STAYING GROUNDED IN COMPLEXITY:

Designing an M&E System for Counter Trafficking in Persons

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What are ‘wicked problems’?

Definition



Dynamic, highly complex, interact with other issues and often contain stakeholder conflict.

How do you know if your problem is ‘wicked’?



One stakeholder’s ‘improvement’ is a set-back for another.

How should they be addressed?

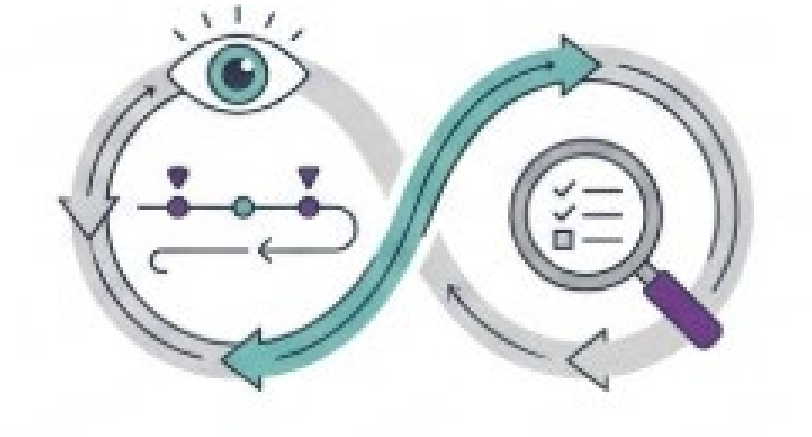


Problems may be managed, but not solved.

Understanding and managing wicked problems

When a problem keeps shifting, involves many actors, and lacks reliable data, you can't just act once and assume it worked.

You need an ongoing system to keep watching what's actually happening (monitoring) and to keep checking whether your actions are making a real difference (evaluation).



Systems and Systemic thinking

Simpler systems can be understood when broken down into their parts (i.e. machinery). Then reassembled to accurately recreate the system.

***Systemic* thinking** is used for complex systems.

- Complex systems are dynamic, almost limitless variables, and need to be studied holistically
- Focus on the interactions between the individuals; intersections between issues, including lived experience
- Emergence, things that happen (planned or unplanned)



A systemic approach fits the wicked problem.



How do systemic approaches apply to your context?

MODERN SLAVERY

Types of Modern Slavery



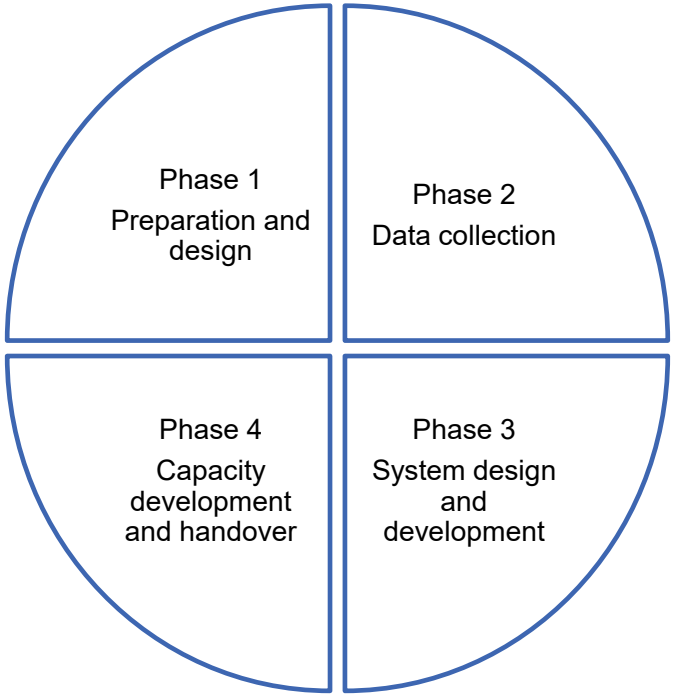

What challenges do you have in designing evaluation frameworks for complexity?

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

To **develop a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system** on the adoption and monitoring of the ACWC's Regional Guidelines and Procedures.



