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Progress through partnership – responding to human trafficking in Northern Ireland

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Challenges of identifying victims

- Not unique to this Ireland – a global problem;
- Cross-border Forum on human trafficking, October 2013 –
 - Training and awareness;
 - Multi-agency approach;
 - Build victims' trust;
 - Role of education; and
 - Challenge public mindsets.



Northern Ireland Context

UK NRM established in 2009, since then:

- 104 referrals of potential victims from Northern Ireland;
 - 37 confirmed as victims;
 - Around 30 not considered to be victims of trafficking;
 - (other cases still pending, or have been suspended).
-
- Small numbers – figures fluctuate – 1 case can make a difference;
 - 2012-13 significant drop to 16 referrals
 - 2013-14 already risen to 29 referrals
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- Tip of the iceberg. But don't yet know how big the iceberg is.



Progress through Partnership

- **Multi-agency approach** needed; but
- Also needs to be **multi-dimensional**.

- **Reaching up** through different *levels* of Government:
 - (Europe; neighbouring jurisdictions; UK Government; local government);

- **Reaching across** Northern Ireland Executive:
 - (other relevant Government Departments; statutory bodies; law enforcement); and

- **Reaching out** to include and be informed by civil society:
 - (NGOs, community groups, support providers, faith groups etc)



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National / cross-jurisdictional

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- Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Human Trafficking
 - Chaired by Home Office Security Minister;
 - Includes Devolved Administrations (Minister of Justice for NI)
 - Provides strategic leadership on UK's response to human trafficking;
 - Identifies national priorities and shared aims
 - Sharing knowledge and information; pooling resources;
 - Best practice from other jurisdictions

- Cross-border partnership
 - Ministerial bi-lateral;
 - Collaboration on raising awareness
 - Cross border Forum;
 - Joint projects;
 - Need to identify future opportunities for collaboration.



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Strategic partnerships in Northern Ireland

- Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF)'s **Immigration and Human Trafficking Subgroup**
 - Chaired by Philip Marshall, PSNI
 - Brings together relevant Departments; statutory agencies and law enforcement
- Human Trafficking Engagement Group
 - Established by the Minister last year;
 - Chaired by DOJ
 - Provides a forum for Government and civil society organisations to work together;
 - PSNI also represented



OCTF subgroup

Exemplifies progress through partnership -

- Identify and address key priorities and local issues;
- Share information;
- Critical assessment of current provision; identify areas / need for change;
- Inform effective strategy, policy, legislation & operational response;
- Collectively and individually work to improve victim experience of the justice system;
- Provide consistent, co-ordinated response, e.g:
 - Human Trafficking Action Plan
 - Training needs mapped strategically & progress reported;
 - Research on trafficking in Northern Ireland



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Human Trafficking Engagement Group

- Established following consultation;
- EU Anti-Trafficking Day 2012;
- Initial membership drawn from respondents to the consultation
- First meeting December 2012



Role of the Group

- facilitate a **partnership approach** and joint working amongst Government Departments, statutory bodies, voluntary and community organisations and other agencies;
 - clarifying roles;
 - how we can support each other;
 - pooling knowledge and expertise
 - coordination to avoid duplication.
- **assist Government and law enforcement** agencies etc in their work in tackling human trafficking;
- **inform development** of human trafficking **policy and programmes**
 - role in development of action plan
 - informing Minister's thinking on further legislation



Role of the group (2)

- seek to **identify the groups involved** in the issue of human trafficking in Northern Ireland;
 - information sharing;
 - coordinating efforts across Northern Ireland
 - Consistent, accurate messaging;
 - training for NGOs
- Provide an arena for **exchange of ideas**;
- Identify **best practice** and **lessons learned**;
- Identify core information needs;
- Identify and plug gaps in provision



Subgroups

- Three subgroups established
 - Education
 - Secondary level education (education resource produced)
 - Looking ahead to engaging at Third level
 - Training
 - Focus on training for NGOs on Engagement Group
 - Rolling out to wider groups;
 - Then looking at training for other sectors (eg; PCSPs, legal professionals, Citizens' Advice Bureaux)
 - Raising awareness
 - Targeted engagement (eg key sectors; Belfast City Council event – hotel staff, refuse collectors, postal workers, Environmental Health Inspectors, taxi drivers)
 - Development of resources (eg mouse mat for businesses, CAB etc)



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Benefits

- Genuine partnership approach;
- Wide spread skills and experience;
- Greater “reach”;
- More effective awareness-raising;
- Different perspectives and insights;
- Better informed policy development;
- Effective, co-ordinated response;

Because together we are stronger