

Human Trafficking and the Impact of Covid-19

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ALSO STAAR Project

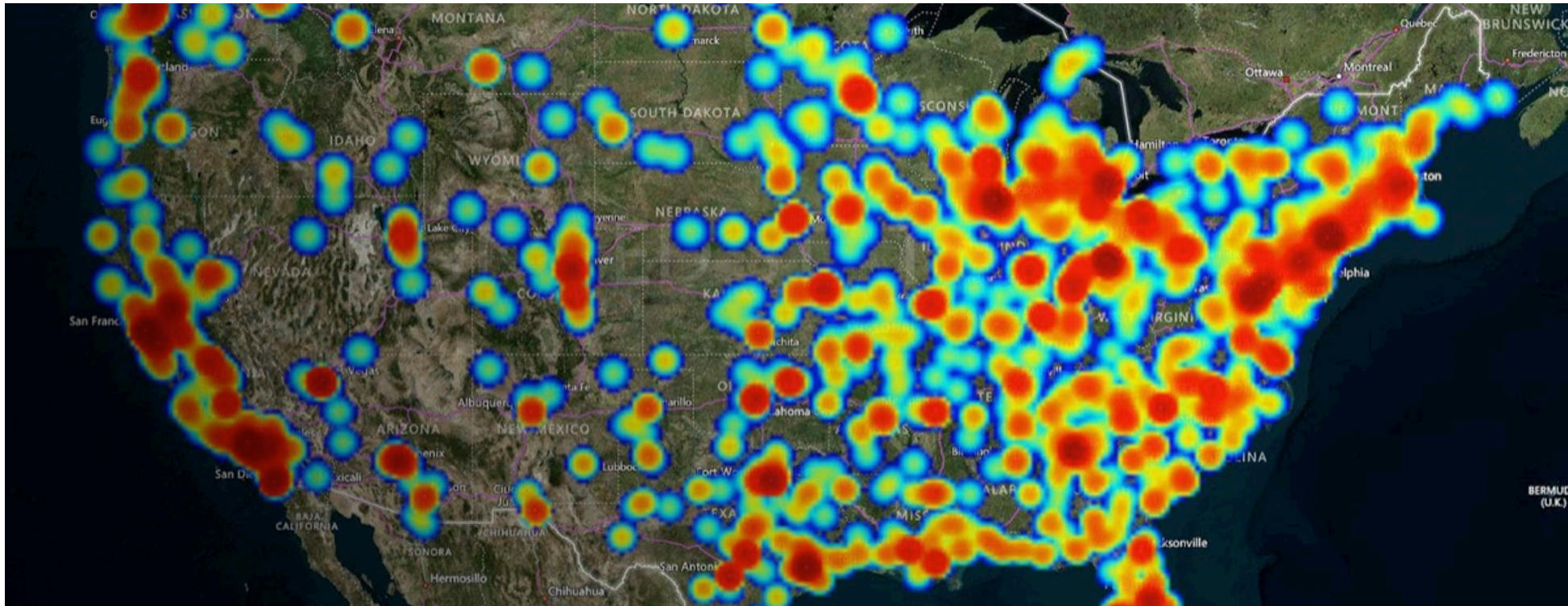
July 28, 2020

Human Trafficking and STOP

- Trafficking overlaps with domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking
- Must have these predicate crimes and/ or prior victimization for STOP funding
- See ALSO STAAR Project's archived webinars for more information on trafficking

What is Human Trafficking?

- Forms of modern-day slavery that involves the exploitation of persons for commercial sex or forced labor
- Often involves moving victims across international borders, but does not require transportation to another location
- Victims are frequently held by the “invisible chains” of psychological coercion



Since 2007: 276,654 contacts and 63,380 cases

Human Trafficking: Legal Definition

Sex Trafficking

Recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining a person for a commercial sex act that is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, **or in which the person induced is under age 18.**

Labor Trafficking

Recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

Who is at Risk of Being Trafficked?

- Immigrants (documented and undocumented)
- Substance users
- Persons with disabilities
- Foster care youth
- Runaway or homeless youth
- Mentally ill
- Homeless; Unstable housing
- LGBTQI+
- DV and sexual abuse survivors
- Low wealth/economically insecure
- Any underserved/minority population

ANY vulnerable person



Sexual Assault and Trafficking

- Sex trafficking is, by definition, sexual assault
- Labor trafficked women and children are often sexually assaulted
- Prior victimization is common among sex trafficking survivors
- Distinction between prostitution and sex trafficking is important to know
- LGBTQI populations are especially vulnerable, particularly individuals who are transgender

Sexual Assault Indicators in Labor Trafficking

- Abused at work, threatened harm by supervisor
- Sexually harassed at work; sex is part of job “requirement”
- Could be trafficked for both work (including criminal acts) and sex
- Sexual assault used as threat for compliance
- Sex offered/coerced as way to pay off labor trafficking debt
- Food, water, shelter used in exchange for sex

