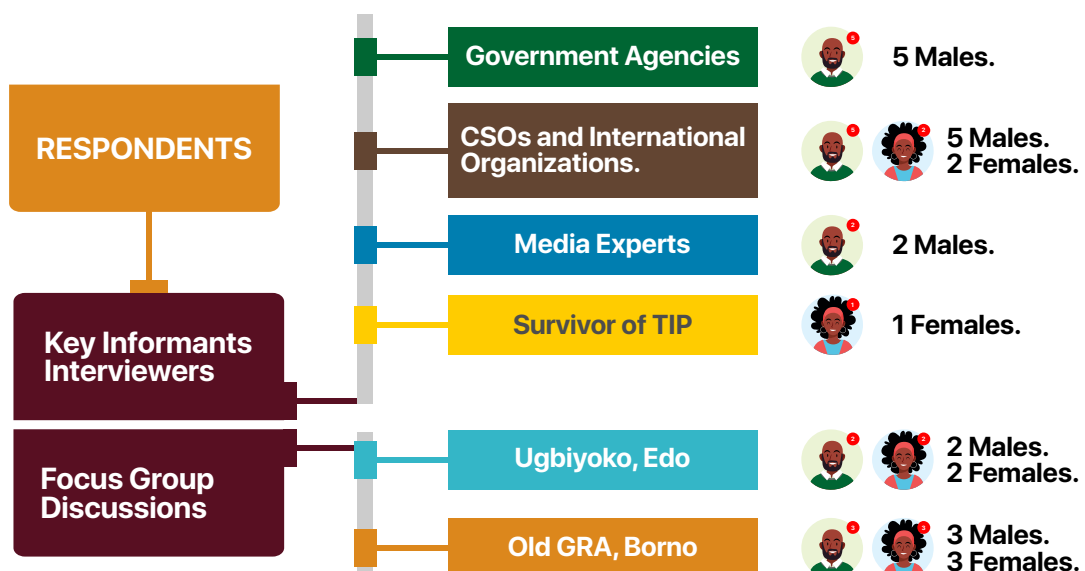
## 1.2 Objectives of the Policy Gaps Analysis

The following are the objectives of this gap analysis study:

- i. To identify existing policies and implementation frameworks surrounding countering trafficking in persons (CTIP).
- ii. To examine the gaps that hamper effective implementation of these laws.
- iii. To provide useful recommendations; this will guide the formulation/ implementation of new strategies capable of curbing the incidence of trafficking in persons.

## 1.3 Methodology

Thematic and Contextual Analysis techniques were used to identify recurrent and emerging themes that occurred in the transcripts from the audios of the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) respectively. Insights were drawn from the differences in the Northern and Southern regions' contextual analysis of the KIIs and FGDs. This research employed the use of a Snowball sampling technique to reach the stakeholders from relevant government agencies, civil society organizations, media, survivor of TIP and key community leaders in Ugbiyoko, Edo State and Old GRA in Borno State. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted physically and via phone calls across Edo, Akwa Ibom, Lagos, Borno, Adamawa, Bauchi and the FCT. The meetings were recorded with an audio device after consent was given. The breakdown of the stakeholders engaged are as shown below.





### 1.3.1 Scope of Study

The target states for this policy gap analysis are situated in southern and northern parts of Nigeria. They include Lagos, Akwa Ibom, Edo, Adamawa, Borno and Bauchi. It is important to note that four out of the six study states: Lagos, Akwa Ibom, Edo and Borno are reported to have anti-trafficking task forces through assistance from the government. The six states were selected for their contextual variations on TIP which will be useful for a contextual analysis on the scope and nature of trafficking in persons in Nigeria as well as highlight contextual gaps in the implementation of CTIP policies.

### 1.3.2 Data Collection

Data collection was done systematically to ensure that a mixed-methods approach was utilized to collect both primary and secondary data. Ethical procedures for interviews undertaken by **LEAP Africa** required that interviewees explicitly agreed to being interviewed and on how the information contained in their interview will be used. Focal persons interviewed were made up of a fair distribution of male and female from across a spectrum of stakeholders in Nigeria. However, as part of other ethical considerations, children were not interviewed as the information was not deemed age appropriate.



Primary data was collected from 15 KILs held with 16 focal persons on CTIP in 5 government agencies, 6 CSOs including NACTAL, 2 media consultants and 1 Survivor of TIP. Two FGDs were held with key community leaders in Ugbiyoko; Edo State as an endemic area and Old GRA in Borno State as an area with current surge in TIP because of the insurgency. Secondary data was collected via desktop review.

**Table 1.**  
**Overview of Data Collection tools**

SN	ACTIVITY	DATA COLLECTION TOOL/MEANS OF VERIFICATION
01	Desktop Reviews	- Google Scholar and other academic and non-academic databases - Direct referrals/recommendations
02	Key Informants Interviews	- Interview Guides - Consent Forms - Audio Recording
03	Focus Group Discussions	- Focus Group Guides - Consent Form - Audio Recording - Attendance

### 1.3.3 Limitations

1. Time constraint: data collection could only be done within a certain period; thus, data could not be obtained from some focal persons in government agencies and relevant International Non-governmental Organizations (INGO). Government agencies and some INGOs require submission of letters to get approval from the head of the organization before the focal person can engage in the KII and some of these approvals did not come through within the stipulated timeline for the KII.
2. Lack of interest and willingness to participate in the KII by some enlisted respondents in the government agencies. Some mentioned that they are not aware of how far the PGA report would go and would not want to have any challenge in future with their supervisors. Some officials clearly said that they were not interested in the research.
3. Biased responses cannot be ruled out, wherein respondents answer questions in the way that they perceive to be correct or desirable, particularly in group discussion settings and when dealing with sensitive issues such as trafficking in persons policies and the slack of duty bearers.

## 2.0 Findings from Desk Review



## 2.1. Increasing Cases of Domestic Trafficking in Nigeria

Internal trafficking is prevalent with Nigerian traffickers recruiting victims from rural areas, especially the country's southern regions, for exploitation in commercial sex and forced labour in domestic work in urban cities such as Lagos, Abeokuta, Ibadan, Kano, Kaduna, Calabar, and Port Harcourt. Women and girls are victims of forced labour in domestic service and sex trafficking, and boys are victims of forced and bonded labour in street vending, domestic service, mining, stone quarrying, agriculture, textile manufacturing, and begging<sup>3</sup>.