- *ASEAN Do No Harm guide for Frontline Responders Safeguarding the Rights of Victims of Trafficking in Persons*
- *Regional Guidelines and Procedures to Address the Needs of Victims of Trafficking in Persons, and*
- *The Gender-Sensitive Guideline for Handling Women Victims of Trafficking in Persons.*





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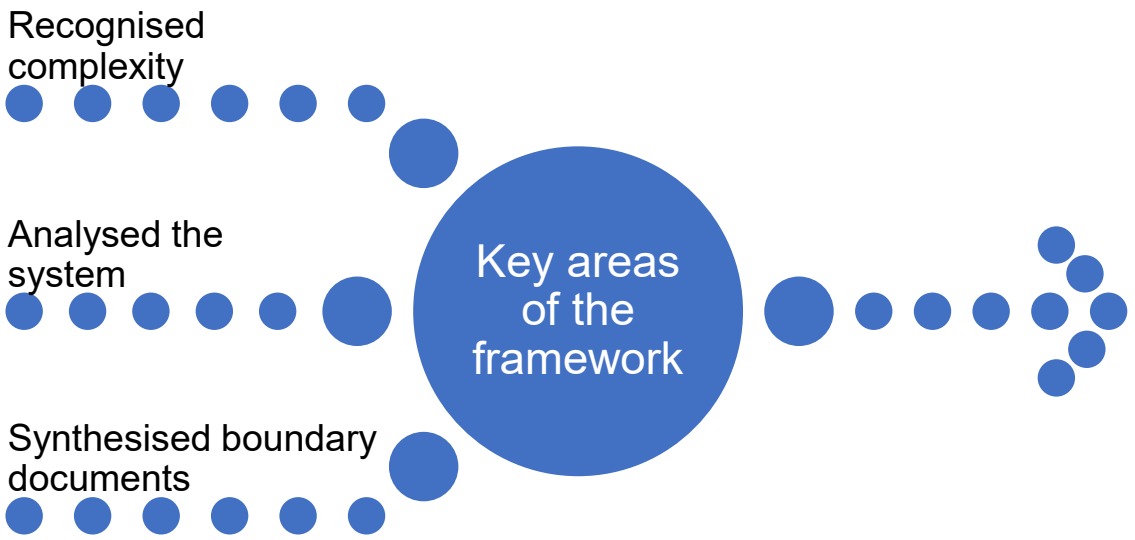


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What we did…(process for designing our system)



- **TIP Awareness and Prevention**
- **Victim Identification and Referral**
- **Recovery, reflection and shelter**
- **Return and Reintegration**
- **Medical and Mental Health Care**
- **Justice Processes**

DNH Key areas of direct victim assistance and protection	Immediate Outcomes 0-2 years	Medium Term Outcomes 3-5 years	Long Term Outcomes 5 + years
TIP awareness and prevention	Educational activities and awareness campaigns emphasise the risks, penalties, and consequences of TIP	Increased awareness of TIP has led to an increase in TIP early detection and reporting.	Increased TIP awareness and reporting has reduced TIP prevalence.
TIP awareness and prevention	Safe, orderly, and regular migration pathways are established and/or strengthened and promoted.	Increased awareness of TIP has led to an increase in TIP early detection and reporting.	Increased TIP awareness and reporting has reduced TIP prevalence.
TIP awareness and prevention	Research is conducted, and data and good practices are collected, about TIP and related issues.	Evidence is utilised to craft evidence-based measures to combat TIP supply and demand.	TIP research and reporting has reduced TIP prevalence and improved response.

- 23 versions
- refined over 3 months
- included indicators, references & guidance notes

We asked ourselves…

What is the context?

Multiple countries / jurisdictions	Sovereignty vs regionalism
Many types of actors	Massive rate of slavery
High levels of intersecting vulnerabilities	Rapidly changing profiles of risk