Domestic/ Dating Violence and Trafficking

- Family members traffic other family members (within definition of DV)
- Use same tactics of control
- Can charge/prosecute HT crimes + DV crimes
- Examples:
 - Abuser forces wife and child to panhandle
 - Abuser forces intimate partner to have sex for money
 - Abuser is a pimp/trafficker, residing with many victims “as if a family”
 - Trafficker has “child in common” with trafficking survivor
 - Trafficking situation fits definition of “dating violence”

Trafficking Thrives During Crises and Disasters

- Trafficking is more hidden amidst chaos
- More people vulnerable during crises
- Traffickers (and other crime organizations) are nimble during crises
- Labor trafficking victims forced to work in unsafe conditions, and without safety equipment and protections
- Sex trafficking victims forced into even more dangerous situations

Human Trafficking and Covid-19

- Police and child protection report cases are down (fewer mandatory reporters around kids/youth)
- Risks to online exploitation higher – especially youth
- Domestic violence abusers/traffickers isolate victims
- Travel is restricted
- Millions out of work
- Options limited if clients are exposed/or have Covid-19
- Law enforcement focused on other situations

Vulnerability, Communities of Color, and Covid-19

- Black Americans up to 3.5 times more likely to die of Covid-19 and
- Latinx people twice as likely to die as white people
- In some states there's a 5 to 10 -fold higher risk of death
- Exposes long-standing racism, inequalities, and inequities
- Lack of access to housing, healthcare, jobs, wealth
- More co-morbidities (hypertension, diabetes, stress) linked to unequal access to resources and opportunity
- Exposed more and protected less in "essential" work like retail, sanitation, farm work, meatpacking, frontline nursing homes, etc.
- Extreme vulnerabilities

Areas Impacted by Coronavirus

Health Disparities

- Access to Health Care
- Access to Mental Health
- Chronic Illness
- STI's
- Sexual Violence
- Communicable Diseases
- Physical Injuries

Poverty

- Employment/Unemployment
- Food Deserts
- Access to Transportation
- Access to Education
- Access to Stable Housing

Education

- Access to quality education
- Read/Write/Comprehension
- Digital Divide
- Vision/Hearing
- Intellectual Disabilities
- Developmental Disabilities
- Societal Norms

Social Justice

- Personal/Property Crimes
- Incarceration
- Drugs/Alcohol
- Prostitution
- Loitering
- Debtors Court
- Socioeconomics

HUMAN TRAFFICKING INTERSECTIONALITY

Race, Ethnicity, Culture, Language, Faith, Family, Gender, Sexual Identity

Environmental

- Natural Disasters
- Community segregation
- Physical/Social barriers
- Exposure to toxins/hazards

Mental Health

- Diagnosed/Undiagnosed
- Bipolar/PTSD
- Addictions (Drugs/Alcohol)
- Family History
- Trauma Bonding
- Suicide (attempted)

What economic challenges are survivors facing due to Covid-19?

Almost all (98%) of the 608 direct service providers surveyed said the survivors they talked with mentioned **facing economic challenges due to the pandemic.**

Select Organization Type

(All) ▼



Here's what we asked about across the five different types of challenges shown above. The following tab shows the estimated percent of survivors who faced each challenge.

Health & Safety Challenges

- **COVID Symptoms:** Survivor or household member with COVID-19 symptoms
- **Can't Social Distance:** Limited ability to practice social distancing (staying 6ft from others)
- **Risking Health for Job:** Risking health due to employment that cannot be done remotely
- **Risking Safety:** Risking survivor safety sheltering in place with an abusive partner, household member, or caregiver
- **Target of Discrimination:** Experiencing increased acts of racism, xenophobia, and/or

Child-Related Challenges

- **Can't Access Internet/Computers:** Access to the internet and/or computer/ipad/tablet for kids' schooling
- **Can't Find Childcare:** Finding childcare so that they can go to work, remotely or outside the home
- **Trouble Assisting with School:** Having the knowledge, time and/or skills to assist kids with school work
- **Trouble Enforcing Child Support:** Enforcing child support payments

Trafficking Survivor Needs

- Housing
- Legal assistance
- Substance use
- Healthcare (including dental)
- Counseling (trauma)
- Motivational support
- Education
- Job training
- Faith community support
- Safety planning/protection
- Benefits advocacy
- Immigration support
- Family support
- Crisis intervention
- Pregnancy/newborn care
- Other?

