

# Using the PIM Framework in IOM's Counter-Trafficking in Emergencies Information Management Guide

IOM Counter-Trafficking in Emergencies Information Management Officer, Benedetta Cordaro, describes how she used the PIM Framework to develop IOM's Counter-Trafficking in Emergencies Information Management Guide.

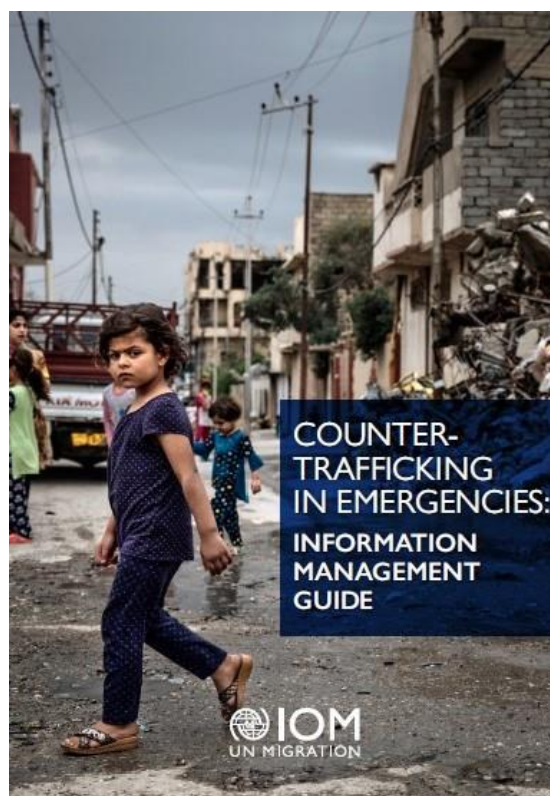
IOM's Migrant Protection and Assistance Division published IOM's Counter-Trafficking in Emergencies Information Management Guide in November 2020, which utilises and aligns with the PIM Framework.

## Need for the Counter-Trafficking in Emergencies Information Management Guide

Humanitarian crises both exacerbate pre-existing risks and patterns of trafficking and create new risks; yet trafficking in persons is often not sufficiently or comprehensively addressed in humanitarian responses.<sup>1</sup> Where it is addressed, it is often as part of - and from the perspective of - gender-based violence (GBV) programming relating to sexual violence, sexual exploitation, forced and early marriage, or child protection programming relating to child labour exploitation, forced child recruitment, and others; dealt with on an individual or case-by-case basis.<sup>2</sup>

The CTiE Information Management Guide aims to support a shift from analysis based on obtaining information from individual cases of trafficking in persons, to the development of evidence of trafficking trends and patterns and how these are affected by a humanitarian crisis; and analysis of factors that mitigate against or exacerbate these risks.<sup>3</sup> Benedetta explains:

*Existing counter trafficking indicators tend to be very narrow, and assume you are dealing with a victim of trafficking. There are [many] indicators to spot a case of trafficking or determine whether the person sitting in front of you is a victim of trafficking so [that] has more to do with screening...The purpose [of the approach outlined in the guide] is not to determine if one individual is trafficked but [to identify] if you have a trafficking phenomenon under your eyes and you need to connect the dots.*



...What was important for us to do is research on counter-trafficking without ever having to [interact with] the victim, either because the person has not been identified yet or from an ethical perspective, a safety perspective. [In emergency contexts, where resources and capacities are stretched, basing research on speaking with people experiencing trafficking] is absolutely not ideal because of the ethical and safety risks associated with that.

The purpose of IOM's *Counter-Trafficking in Emergencies: Information Management Guide* is to provide guidance on integrating counter-trafficking-specific data and analysis into existing information management mechanisms in emergency contexts and humanitarian settings. The ultimate objective is to promote an evidence-based decision-making approach that allows for the development of new programming or adaptation of existing interventions to counter human trafficking, which is often overlooked in times of crisis.

- from IOM, 2020, *Counter-Trafficking in Emergencies: Information Management Guide*

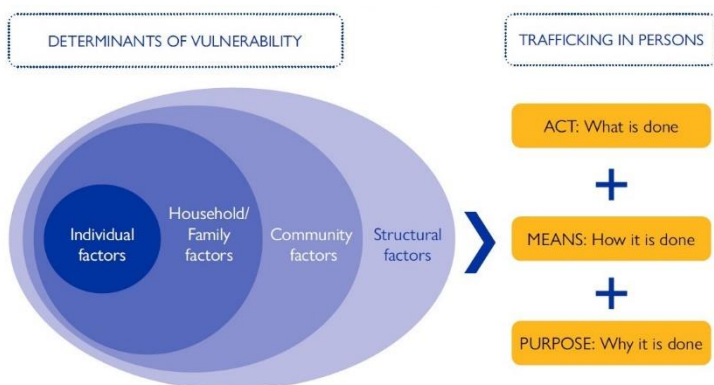
## Addressing ethical issues associated with CTiE information management

The approach outlined in the CTiE Information Management Guide also seeks to avoid the risks associated with CTiE information management activities. As the Guide itself outlines<sup>4</sup>:

*The well-being and safety of a [victim of trafficking (VoT)], and of any data subject, must be considered a priority in the way researchers or counter-trafficking practitioners plan and implement their information management activities. The life or safety of a VoT may be put at risk by the mishandling of personal data, failure to obtain informed consent, lack of data security measures, and inadequate assessments of the risks involved in data collection, storage, analysis, and dissemination. Failure to implement responsible research approaches may lead to stigmatization and ostracism of a VoT, cause re-traumatization, endanger their life, or subject them to reprisal. It could endanger other victims exploited by the same perpetrators, create risks for the staff who conduct information management activities, and cause reputational risks for the organizations involved.*