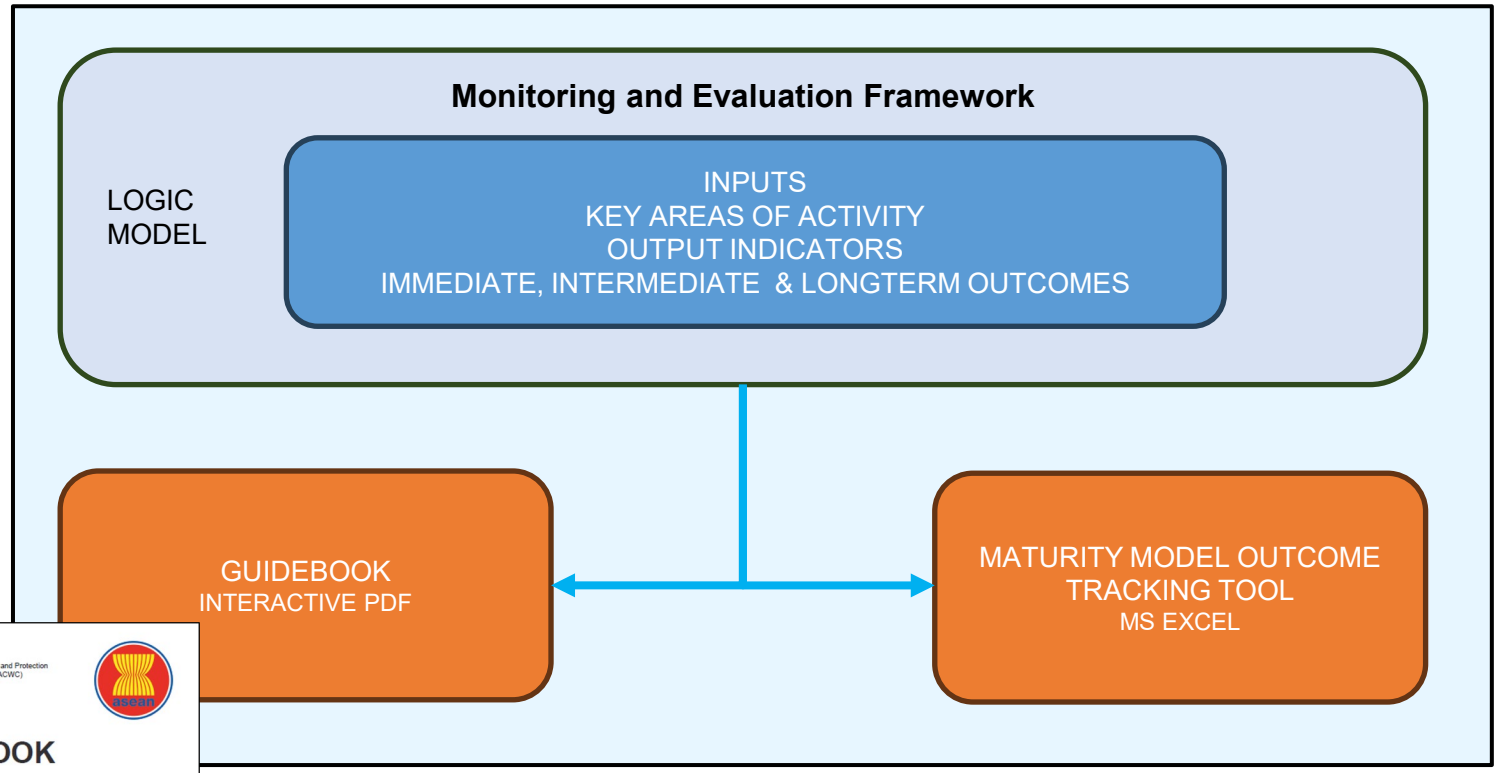
What design considerations matter?

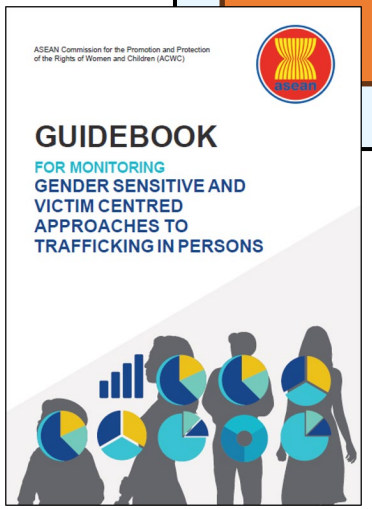
- Who will use the system ?
- Which key areas will they focus on?
- How can people with low M&E literacy adopt it?
- How will it promote strength based continuous improvement?



How have you dealt with the problem of low M&E literacy in your end use groups?

