Where have all the Children gone? …and when will we ever learn?

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International Round Table
Re-Branding Human Trafficking – The Interface of Migration, Human Trafficking and Slavery

Regional Implementation Initiative/IDM – Vienna, 29/9/2017
Discuss exploitation first

- Socioeconomic inequality, weak social services => dependencies increase => risk of abuse of power for own profit increases => discussion should start with exploitation, not trafficking
- Migration adds further risks/vulnerabilities
- Status of children adds further multiple vulnerabilities – age, gender, trauma/coping
  - Weak protective response structures
  - Worst case: forced criminality – criminalisation/disrespect for non-punishment principle
  - THB children = no “normal”/”collateral” risks, but deliberately situations created/exploited
=> Risks of exploitation/trafficking increase
Child protection

- Child protection system – protective environment?
  - Density of safety nets? Targeted/relevant, adequate? Reflective/interested in feedback from children?
  - Should be integrated, holistic, not isolated – e.g. check guardianship, return procedures – best interests determination?

- Assessment – see e.g. GRETA reports
  - Negative: blurred concepts of trafficking/exploitation, isolated responses, lack of identification, guardianship, child–focused assistance, access to justice, return; reliance on detention ↔ Smile of the Child/Greece: children don‘t need a guard, but someone to care – trust building
  - Positive: some multi–disciplinary/sectoral efforts, outreach, guardians, mediators
Guiding principles: best interests + child participation (direct involvement of children in prevention, service development, feedback)

- Prevention – social policies, family services – address inequality, status of children/awareness–raising, education
- Raise prestige of social work (salaries, training)
- Proactive identification/outreach
- Reporting of presumed cases – hotlines for children
- In proceedings: child–friendly justice beyond courts – also for admin procedures in THB identification, asylum, return, child protection
  - Includes: adequate setting, child’s access to information, interpretation, guardians + legal assistance
- Specialised assistance – seeking child feedback in institutions
- Access to complaints – Ombudsman
- External monitoring – National preventive mechanisms
- Research and evaluation – see Mike D/UNICEF, Olivier, BIM projects, GRETA country visits
Expected outcomes of stronger child participation

- Improved relevance/effectivity of response
  - Convincing offer for vulnerable children/policy to address children running away
- Improved sustainability
- Means of self-reflection, re-connect with target groups
  - it’s a right – process and result
  - make them heard and seen, end invisibility and ignorance of children

Thank you!