### 2.1.1. Child Labour and Exploitation

The term "child labour" is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that:

- is mentally, physically, socially, or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and/or
- interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

The worst forms of child labour involve children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age.

## 2.1.2. Sex for food in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps

In the recent years, there has been several reports in the media on human trafficking in IDP camps in North-East Nigeria. An increasing number of women and girls in newly accessible areas of Borno State have resorted to high-risk coping strategies like transactional sex in exchange for money or food to feed their families. Women and girls in the camps of Maiduguri are also increasingly resorting to survival sex, most notably in relation to food distribution within the camps or to secure permission to leave the camps that restrict the movement of internally displaced people, OCHA noted. This has resulted in an increase in vulnerability to being trafficked for the state reason. This reality is further compounded by the rising cases of 4 internally displaced persons camps littered all over the country particularly Northwest and North Central as a result of farmers/herders' conflict and banditry.

## 2.1.3. People trafficked for sexual exploitation.

It is difficult to say how many women and girls are trafficked from, into, and within Nigeria, as there is no reliable data. However, Nigeria is routinely listed as one of the countries with large numbers of trafficking victims overseas, particularly in Europe, with victims identified in more than 34 countries in 2018, according to the US State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons<sup>5</sup>.

## 2.1.4. Baby Factories

Illegal maternity units, known as 'baby factories,' are rampant in Nigeria's black market. The latest police raid rescued ten people, consisting of four children aged between one to four years, four pregnant women and two other women from a separate illegal maternity home on Wednesday, December 2nd, in the Mowe area Ogun State of Africa's most populous nation. (Hamilton, 2020). UNESCO first coined the term 'Baby Factory' in a 2006 policy paper revealing that these facilities were found in Abia, Lagos and Ebonyi states. 'Baby Factories' now stand as the third most common crime in Nigeria<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-trafficking-in-persons-report/nigeria/>

<sup>4</sup> [www.un.org/africarenewal/news/women-displacement-camps-nigeria-resort-transactional-sex-survival](http://www.un.org/africarenewal/news/women-displacement-camps-nigeria-resort-transactional-sex-survival)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/report/2019/08/27/you-pray-death/trafficking-women-and-girls-nigeria>

## 2.1.5. Drivers of Human Trafficking in Nigeria

Despite the transition to democratic rule, poverty, crime, corruption and violence are fundamental factors in driving people to emigrate from Nigeria with young women particularly vulnerable to trafficking for sexual exploitation due to limited work opportunities at home<sup>7</sup>. Other factors that predispose people to TIP are lack of (education, human rights for vulnerable groups, legitimate economic opportunities), poverty, harmful social and cultural norms, ignorance and prolonged conflicts amongst several others.

## 2.1.6. The Impact of COVID 19 on Trafficking in Nigeria

Our findings review some of the resultant impacts of COVID 19 to include the following.

- Increasing prevalence of sexual exploitation online and use of technology to facilitate varied forms of exploitation and other criminal conduct.
- Delayed victim identification and limited access to services and support for victims and survivors, due to prolonged lockdown and shrinking resources.
- Diverted law enforcement resources for investigating and responding to trafficking in persons, as well as reduced inspections leading to decrease in identification of cases, including for labour exploitation.
- Delayed access to justice, including postponement of trials, causing significant disturbances in the conduct of proceedings before criminal, civil and administrative courts to the detriment of victims' rights.
- Risks that the return of victims of trafficking to their countries of origin may be delayed or, on the contrary, precipitated, even if the persons concerned face serious health and protection risks in the countries of return<sup>8</sup>.

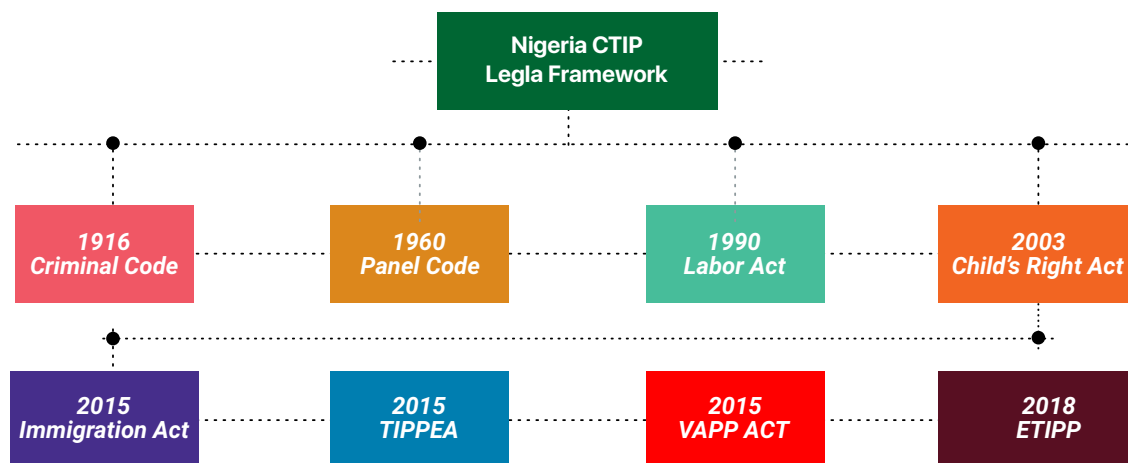
<sup>6</sup> <https://theowp.org/reports/the-dirty-business-of-baby-factories-in-nigeria/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.iom.int/news/human-trafficking-nigeria-europe>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/human-trafficking/Webstories2020/covid-19-pandemic-and-its-impact-for-victimsand-survivors-of-trafficking-in-persons.html>



## 3.0. The Legal Framework for Countering Trafficking in Persons in Nigeria



In this section, a comprehensive desk review of relevant laws and policies governing trafficking in persons in Nigeria at the international, continental, sub-regional, and state levels was carried out. Additionally, articles, opinion papers and publications on the subject were also reviewed to ensure extensive coverage.

### 3.1 The International Legal Framework on CTIP in Nigeria

Nigeria stands out as one of the first African countries to initiate concrete measures towards countering trafficking in persons (CTIP). There are several international and regional 9 conventions and protocols that inform the normative and legal framework for trafficking in Nigeria.