The Monitoring and Evaluation System





About the guidebook

1 TIP awareness and prevention (7 immediate outcomes)

2 Victim identification (9 immediate outcomes)

3 Recovery, reflection and shelter (4 immediate outcomes)

4 Return and reintegration (4 immediate outcomes)

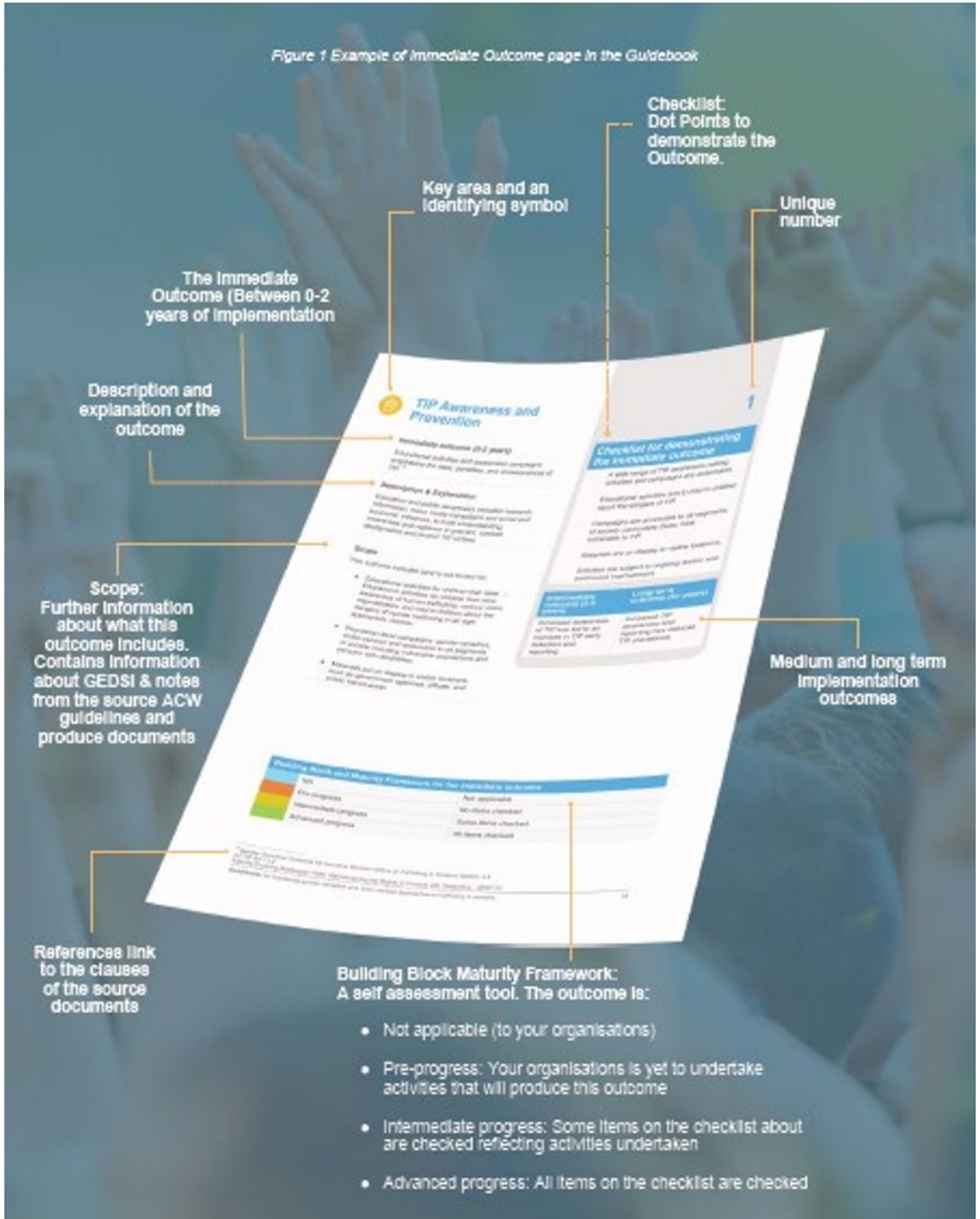
5 Medical and mental health care (3 immediate outcomes)

