

KEY SUCCESSES UNDER THE LUPTA PROJECT

Active Victim participation in investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases



Between February 2021 – February 2023, **250 victims of trafficking (VoTs)** were supported under the LUPTA project. **229** were female, **21** were male and of those VoTs, **49** were minors.

100% of these VoTs have been/are actively and willingly participating in the investigation and prosecution of **179 criminal cases**; with a number of successful convictions and compensation for damages already being awarded to VoTs.

44 of those criminal cases involve the investigation of **transnational organised crime networks**.

Establishment of Victim Protection Coordinators and value added



VoTs under the project have given an **average satisfaction score of almost 6** (out of total possible score of 7) in relation to their satisfaction of experience and assistance under the LUPTA project. VoTs have reported that they would not have felt able to participate without the holistic support coordinated by **Victim Protection Coordinators (VPCs)**.

VPCs play a crucial role in: building trust and ensuring consultation with VoTs to develop and provide individualized, needs-based assistance; and promoting and ensuring multi-disciplinary, victim-centric practices.

There has been a push amongst actors to expand frameworks and use of VPCs at national level. Other important results arising include **increased intelligence gathering due to heightened trust between law enforcement/VoTs/NGOs, improved capacity amongst law enforcement, prosecution and judiciary, increase in successful prosecutions, and improved outcomes for VoTs.**

Judicial tools building specialized competency and improving understandings of victim vulnerability



Justice sector actors have increased awareness and understanding of the **psychological judicial evaluation tool's value** in improving prosecution success and outcomes for VoTs.

The project has seen an increased use of the tool amongst judiciary and prosecution to **improve understandings of the complexity of the nature of trafficking in persons, to provide empirical evidence, to give weight to victim credibility and better understand victim vulnerability, particularly in the recruitment phase.** Furthermore, DIICOT has actively funded further psychological judicial evaluations.

A LUPTA case **set a precedent** when a presiding Judge used the tool to **calculate damages of moral compensation for a VoT.** The evaluation used was **based on vulnerability prior to exploitation, the trauma suffered during exploitation and trial, and vulnerability to being re-trafficked.**

Improved regularity and holistic cooperation between relevant actors



Interdisciplinary communication has improved between relevant actors in the implementation of care plans, security and investigation plans, provision of support, and sharing of relevant information.

Improved regularity and holistic cooperation have proven essential in ameliorating victim outcomes, shifting towards victim-centered practices and the use of interdisciplinary expertise in trafficking cases. This has occurred through not just the regular convening of task force meetings, but also more frequent communication between all taskforce actors, particularly VPCs, law enforcement and prosecution.

Appointment of specialized lawyers for victims



Victims under the LUPTA project were **appointed lawyers who specialize in trafficking in persons cases** and the representation of victims and represent the victim's interests throughout all stages of criminal investigations and proceedings – **ensuring continuity.**

This has overcome challenges where victims are not provided with free legal support, are provided with unspecialized lawyers, or receive different lawyers for different appearances and lack continuity.