#### 3.1.1. The Palermo Protocols

On June 28, 2001, Nigeria was noticeably among the first countries to ratify the Palermo Protocol on Trafficking, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The Palermo protocol is seen as the universally accepted legal framework to address all aspects of trafficking in persons offering a comprehensive approach for addressing transnational crime including guidelines for prevention, victim protection and international cooperation.

<sup>9</sup> Baseline assessment: *Trafficking persons in Nigeria*, UNODC, NAPTIP, FDFA, 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Semprebon M. and Abe O. M. (2021) "The Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Women Returnees in Nigeria", SSIIM UNESCO Chair, University

IUAV of Venice. Available at: <https://www.insightproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/REPORT-NIGERIA-eng-for-publication.pdf>

The protocol emphasizes the 4Ps of Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership. Moreover, it prioritizes the criminalisation of traffickers while significantly delegating the protection of victims and other trafficking-related migration issues to the state's discretion. This limited security/migration-first approach to human trafficking leaves the room to promote states' interests over victims' human rights<sup>10</sup>.

Some of the provisions in the TIPPEA Act derived from the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime includes:

**Table 2: Adoptions of TIPPEA Act provisions from the Palermo Protocol**

Legal Provisions	TIPPEA Act 2015	The Palermo Protocol
Confiscation and Seizure of proceeds from TIP	Article 5 (n)	Article 12 (1)
Assistance and Protection of victims of TIP	Articles 5 m(l) & 12(4)	Articles Annex 1:25 (1) & Annex II: 6 (2 - 6)
International Cooperation on CTIP	Articles 1 & 5 (j, l, m, p, s)	Excerpts of Articles 13, 16, 17,18,19
Law Enforcement Cooperation	Article 5 (q)	Article 27
Training and Technical Assistance	Articles 5 (t) & 12 (6)	Article 29 (1)
Monitoring Transborder activities	Article 5 ®	Annex II, Article 11:6
Bilateral and Multilateral agreements	Article 5 (k)	Article 29 (4)
Awareness campaign on TIP	Article 12 (3)	Article 30 (5)
Declaration of TIP as a crime	Article 13	Annex II, Article 5
Legislative measures on commercial transport	Article 35	Annex II, Article 11:2
Mitigation of Punishment of an accused person who provide substantial contribution to investigation	Article 36 (3)	Article 26 (2)

<sup>11</sup> Available at: [https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/nigeria/documents/page\\_content/eu-ng-jd\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/nigeria/documents/page_content/eu-ng-jd_en.pdf)

### 3.1.2. Common Agenda for Migration and Mobility (CAMM)

Europe is a major continent of destination for trafficking from many countries including Nigeria. Hence, there have been some bilateral agreements between Nigeria and the European Union (EU) on migration. In March 2015, Nigeria and the EU signed a joint agreement declaration on a Common Agenda for Migration and Mobility (CAMM), which earmarked irregular migration and trafficking in persons among other priority areas. The declaration proposed to foster 11 effective migration and mobility based on enhanced understanding of migration flows between Nigeria and the EU, while protecting the human rights of migrants. The UK and Italy are key among countries in Europe that Nigeria has initiated CTIP-related cooperation with. Within Africa, Nigeria has also extended cooperation to Benin and Niger republic (Semprebon & Abe, 2021).

### 3.2 Regional Legal Framework on CTIP in Nigeria

Currently, the African Union does not have a specific legal framework for addressing CTIP but regulates it within the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, 2003. The protocol requires parties to take adequate and effective measures to prevent and combat trafficking in women, prosecute traffickers and protect women who are at risk. However, the focus of this Protocol on only women, is not representative of the scope and nature of human trafficking in Africa. Furthermore, it does not provide specific implementation measures for achieving prevention, prosecution, and protection (Ikeora, 2018).

Alternatively, sub-regional organisations like ECOWAS have been more pivotal in combatting human trafficking. As more people abuse the intra-regional mobility provided within the Free Movement Protocol of 1979; trafficking within West Africa has become increasingly complex and a key area of importance to ECOWAS. In 2002, ECOWAS adopted the Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings Especially Women and Children (Ouagadougou Action Plan), providing a framework for member states to fully implement international instruments 12 against trafficking especially in women and children, while enhancing cooperation to address trafficking between Europe and Africa (Ikeora 2018; Semprebon & Abe, 2021).

<sup>12</sup> Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/default/files/ouagadougou\\_action\\_plan\\_to\\_combat\\_trafficking\\_en\\_1.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/default/files/ouagadougou_action_plan_to_combat_trafficking_en_1.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p.1

<sup>14</sup> The Victims of Trafficking Fund was established to pay compensation and damages to trafficking persons. It was meant to be funded through retrieved assets from traffickers.

### **3.3. The National Legal Framework on CTIP in Nigeria**

Nigeria operates a pluralistic legal system that recognises statutory, Islamic, and customary law. Statutory laws are applicable at both the federal and state level covering issues within the exclusive and concurrent lists respectively. While the exclusive list covers matters under the jurisdiction of the national assembly, the concurrent list includes matters with the jurisdiction of both national and state assemblies . Nigeria's constitution states that international laws and 13 conventions can only take full effect after being enacted into law by the National assembly. In the following section, this document will take a deeper look at key laws and policies relevant to countering trafficking in persons in Nigeria, their implementation and areas that require improvement.

#### **3.3.1 The Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration (TIPPEA) Act, 2003 (amended in 2005 and re-enacted in 2015)**

The TIPPEA Act 2003 was the first specific legislative act that addressed human trafficking in Nigeria. With a mandate to enforce and administer the provisions of the Act, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) was subsequently established. The TIPPEA Act was amended in 2005 introducing the Victims of Trafficking Trust Fund<sup>14</sup> among other administrative changes. In 2015, the 2003 and 2005 Acts were repealed to re-enact a new comprehensive law to tackle trafficking in Nigeria.