6 Criminal justice processes (13 immediate outcomes)

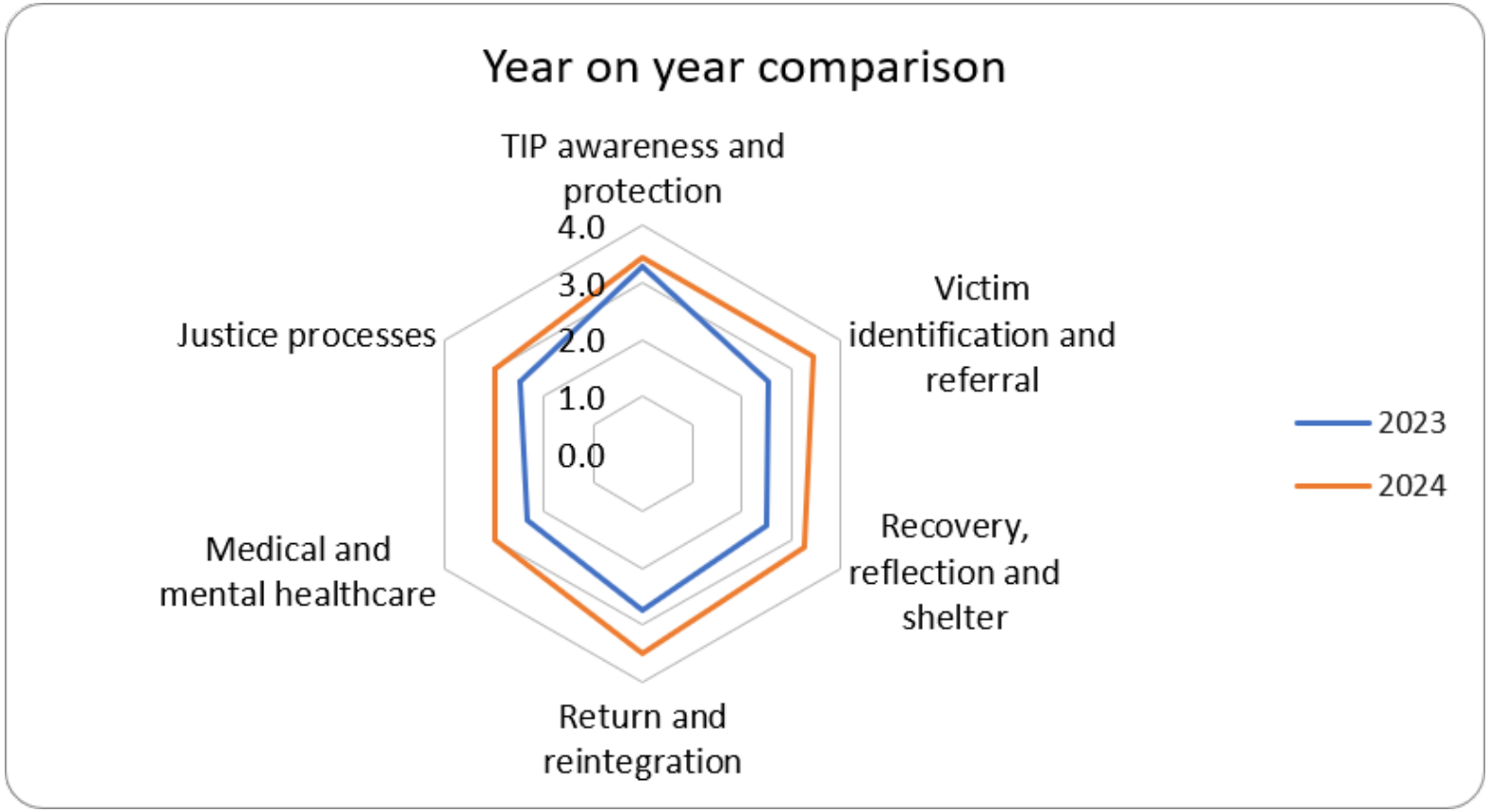
40 immediate outcomes

20 suggested indicators

https://www.aseanact.org/resources/acwc-mel-guidebook-to-counter-trafficking/



Building Block Maturity Framework for the Immediate Outcome		
☐	NA	Not applicable
☐	Pre progress	No items checked
☐	Intermediate progress	Some items checked
☐	Advanced progress	All items checked