FEMA Emergency Management Response Framework



FEMA Emergency Response Framework

Continuity:

- Partnerships
- Resource mapping
- Training

Recovery

- Worker protection agencies actively partnering to identify high-risk locations
- Law enforcement investigations
- Screening vulnerable people
- Ongoing education about rights and laws
- Rebuilding service programs

Mitigation

- Know Your Rights training for at-risk populations
- Outreach to at-risk communities
- Law enforcement investigations into worksites and potential trafficking situations
- Procurement audits within disaster response agencies to ensure clean supply chain



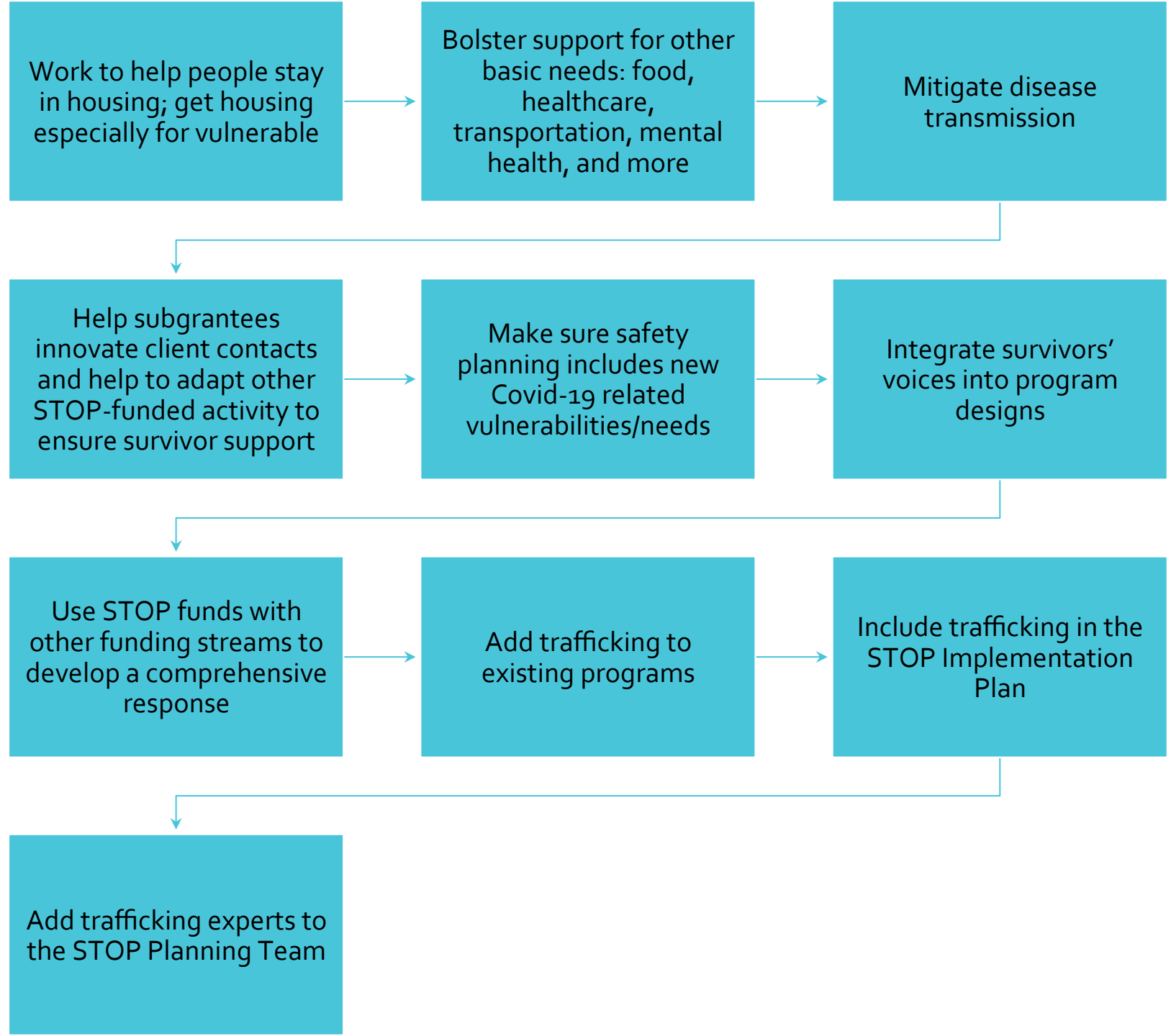
Response

- Shelters, doctors, and key locations post posters and outreach materials
- Meeting basic needs of disaster survivors
- Finding resources, communicating services offered
- Notifying anti-trafficking groups of potential victims, calling hotline or local

Preparedness

- Training of key personnel
- Disaster protocols established that include anti-trafficking information
- Creating and disseminating trafficking awareness materials
- Outreach and partnerships between anti-trafficking and disaster agencies
- Sustainability and transition planning

What can YOU DO?



Questions?

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JauuEoL2Fo>

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