The <sup>2015</sup> Act introduced new and extended provisions that addressed not only trafficking (Section 13), but a range of offenses that might be incidental to trafficking (Sections 14-35). The Act addressed the gap in the preceding acts which made it possible for offenders to serve very limited sentences and removed the option for offenders to pay a fine in lieu of serving a prison sentence. It clearly sets the minimum sentence to two years using the phrase "not less than". The 2003 Act uses the phrase "not exceeding", indicating only the maximum - providing a leeway for sentences that do not meet the global standards. The 2015 Act also prohibits the illegal custody of a child below the age of <sup>18</sup> for exploitation, as well as the employment of a child below the age of 12 as a domestic worker. However, this age restriction still puts a lot of children at risk of being trafficked. It is also important to note that the <sup>2015</sup> Act does not provide higher penalties for organized groups as provided in some other countries. With regards to protection of trafficking victims, the 2015 Act provides somewhat limited provisions with regards to information on their rights, access to health and social services, and protection from intimidation or threats.

### **3.3.2 The Labour Act 1990**

This act is currently being reviewed to provide stiffer penalties for several offences that relate to women in the workplace, modern slavery, and child labour. It passed its second reading in early 2021 (Umoru, 2021). While Nigeria has several provisions prohibiting forced and child labour, the provisions are largely inconsistent. In Section 73 of the Labour Act, the penalties prohibiting forced labour are significantly lower than those under the TIPPEA Act. The former requires either a fine of 1000 naira or imprisonment up to 2 years compared to the latter which stipulates five years and 1 million naira.

With regards to child labour, there are significant disparities within the laws that prescribe the minimum age for work. While Section 59(2) prohibits any young person under age 15 from being employed or working in any industrial undertakings; Section 59 (1) and Section 91 define the minimum age for work as 12. The Act also allows children of any age to do light domestic and agricultural work and does not cover self-employed children or those in the informal sector (USDOL, 2020). However, the Act itself upholds provisions Section 59 of the Labour Act (minimum age of 12) and does not comply with international labour standards. Moreover, the Labour Act prohibits the employment of young persons below the age of 18 in any work that is detrimental to their health, safety, or morals, but does not specify what counts as hazardous work. The blurred lines between what counts as a young person (under 18) and a child (under 12) within the Labour Act (and other complementary laws) creates room for ambiguity and makes effective implementation a challenge.

### **3.3.3 Child Right Act (CRA) 2003**

According to the 2019 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour; children in Nigeria are involved in the worst kinds of child labour including quarrying granite, artisan mining, commercial sex exploitation and armed conflict – sometimes due to human trafficking (USDOL, 2020, p.1). The CRA codifies the rights of children in Nigeria and provides extensive legislation for the prohibition of child trafficking, forced labour and other harmful practices to children. The Act requires parents or legal guardians to ensure basic protection of their children, although it does not include specifications on how.

Given that the Act was enacted by the National Assembly, it must be enacted and implemented at the state level to become applicable within their territories. However, 11 states specifically in northern Nigeria are yet to domesticate the act with legal frameworks that fall short of global standards that prohibit child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation.



### **3.3.4 The Immigration Amendment Act, 2015**

The Immigration Act, 2015; includes specific provisions concerning human trafficking offences, including trafficking for sexual exploitation, prescribing stiffer sanctions than attainable under the TIPPEA Act. This raises concerns about duplication of efforts and mandates in relation to prosecuting trafficking related offenses under the Immigration Act. Under this Act, trafficking victims are also at risk of being prosecuted for using forged documents if travelling for the purpose of prostitution, according to Section 57(4)(a), requiring sanctions of ten years imprisonment or a fine of 2 million Naira or both. Section 62 of the TIPPEA Act does not provide for such a penalty. The sanctions for smuggling under the Immigration Act are also heavier than the TIPPEA Act (UNODC, NAPTIP, & FDFA, 2020).

### **3.3.5. The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015**

The VAPP law is designed to tackle “all forms of violence against persons in private and public life” and provide “maximum protection and effective remedies for victims and punishment of offenders.” It was passed by the National Assembly, and it would have to be adopted across the rest of Nigeria’s states as part of their own laws through their state legislature and government. This is the only reason it can be useful to every Nigerian woman and girl and why it is important for Nigeria’s leaders to enforce the VAPP Act in all states. It has been adopted in varying forms by 18 of Nigeria’s 36 states. The VAPP Act covers various forms of violence but particularly hones in on gender and sexual-based violence. Furthermore, the VAPP Act focuses on globally acceptable deterrents in the form of punishments for offenders and includes provisions for the financial compensation of victims – another first. It also categorizes emotional, verbal, and psychological abuse as offenses.

Ultimately, the VAPP Act's purpose is to reduce the equality gap between men and women in Nigeria as well as cut down the country’s very high incidence of GBV which disproportionately affects women and girls.

It also makes a provision for the creation of a sex offenders register which has already been created by the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) which is also empowered by the law to enforce its provisions<sup>15</sup>.

## 3.4 Regional and state-level legal frameworks

The Nigerian legal framework provides for regional and state-specific laws that also guide the prohibition of trafficking. This section will examine some of them:

### 3.4.1 The Criminal Code and Penal Code

The Criminal Code (1916) applies to states in Southern Nigeria, while the Penal Code (1960) applies to states in northern Nigeria. Both laws do not explicitly define trafficking but were useful before the TIPPEA 2003 Act in criminalizing offences and conduct that could lead to trafficking including sexual offences, rape, criminal charms, or slavery. Sections 223 and 224 of the Criminal Code prohibits the procurement of women and girls for prostitution or using intimidation to procure a woman for unlawful sexual activity. It also criminalizes forcibly detaining someone in a brothel. These offenses are largely referred to as 'misdemeanors' with limited prison terms. On the contrary, a range of offenses attract more serious penalties. Section 364 prohibits the unlawful capturing and transportation of a person outside of Nigeria without their consent – implying a 10-year prison term. Slave dealing also attracts a penalty of 14 years imprisonment. The Criminal Code is silent on issues prevalent forms trafficking in Nigeria including forced labour, child labour, domestic servitude, forced begging, recruitment of children for armed conflict, among others.

The Penal Code Act was signed in 1960 and its application is restricted to some Northern states including the Federal Capital Territory. Prior to the TIPPEA Act, it was the only legislative instrument that mentioned trafficking – albeit in a limited sense. Although The Penal Code contains similar provisions to the Criminal Code Act, it considers trafficking related offenses as felonies and attracts stronger penalties. For example, section 276 of the Penal Code prescribes a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a fine for anyone convicted of encouraging the prostitution of women and children. It is also prohibited to traffick a girl below the age of 21 into northern Nigeria for prostitution. However, some of its provisions do not have a strong deterrent value; the penalty for forced labour is a prison term of up to one year or a fine (United Nations, 2019).