## Use of socio-ecological model to development analytical framework and indicators

Part of the approach taken to support analysis of trends and risk factors, and to ensure ethical research approaches, was to develop an analytical framework that utilised the socio-ecological model. The Guide offers examples of relevant indicators for each 'level' of the



CTiE Analysis Framework Conceptual Pathway

socio-ecological model; to broaden analysis beyond the individual level to also examine factors associated with the household or family, community actors and structural actors.<sup>5</sup>

Benedetta describes this approach:

*The indicators were not just to fill the different layers of the socio-ecological model. The suggested approaches have to do with what kind of secondary data sources, research methods or analysis framework can be adopted to avoid the enormous risks associated with the information management process.*

*...For every layer of the socio-ecological model, [we should] apply different [research] methods or collect information, secondary and primary, that can allow us to draw conclusions [about a situation] without ever having to [speak to] a victim of trafficking.*

## **Standardised approach supports data sharing and joint analysis**

The Guide encourages use of secondary research materials where available, identifying this as preferable to primary data collection given the risks and sensitivities of counter-trafficking research. The Guide outlines an analytical approach that also aims to facilitate data sharing to avoid duplication of information management activities, and to support joint analysis. Benedetta explains:

*The entire logic of [the Guide is that] we need an analysis framework and standardised indicators because these allow us to do a number of things including data sharing. Part of the reason the [socio-ecological model] was chosen [for the] analysis framework ...was because child protection ...and GBV [Areas of Responsibility] use it.*

*The whole idea was that it was being designed to fit a specific need which was going beyond primary data collection, [and] having a standardised approach, so if data is being collected in the capital or the village, if data is being collected in Nigeria or Niger, humanitarians are collecting information about roughly the same [topics], [while] leaving the freedom about the research methodologies [that best suit the context]. Standardisation is the common language that allows us to do joint analysis. If we share the data and do joint analysis [then] we don't need to collect new data.*

*There are other angles of analysis for counter-trafficking, but if we want to ensure this is mainstreamed within existing [humanitarian] mechanisms, [it is perhaps easier if we avoid] using another language. This is why the socio-ecological model was chosen. At a field level in humanitarian contexts, [practitioners] want to see how counter-trafficking is cross-cutting across all the layers [of the socio-ecological model] and consequently, where humanitarians can intervene.*

*The indicators [in the Guide] come from existing lists. I tried to design them in a way that they would speak to existing data sets [to facilitate data sharing and avoid duplication of data collection activities].*

## **PIM Framework as a 'backbone' for the Guide**

Benedetta describes how the PIM Principles and PIM Process provided a foundation for elaboration of the analytical framework outlined in the guide:

*[From the PIM Framework I used] the PIM Principles and the whole [PIM] Process [including the concept that data collection needs to] 'have an identified purpose'. I tried to use [the PIM Framework] as a backbone [for the Guide].*

*Chapter 3 [about PIM Principles] is probably the longest [chapter]. [This is because] if people do not understand [these], they cannot understand why I am proposing the approach I am proposing in the guide. Readers needed to know these aspects to understand the rationale for the analytical framework being proposed.*

*By giving as a background all the challenges, problems and ethical dilemmas, we might have in conducting research, including the desired data collection, defined purpose, and that secondary data collection should be always preferable to primary data collection; that was for me the skeleton of everything and from that it was possible to explain why a certain approach was going to work or not.*

The PIM Framework was also useful when trying to engage a broad readership, with diverse professional backgrounds. Benedetta explains:

*One of the things I like about PIM is the fact it gives structure to [these topics]. Information management can be done by people with very different backgrounds, not all with research backgrounds and not all from a social science angle [who may otherwise be familiar with some of the themes and content included in the PIM Framework]. It is not so unusual to have an engineer or a physicist - given their strong skills with data, IT and analysis - to be doing Information management, even in strongly thematic areas like protection, child-protection or GBV.*

*Because [the PIM Framework outlines] very clear principles, it is very easy to apply. I think it was very well explained. It is good to have it in a certain clear simplified way. Another very important [aspect] was having it in an authoritative way. [The PIM Framework] is a tool that has already been agreed upon, which works to facilitate [collaboration between organisations].*

### **PIM Highlights**

- The CTiE Guide refers to and elaborates on the PIM Principles and practical issues relating to their application, as a basis for elaboration of the analytical approach - Chapter 3 of the Guide. ([PIM Principles](#))
- Seeks to mitigate risks associated with inappropriate data collection and information sharing (PIM Principle – Do No Harm)
- Encourages the use of available secondary data where available, to avoid risks relating to counter-trafficking research ([PIM Process](#), PIM Principles – Do No Harm, People-centred and inclusive)
- Uses the [PIM Matrix](#) as a reference for IM categories (PIM Matrix)
- Ensures consideration of the ‘defined purpose’, including through inclusion of decision-makers in discussion of purpose (PIM principles)
- Supports data sharing and joint analysis by the establishment of a standardised analytical framework (PIM Principle – Coordination and Collaboration)
- Use of analytical approaches aligned with those used by gender-based violence and child protection actors to facilitate coordination and collaboration (PIM Principle – Coordination and Collaboration)

### **More information**

The IOM Counter-Trafficking in Emergencies Information Management Guide can be found [here](#).

A short film by IOM introducing the Guide can be found [here](#).

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<sup>1</sup> CTiE IM Guide, pp8-9

<sup>2</sup> CTiE IM Guide, p9

<sup>3</sup> CTiE IM Guide, p28

<sup>4</sup> CTiE IM Guide, p11

<sup>5</sup> CTiE IM Guide, p45