Iterative consultation



Regional workshop to test key concepts within the M&E framework

- ASEAN member state representatives (25) online

National level consultation workshops to refine and confirm key indicators

- Workshops 2 and 3 Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam
- 230 participants



Key informant interviews to test draft Guidebook:

- 7 CTIP experts

Final workshop with key program and the Technical Working Group



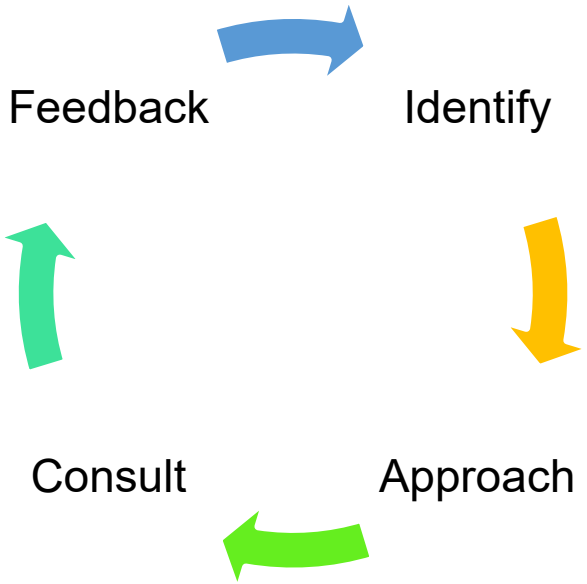


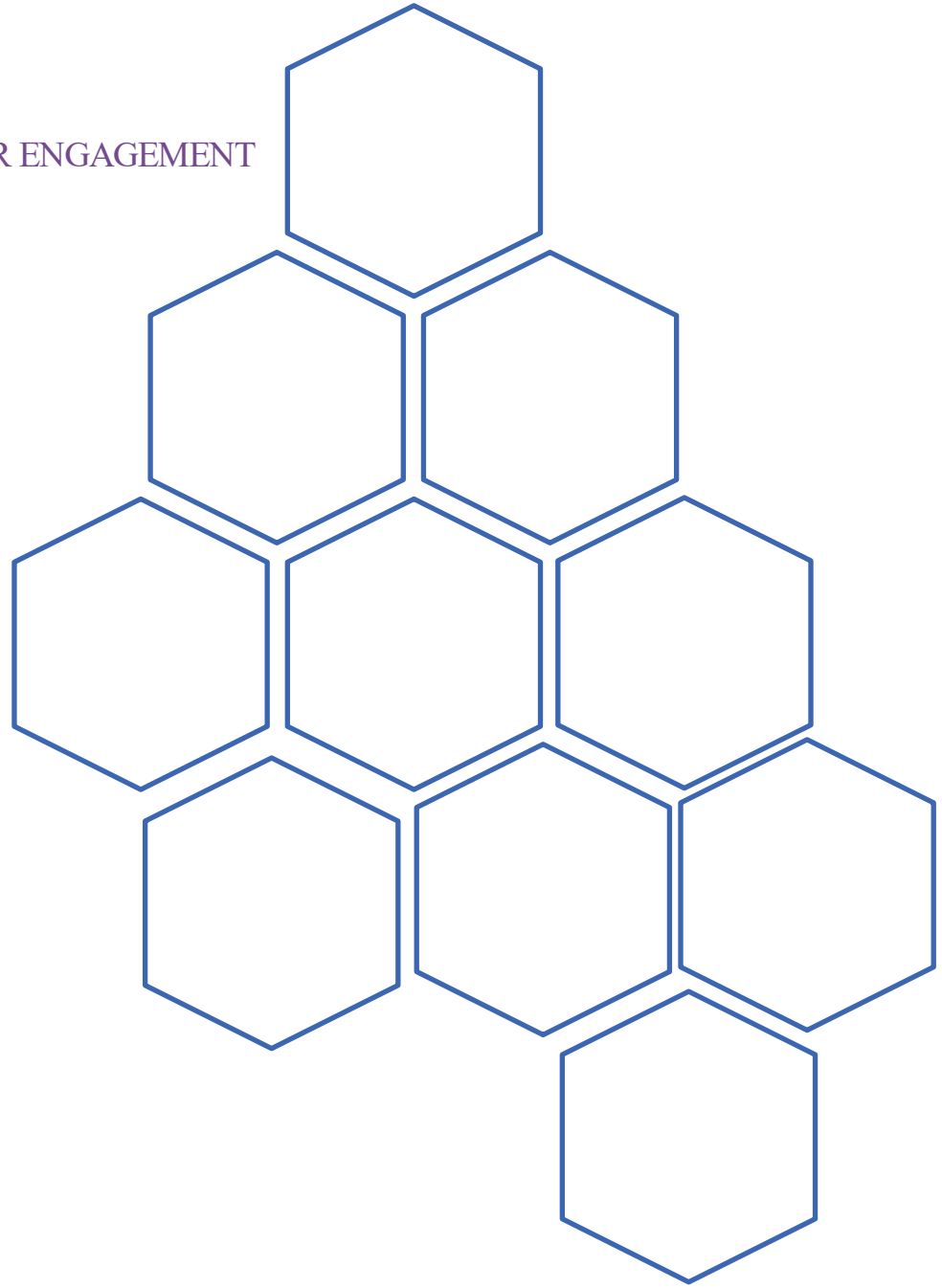


PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Snowball technique to identify and approach relevant participants.

Share and review findings with stakeholders.





Key area 1 TIP awareness and prevention

1	Educational activities and awareness campaigns emphasise the risks, penalties, and consequences of TIP.
2	Regular migration pathways are established and promoted.
3	Research is conducted about TIP and related issues.
4	National governments and institutions have TIP policies and programs in place to deter TIP.
5	Laws and policies are implemented for the investigation and prosecution of human traffickers and other persons involved in trafficking.
6	Law enforcement agencies have the knowledge, skills and resources to prevent TIP.
7	SOPs for disaster relief and emergency response include TIP prevention.

Key area 3 Recovery, reflection and shelter

17	TIP victims' recovery, reflection period, shelter and other supports are available.
18	TIP victims receive information and give their consent to access safe shelter / accommodation and services that are appropriate to their needs.
19	Child TIP victims are placed in safe and suitable accommodation, according to their needs.
20	Support and assistance in shelters is trauma informed.

See Scope bullet 3, inclusion of surveillance being in the interest of victim safety – contradictory to freedom of movement?





The benefits of embedding a regionally adaptable M&E system

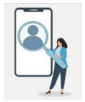
- Our **suite of tools** enabled end-users to take a systemic perspective across the system
- **Simple, inexpensive,** and **flexible** enough for users with varying expertise