## 3.4.2 State-Level Frameworks

At the state level, the legal and policy framework includes a range of laws, policies, action plans, task forces and awareness initiatives to curb human trafficking in Nigeria. Four out of the six study states (Lagos, Akwa Ibom, Borno and Edo) host NAPTIP Zonal Commands. This section highlights specific frameworks and provisions across the study states in southern and northern Nigeria.

### 3.4.2.1 CTIP Legal and Policy Framework in Southern Nigeria

In 2018, the Edo State Trafficking in Persons Prohibition Bill was signed into law. The Act also formalised the establishment of the Edo State Task Force Against Human Trafficking (ETAHT) which was already functional since 2017. The Act provides a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for countering trafficking in persons in the state, although it largely mirrors the provisions of the TIPPEA Act 2015 in terms of penalties. This attracted some criticism from CSO stakeholders in the state who had expected stiffer penalties, but the Act was widely appreciated as being a step in the right direction (Pathfinders Justice Initiative, 2018). Lagos and Akwa Ibom have state level steering committees to guide the implementation of the National Policy and National Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labour (USDOL, 2018).

## 3.5 CTIP Policy and Institutional Framework

The National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) works towards enforcing the TIPPEA Act and other supporting policies like the **NAPTIP Action Plan on Trafficking which was adopted in 2008** (spanning from 2009-2012). The plan provided a standardized format for identifying and coordinating key CTIP activities, high-level timelines, and impact indicators. However, implementation was faced with several challenges including inadequate funding, poor stakeholder management and information dissemination, and donor dependent coordination. In 2012, the NAPTIP Strategic Implementation Plan (2012–2017) was created, however, it did not gain as much engagement as the 2009-2012 Action Plan.

The 2019 Action Plan on Trafficking is the most recent framework which was anchored on: public enlightenment, prosecution and law enforcement, protection, partnerships (national, regional, and international) and organizational development and policy. In 2020, NAPTIP with support from the UNODC and the Government of Switzerland developed a new 4-year action plan.

NAPTIP is also supporting the revision of the National Policy on Protection and Assistance to Trafficked Persons (2008). Another pivotal policy instrument that requires greater awareness and implementation is the 2015 National Referral Mechanism Guidelines for protection and assistance to trafficking persons in Nigeria which aims to enhance protection and support services CTIP victims through geographical and service clusters using human-rights approach (Semprebon & Abe, 2021).

Other relevant policies relevant to combating trafficking in Nigeria include:

- National Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labour (2013-2017)
- The National Policy on Labour Migration, 2014
- National Policy on Child Labour, 2014
- National Policy for Protection and Assistance of Trafficked Persons being supported by UNODC which has scaled second reading. This policy will enhance adequate enforcement and implementation of the Victims Assistance and Protection in the TIPPEA Act with more focus on the persons who were trafficked rather than the agency.

## 4.0. Key Findings from KII and FGD



## I. Prosecution Takes Time:

Prosecution of perpetrators of TIP takes three to ten years, thus, resulting in survivors giving up on court cases, disappearing without a trace or being shielded by family members due to stigmatization. According to the Regional Commander of Southeast; Barr. Nduka Nwamenmo;

***“We cannot keep the survivors in the shelter for that long because people keep coming and going.***

***Where we usually have problems is when the victim’s family come and said (sic) that they are no longer interested in the case and that they will not allow their daughter or their son to show up and testify in court”***

In Part V: Jurisdiction of the TIPPEA Act.

Article 37:(1); In any trial for an offense under this Act, the court shall have the power, notwithstanding anything contrary to any other enactment, to adopt all legitimate measures that it may deem necessary to avoid unnecessary delays and abuse in the conduct of proceedings.

This is ambiguous and there is no clear timeline for trying a case. There is no legal framework that allows for forensic interviews which can be carried out and used in court when the need arises. This is a way of protecting the identity of the victim/survivor from the suspect.

## II. No Provision for Ethical Reporting

There is no guideline on how the media should report cases of TIP as stated by both NAPTIP and media correspondents. They relied on individual/organizational ethics.

Some media personnel/consultants are involved in investigative journalism and produce documentaries that can help NAPTIP and other related agencies in investigations, but this avenue is currently not being explored.

***“Personally, going to report is not my work but by telling these stories on air as journalists; we alert the law enforcement agency to know where to take themselves to (sic). I have held a program where someone described the routes from Edo, Benin city up to Libya. Mentioning the routes and the stopping points up until Libya, so in telling those stories, it is obvious where the security agencies should look. So that is the mandate of my work as a journalist” Chibuike Utaka, Media Consultant.***



TIPPEA Act, Article 5 (f): Encourage and facilitate the availability and participation of persons who voluntarily consent to assist in investigations or proceedings relating to trafficking in persons and related offenses.

From this provision, NAPTIP is expected to encourage such relationships to boost their investigation.

### **III. Inadequate Capacity Building for Judges**

*“There is also the need to train and retrain judges, because they must be acquainted with the policy. Judges, we have trained you know; cases are disposed of judiciously. A practical experience: I remember very well the former Chief Judge of Edo state; Honourable Justice Cromwell Idahosa. He had been trained by NAPTIP on trafficking laws so the cases don’t last too long in his court because he knows the in and out of trafficking laws, so it is important to keep training judicial officers particularly the judges that handle these cases” Barr. Nduka Nwamenmo.*

NAPTIP has the ratification to train all persons that are involved in executing their mandate as stated in:

Article 12-6(a): Initiate, develop or improve specific training programmes for officers of the Agency and relevant law enforcement officers charged with the responsibility for the prevention, detection, investigation, elimination, prosecution, rehabilitation of victims of trafficking and related activities.

### **IV. Inadequate Cooperation & Intelligence Sharing with Relevant Agencies**

The Joint Task Force in Borno State is chaired by the Attorney General of the State and co-chaired by NAPTIP but according to.

Article 5 (l): of the TIPPEA Act states that NAPTIP has the mandate to strengthen cooperation and conduct joint operations with relevant Law Enforcement and Security Agencies, International Authorities, and other relevant partners in the Eradication of Trafficking in Persons.

