



Combating Illegal Activities Linked to Migrants and Refugees Exploitation: Why it Matters?

Combating and preventing illegal activities linked to the exploitation of migrants and refugees is crucial for upholding human rights, ensuring public safety, and promoting regional stability. Economic, social, and political crises in the Americas have increased migration flows, making migrants and refugees more vulnerable to criminal exploitation. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling violate fundamental rights and undermine the rule of law in both origin and destination countries. To address this, nations must strengthen their institutional capacities to prevent, investigate, and counter these crimes. A comprehensive approach led by the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security includes improving border management, enhancing screening and investigative capabilities, and engaging civil society. By implementing cooperative mechanisms, improving regulations, and promoting specialized investigation and prosecution methods, countries can better protect vulnerable populations and disrupt criminal networks, while addressing the root causes of exploitation.

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OAS

More rights
for more people

OUR MISSION

To strengthen the institutional capacities of Member States to prevent and combat criminal activity linked to the exploitation of migrants and refugees in the region, and increase awareness, knowledge, and skills of key stakeholders in using resources for the protection, investigation, and assistance of human trafficking victims, with a focus on gender and human rights perspectives.

1 Empowering Governance for Victim Protection

We focus on strengthening governance at all levels to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Our approach includes comprehensive institutional assessments, modernizing information systems, and aligning national frameworks with international standards. This multi-faceted strategy ensures a coordinated, rights-based response to protect victims and prevent exploitation.

WHAT WE OFFER

- Assess and propose institutional enhancements to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling.
- Modernize information systems and case documentation.
- Align national regulations with international anti-trafficking standards.
- Establish operational protocols for migration control to identify and address exploitation.
- Develop care strategies for vulnerable migrant populations.
- Train frontline officials in victim identification, assistance, and case prosecution, emphasizing human rights, equity, and inclusivity.
- Improve crime reporting mechanisms.

2 Enhancing Investigation and Prosecution Capabilities

Our efforts aim to bolster the justice system's ability to effectively tackle trafficking and smuggling networks. We develop cutting-edge investigation manuals, conduct hands-on training in proactive techniques, and facilitate realistic simulations of legal processes. By providing technical and logistical support for anti-trafficking operations, we help law enforcement to dismantle criminal networks and bring perpetrators to justice.

WHAT WE OFFER

- Provide best practice guides on cutting-edge investigation methods for trafficking and smuggling cases.
- Train justice professionals in proactive investigative strategies.
- Conduct mock investigations and prosecutions for hands-on learning.
- Provide technical and logistical support for anti-trafficking operations.



3 Strengthening Borders with a Human Rights Focus

We take a compassionate approach to border security, balancing safety with human rights. Our program trains customs and border officials in advanced inspection techniques, with a specific focus on identifying risky migration scenarios and potential trafficking situations. We also raise awareness about forced displacement, emphasizing diversity and gender considerations. Through regional workshops, we facilitate the exchange of best practices and foster stronger subregional cooperation in border management.

WHAT WE OFFER

- Equip border security personnel with advanced inspection skills to detect trafficking and smuggling.
- Educate stakeholders on forced displacement, emphasizing diversity and gender issues.
- Foster regional cooperation through knowledge-sharing workshops.

4 Fostering Inclusion for Vulnerable Populations Through Civil Society

Our project empowers civil society and institutions to protect and integrate at-risk migrants, refugees, and displaced persons. We develop resources, provide training, and facilitate knowledge exchange to create a more inclusive society. Our approach prioritizes human rights, gender equality, and intercultural understanding.

WHAT WE OFFER

- Develop guidance and toolkits for assisting and protecting at-risk migrants and refugees.
- Train organizations to strengthen services based on international standards.
- Assess access to rights and regulatory mechanisms for migrant populations.
- Host forums on best practices for socioeconomic inclusion.
- Implement awareness campaigns on human trafficking and migrant smuggling.
- Support organizations assisting trafficking victims and vulnerable migrants.

PICAD: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO IRREGULAR MIGRATION CHALLENGES

PICAD (Prevent, investigate and counter criminal activity linked to the exploitation of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the Americas) is the OAS's groundbreaking initiative, tackles irregular migration issues across the Americas. This multi-year program bolsters Member States' capabilities to prevent and combat migrant and refugee exploitation. Its cross-cutting, multidimensional strategy harnesses expertise from various OAS departments, focusing on key areas such as governance, investigation, border management, and civil society empowerment. PICAD tailors its approach to each country's unique needs, deploying customized solutions ranging from regional cooperation to sustainable resource management. This innovative program marks a milestone in coordinated efforts against irregular migration, setting a new standard for regional response.



OUR IMPACT

2,900+ police officers, immigration officials, and first responders trained in prevention and investigation of human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

270+ regional migration, security, and social policy authorities trained in gender approach, human rights, and social inclusion of survivors.

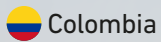
240+ government officials trained in legal cooperation.

150+ customs and immigration officials trained in cargo inspection focused on migrant vulnerabilities.

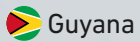
10 national roundtables held with migrants and trafficking survivors.

14 publications with new insights on the subject.

COUNTRIES WHERE WE HAVE WORKED



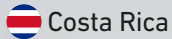
Colombia



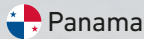
Guyana



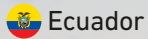
Trinidad and Tobago



Costa Rica



Panama



Ecuador



Peru



OAS

More rights
for more people



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