- **Strength-based** with focus on **equity, diversity and inclusion**
- **Consistent** across the ASEAN to whole governments
- Situates **M&E** and its practitioners as **leaders in the long-term agenda** to eradicate human trafficking



Project management learnings

- **In country** consultants
- **Face to face** engagement
- **Translation**
- Really good **secretariat**
- **Repeated engagement** with the same people- trust, knowledge, and engagement
- Participants saw their contribution **shape the work**
- **M&E literacy** was varied

When using systemic thinking on wicked problems, understand…

*Your **problem*** 	• Scope and interactions • How stakeholders need to **view the problem**
*The **component parts** and how they interrelate* 	• Formal and informal **interrelationships**
*Your **audience*** 	• Inexhaustible number with **varying views and perspectives** and M&E literacy
*Our **place** in the system* 	• Become **immersed in the system**
*The **gulf** between conventional and systemic thinking paradigms* 	• **Push back** can present major challenges • **Leadership shutdown** of the voices of people and communities
*The system will **evolve*** 	• **Nudge transformational change** with monitoring, sharing, co-learning and evaluation

How the guidebook is currently being used…

Thailand: Pilot completed; government shelters are using the guidebook for internal self-assessment and planning.

Philippines: Pilot completed; guidebook adapted to monitor the Victim-Sensitive Guidelines, with testing planned in three justice zones and a further national assessment.

Cambodia: Included in the national counter-trafficking monitoring framework; first group assessment planned to support the strategy's mid-term review.

Lao PDR: Introduced and attracting interest; possible local adaptation is delayed by administrative arrangements and resourcing.

Vietnam: Interested, but implementation is deferred pending guidebook revisions and available funding.

Developing an M&E system for a wicked problem

A Stephens, J Thomas
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Q&A


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