- (m) co-ordinate, supervise and control
- (i) the protection, assistance, and rehabilitation of trafficked persons and
- (ii) all functions and activities relating to investigation and prosecution of all offenses connected with or relating to trafficking.

In essence, it is the duty of NAPTIP to oversee any committee or task force constituted to Counter Trafficking in Persons as anything contrary affects the goal for which such a body was set up.

***“We sometimes encounter interagency rivalry where this agency will say, ‘this is our mandate’ and migration issue is a protection activity where almost all the agencies I have mentioned have the responsibility of protection too but when one aspect is done, and we are like the other one is not important” Mordecai Titus (NCRMI).***

## **V. Ignorance of the Constituent Elements of Trafficking in Persons**

A common challenge in the Northern states under study is that some respondents reported that while providing psychosocial support to rescued persons who were trafficked; that quite several of them did not know that they were trafficked. There is still the misconception of smuggling of migrants with trafficking in persons. The CSOs who provide psycho-social services said they usually must explain to the survivors that they were trafficked before they can effectively help them. The quest for a better life has been deepened by the economic crunch in the country; thus, making a lot of youths vulnerable to trafficking. Parents, especially those in the North-East who are besieged by the insurgency, are equally affected and are desperate to have the children live better lives outside of the insurgent-threatened environment, thus, release their children to those who offer them a better life; according to the participants from Old GRA, Maiduguri at the FGD. Awareness creation on TIP is provided for in.

Article 3: The Public Enlightenment Department shall be responsible for (a) carrying out information and awareness-raising campaigns, seminars and workshops, radio and television programmes aimed at educating the public on the dangers of trafficking in persons, especially to sectors and groups that are vulnerable to trafficking in persons, in cooperation with the media, non-governmental organizations, Labour, market organizations, migrant’s organizations and other segments of civil society.

Notwithstanding, CSOs and INGOs have been engaged in prevention campaigns in communities, cities, and states across the nation especially in reported endemic areas.

## **VI. Victims'/ Survivors' Ignorance of Rights and Policies**

Article 4: The Counseling and Rehabilitation Department shall have the responsibility of supporting, advising, and facilitating access to legal aid services by victims.

However, service providers which include CSOs in the reference states mentioned that victims do not know their rights; most of them do not even know the policies. Moreover, a survivor of TIP that was rescued and supported in the shelter for some weeks did not know why they were in a closed shelter; nor anything about the laws. In her words, "I didn't understand what I was doing there. I felt like a prisoner." Anonymous

## **VII. Non-Implementation of Policy on Addressing the Root Causes of TIP**

Article 12:3 (b) (iii) of the TIPPEA Act states that the Public Enlightenment Department of NAPTIP shall be responsible for addressing the underlying causes of trafficking, such as poverty, under-development, unemployment, lack of equal opportunities and discrimination in all its forms and improve the social and economic conditions of groups at risk. However, this is not being implemented because of inadequate funding of the agency.

## **VIII. Inadequate Enforcement of Policies on Internal Trafficking**

Children are mostly the victims of internal trafficking where they are used for child labour, hawking, begging, and fall prey to sexual abuse and exploitation either by their madam's husband or customers at the beer parlour where they work. There is a need to address internal trafficking which is increasing alarmingly as persons who are trafficked internally are more likely to fall victims and trafficked out of the country.

***“Though not so familiar because we may call it another name in another language, but the name ‘trafficking’ is not so familiar with the people. Like the one that is happening; they take housemaid, they take a child (child abuse); you see a girl of 7-8 years in the name of house help. What will she do? She ends up playing with your kids and one can’t even differentiate who is the child among them. This contributes a lot to the name of trafficking”***  
***Hon. Hadiza Muhammed (Political Advisor/Women Leader; FGD participant in Borno)***

## **IX. Inadequate Implementation /Enforcement of Policies**

There are currently 9 zonal commands, 4 state commands and 12 liaison offices; that is a total of 25 stations of NAPTIP across the nation. In a state like Bauchi where there is none; policy implementation is not even the issue. Currently, survivors of TIP are taken to IDP camps and cases must be reported physically in the nearest State which is Kano.

According to a service provider in Bauchi who wants to be anonymous; explained that the available law enforcement agencies do not seem to understand the gravity of TIP, hence poor response to the reported cases and they cannot afford the cost of always going to Kano to report cases of TIP.

***“Enforcement is still a big problem because we are not short of policy documents, we have so many. We have policies, SOPs, guidelines; all of them contributing to ensure that the policy works but enforcement is a major problem. One of the ways we can ensure enforcement is when everybody takes it as a priority, even the government”. Abimbola Adewunmi; Program Manager; Expertise France.***

## **X. Lack of Support from the State Government**

Traveling by road within the North-East is a major challenge currently due to the insurgency; an anonymous person spoke on how despite efforts made in advocating for support from the Adamawa State government; no positive response has been given. He stated that the strength of a NAPTIP office in a state is directly proportional to the support from the state government. For instance, in Yobe state; the governor donated office space and vehicles to NAPTIP in addition to some funding but that is not the case in other Northern states.

## XI. Regional variations in Enforcement

It was observed that interventions on TIP are concentrated in the Southern part of Nigeria, there are more NAPTIP offices there, more awareness, and thus more prosecution of cases. Meanwhile in the North, the on-going interventions are limited to IDP camps, and the command seems to be overwhelmed handling cases from other states due to the absence of physical presence of NAPTIP or inadequate facility (liaison office) for executing their mandates. While concentration was placed on the South, the traffickers went to the North to operate; they tended to change recruitment tactics depending on the trend in intervention as said by May Ekido; Edo State Coordinator, Girls Power Initiative. ***“We discovered that traffickers now go into the interior. When we are trying to cover the cities, they are going to the villages, we go to the villages; they go to the farms”.***

### 4.1. Cross-cutting Findings

#### I. Lack of Awareness of the Existing Policies

It was observed that focal persons in some government agencies and CSOs who are service providers do not know the policies by name or its provisions. One of the KII respondents mentioned that he attended a training on policies once, but the policies were not discussed in depth but just the names and years of enactment were mentioned.

#### II. Limitation of Policies to Prosecution

Many believe that the policies are limited to the legal aspect of TIP as they referred us to NAPTIP and insisted that anything that has to do with policy is the mandate of NAPTIP and did not grant the KII. A common statement from both reference regions states; ‘it is where we stop, that NAPTIP begins from’. Thus, it can be said that they do not know that NAPTIP has the mandate for prevention of TIP, rehabilitation, re-integration, and prosecution of offenders amongst others as the mandate of NAPTIP is all encompassing.

#### III. Lack of Awareness of NAPTIP

In some reference states in Nigeria, especially in the Northeast; the Police is still seen as the first contact for reporting cases of trafficking instead of NAPTIP and the response has been poor as the community members who participated in the FGD expressed their disappointments at the ineffective response of the Police to reports of human trafficking in most cases.



## **IV. No Policies for contingencies like Covid 19**

As much as all the relevant agencies like NAPTIP, Nigeria Immigration Service, National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs and the Police worked during the lockdown period; there was no legal framework that guided how they operated in carrying out rescue of victims and arrests. According to the respondents, they still worked during the lockdown because they are special agencies based on their mandates; however, there is no provision in the policy on how they should operate.

### **5.0. Recommendations**

#### **1. Continuous Training of Law Enforcement Agents**

There is a need for continuous training of judges and other law enforcement agents across the nation on CTIP policies to enhance prevention, rescue of victims and fast tracking of prosecution of TIP cases.

#### **2. Establishment of Special Courts**

There should be a special court for the trials of TIP related cases, this will enable NAPTIP to keep the survivor under protection in their shelter or under surveillance until the case is over. This will ensure the survivor testifies and curb discouragement from family members.

#### **3. Improved Collaboration with Media Organizations for TIP Prevention**

There is a need for a guideline on reporting for the media and collaboration between NAPTIP and investigative journalists who are working on CTIP. This will prevent an enthusiastic journalist from being unethical and the collaboration will enhance effective investigation of cases by NAPTIP

#### **4. Awareness Campaign on Trafficking in Persons and Policies**

There are a lot of awareness campaigns going on and many are still unreached. There is a need to have more CSOs carrying out awareness creation in the rural areas as the traffickers now go into the interiors to recruit persons. In addition, awareness on TIP should be part of the curriculum in schools as stated in.

Article 3 (b)(ii) of the TIPPEA Act which states: include trafficking in persons in human rights curricula in schools and universities.

There is a need to create more awareness on the policies on CTIP and about NAPTIP. This will contribute largely to primary prevention of TIP and ensure the reports are channeled to the appropriate sources where they will get the desired response.

***“Even though we know that it might be difficult to say we want to curb it 100%, but at least let’s archive 80% intervention in terms of prevention because when we prevent (you know Nigeria is not a very rich country), the kind of empowerment and rehabilitation that we will give in Nigeria is different from if the person was the citizen of another country. So, the minimal resources we have is very tight, so we are just using donors that have been supporting. So, for us it is cost efficient to prevent those things from happening rather than wait until it happens, and we start looking for money to rehabilitate”. Abimbola Adewunmi***

## **5. Inter-agency Collaboration**

According to the policy, NAPTIP representatives should be allowed to coordinate interagency collaborations on anti-trafficking as CTIP requires a united front. In as much as some relevant government agencies have an anti-trafficking unit, there is a need for them to collaborate with NAPTIP and refer cases of TIP to NAPTIP after profiling the victims and suspects.

## **6. Increase in Budgetary Allocation**

There is a need for an increase in the budgetary allocation of NAPTIP to facilitate the establishment of commands in all the states of the federation. In addition to increased awareness, research, protection, rehabilitation, and investigation.

***“Maybe the government needs to put more budget for NAPTIP, I think they are struggling. They need more budget to be able to do this work well”. Abimbola Adewunmi.***

## **7. Alternative Platform for Reporting**

Creating and maintaining an online platform for quick reporting of cases on trafficking especially for states where there is no physical presence of NAPTIP. This will enhance the speed of rescuing victims alongside possible arrests of traffickers and their agents.

## 8. Domestication of Acts under NAPTIP

There is no doubt that the TIPPEA Act is being implemented to a large extent; however, some laws need to be followed through. In addition, there is a need to domesticate the VAPP Act and the CRA across all states in Nigeria as these will ensure effective trials of perpetrators especially where minors are involved.

## 9. Advocate for increased funding for State Task Forces

As task forces on CTIP are being established; the state government should not relegate their support for NAPTIP. The task forces need funds to function effectively in preventing and responding to TIP.

## 10. Timely Prosecution of Cases

There is a need to make provisions in the TIPPEA Act or an institutional framework by NAPTIP stating the specific period prosecuting cases on trafficking in persons. This will save the state/agency a lot of funds which can be used to address other pertinent issues considering the challenge with inadequate budgeting. In addition, survivors will be readily available to testify against the perpetrators which usually ensures stiffer penalties when the offenders are sentenced.

As stated by Abdul Ganiyu Abubakar; NACTAL National Coordinator.

***“I think the federal government of Nigeria has tried by establishing NAPTIP and other related agencies. Compared to other countries where I have worked, I think so much needs to be done around diligent prosecution of cases, as well as inter agency collaboration between these actors. Now, during this intervention, I had the opportunity of bringing government and civil society stakeholders from other countries, Niger, and the Gambia to Nigeria, so that they will study the Nigeria model of NAPTIP.*”**

## 6.0. Excerpts from the CTIP Policy Gap Analysis Validation Meeting

To further enrich and refine the findings from the PGA, a rich pool of 33 research and TIP experts in Nigeria drawn from National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Network Against Child Trafficking, Abuse & Labour (NACTAL), Edo State Taskforce Against Human Trafficking (ETAHT) Media Practitioners, International Partners and the private sector converged on November 4th at the Rockview Hotel to witness the presentation of preliminary findings of the CTIP Policy Gap Analysis (PGA). Highlights of contributions from stakeholders are reflected hereunder:

## **I. Non-Implementation of the Victim of Trafficking Trust Fund (VTTF)**

A key provision of the TIPPEA is the establishment of the VTTF to support survivors of trafficking, findings from the PGA revealed that this is not currently being implemented, efforts in the past to set up a committee led by the AGF to drive this process have not also yielded positive outcome.

## **II. Inadequate enforcement of law on commercial transporters**

Provisions in the TIPPEA Act that places responsibility of TIP prevention on air carriers, transporters and other private sector entities is currently not been adequately enforced, there is need to engage more closely with the duty bearers to acquaint them with their obligation under the act and set in enforcement mechanisms to ensure that law is implemented and failure to cooperate should attract adequate penalties.

## **III. Inadequate implementation on Coordination by NAPTIP**

The provisions in the TIPPEA Act on coordination of TIP activities in the country are currently not fully implemented, findings revealed that there is no forum where NAPTIP constantly engages with TIP actors (local & international).

## **IV. Inadequate Enforcement of VAPP Act**

VAPP Act, though the agency has established a different unit to oversee the implementation of VAPP, this Policy Gap Analysis finds that due to inherent constraints in funding and capacity; the Act has not been optimally enforced and this has resulted in increased reported cases of gender-based violence across Nigeria.

## **V. Gaps in effective prosecution of traffickers**

Well documented that prosecution of traffickers and conviction have not been optimal. Part of the reasons found to drive this low prosecution/conviction of traffickers is the difficulty in getting credible evidence to support cases due to reluctance of victims to testify, fear of reprisal attack amongst others.

## **VII. Restriction of involvement on survivors of TIP**

Policies on confidentiality have been used to restrict the active involvement of survivor of trafficking as agents of change

## **VIII. Lack of commitment from the government**

It was established that the government has been unwilling to respect the policies that have been put in place and ensure that they are implemented. The attendees echoed that the government is also unwilling to increase the budget allocated to combating trafficking, they set up agencies who conduct research, but do not use the evidence presented to solve the issue of trafficking.

## **IX. Inclusion of TIP prevention in school curricula**

Trafficking is present in the Edo state junior secondary school curriculum, but the way students are taught is where the gap is because there is no conscious effort made to drive home the points by the teachers nor is there effort being made to replicate the same in other tiers of education across the nation.

### **6.1. Recommendations from the CTIP PGA Validation Meeting**

#### **I. Specification of duties among duty bearers**

National Referral Mechanism (NRM) currently undergoing review should highlight approaches for operationalization and socialization of specific contents especially amongst duty bearers.

#### **II. Coordination of forums by NAPTIP**

NAPTIP to establish a Coordination Forum to engage with relevant international partners on a quarterly basis and CSOs working on TIP, such a forum will be useful for advancing cooperation, shared learning of resources and more impactful interventions.

### **III. Partnership to ensure the speedy passage of the Witness Protection Bill**

NAPTIP needs to work closely with international partners including the SCALE Project to galvanize support for the passage of the witness protection bill in Nigeria. If passed the bill will greatly accelerate diligent prosecution and timely conviction of traffickers as it will ensure the availability of credible

### **IV. Addressing the Root Causes of TIP**

Engaging relevant agencies of government and international partners in addressing root causes of TIP. While a lot of resources are being channeled into rehabilitation; there is a need to also channel some resources into addressing the root causes of TIP such as poor education, curbing insecurity, poor social infrastructures, and unemployment.

### **V. Representation of CSOs on NAPTIP Board**

There is need to revisit the representation of CSOs in the board of NAPTIP: The TIPPEA provides for representation of CSOs in the board of the agency, the PGA recommends that such representation be revisited to ensure that the individuals are active and have the endorsement of CSOs actors in Nigeria.

### **VI. The need for Evidence Based Research**

Investing in generating evidence to guide the design of effective CTIP interventions; such research should focus on emerging issues like sex for food across IDP camps, organ sale/harvesting, online recruitment by traffickers amongst others.

### **VII. Engaging Survivors of TIP**

There is a need to find a middle ground and engage survivors more in driving TIP prevention and rehabilitation of trafficked persons in Nigeria.

### **VIII. The need for Online Prevention Campaigns**

Information about trafficking should be shared in ways that people can understand. Organizations should consider producing documentaries and short movies about the experiences of trafficking victims that evoke emotions and increase awareness. These can be disseminated via social media platforms to facilitate reaching out to young persons. Online sexual exploitation is an emerging issue that needs to be spotlighted and curbed before it worsens. Young people are being targeted through social media, therefore CSO's should be more aware of these avenues that are used for recruiting victims and be strategic in using these platforms to sensitize youth about trafficking.

## **IX. The need to review adoption Laws**

Organ harvesting is occurring through trafficking of young and vulnerable children under the pretense of adoption. There is a need to review the laws on the adoption process to curb trafficking of children, the responsible focal MDAs must work closely with relevant State House of Assemblies and Governments to harmonize salient provisions and reconcile discrepancies where they currently exist.

## **XI. Collaboration with the Government**

There is a need to establish and strengthen the relationship between NAPTIP and state governments. It is also important to involve community heads and religious leaders especially in the North, so it doesn't appear like NAPTIP is involved in religious affairs. In addition, it would be important for NAPTIP to drive the initiation of such collaborations.

## **XII. Awareness by Education**

The curriculum is an excellent way to inform young people about the dangers of trafficking. It should not only be at the secondary level but also at the primary level. Topics on trafficking should be put in textbooks in simplified forms for them to read and understand.

## **XIII. Establish NAPTIP desks in embassies abroad**

There is a suggestion to post NAPTIP representatives in Embassies abroad, which will be effective in tackling trafficking, but this boils down to the issue of funding. Setting up human trafficking desks at embassies is one way to prevent young people from being trafficked. NAPTIP officials should be trained on how to identify trafficked victims. It is also a good way for victims to be supported if stranded.

## **XIV. Availability of Safe Houses**

Due to the sensitive nature of trafficking, it was suggested that safe houses should be made available to victims. Most victims usually do not have a safe place to return to after being rescued, some of them even need protection from their handlers during court cases. Safe houses are a great way to keep them safe and give them time to get their lives back on track.

## 7.0. Conclusion

The Policy Gap Analysis on Countering Trafficking in Persons has further elucidated the current state of gaps in policy provision and implementation in Nigeria. Furthermore, the recommendations will inform channeling project objectives evenly by relevant stakeholders especially CSOs to promote holistic interventions in curbing the menace of TIP.

This report will be disseminated to relevant government agencies, International Non-Governmental Organizations, CSOs and all the participants at the Validation Meeting to encourage collaborations and targeted funding of the recommendations earlier mentioned.

Countering trafficking in persons is a call for all and like the community leader of Old GRA in Maiduguri, Borno State, the Sheik Bulama Abubakar Hassan said, "It is not the government that will do all for us. It is a collective responsibility for me, you and everybody".



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