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# SOP FIELDBOOK

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR  
FIGHTING SEX TRAFFICKING

PROCEDURES FOR BORDER MONITORING  
INTERVENTIONS

**JVI** JUSTICE  
VENTURES  
INTERNATIONAL



HUMAN TRAFFICKING FIELDBOOK  
SOP's for Sex Trafficking Interventions  
Procedures for Border Monitoring Interventions

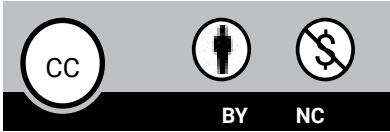
From  
Human Trafficking Legal Refrence Toolkit  
Standard Operating Procedures to Fight Bonded Labour and Sex Trafficking

A Handbook for NGOs and their Lawyers

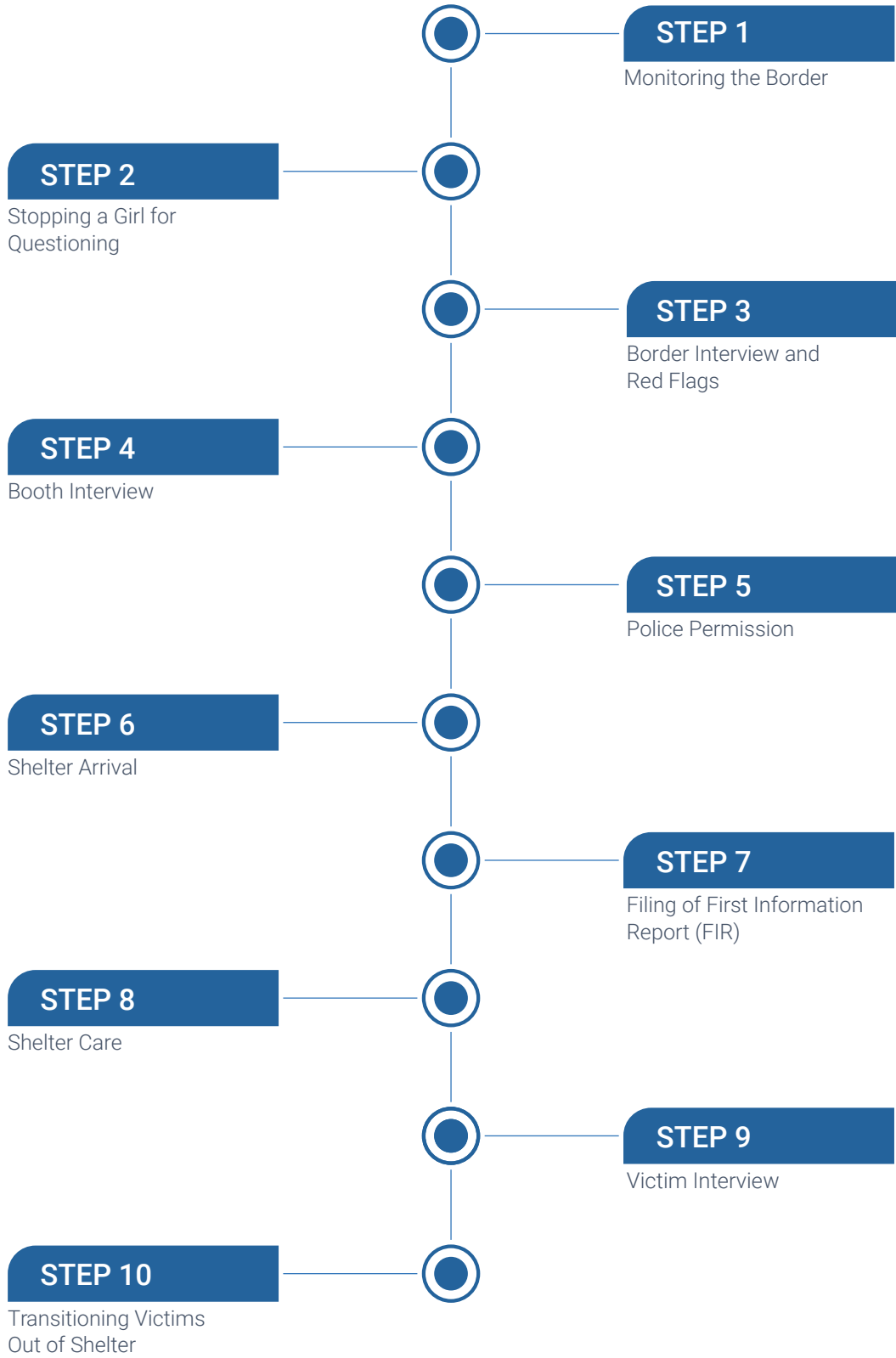
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OVERVIEW OF PROCEDURES FOR BORDER  
MONITORING INTERVENTIONS



## Step 1 Monitoring the Border

NGO	ADVOCATE
The NGO should stand alert and look for signs of human trafficking	The Advocate should be available to answer questions and advise the NGO on legal issues that arise.

## Step 2 Stopping a Girl for Questioning

NGO	ADVOCATE
If signs of trafficking are observed, NGO staff should approach the suspected traffickee, present their ID card, and ask preliminary questions.	The Advocate should advise the NGO staff on what actions they are legally entitled to take upon stopping individuals to avoid violating the rights of people who are not engaged in illegal activity.

## Step 3 Border Interview and Red Flags

NGO	ADVOCATE
If NGO staff notice a red flag in the initial questioning, they should take the girl to the booth for further questioning.	The Advocate should advise the NGO staff on what actions they are legally entitled to take when interviewing in order to avoid violating the rights of people who are not engaged in illegal activity.

## Step 4 Booth Interview

NGO	ADVOCATE
At the booth, NGO staff should continue to follow the Questioning Protocol, complete the IRF, and attempt to contact the girl's family.	The Advocate should advise and assist the NGO staff while they are questioning the girl.

## Step 5 Police Permission

NGO	ADVOCATE
Once NGO staff makes a positive determination that a girl is being trafficked, they should contact the police.	The Advocate should accompany the NGO staff and victim to the police station to ensure that proper procedures are followed and the victim is treated fairly.

## Step 6 Shelter Arrival

NGO	ADVOCATE
The NGO staff should follow safety protocol in travelling with the girl to the shelter and register her with the shelter upon arrival.	The Advocate should advise and assist the NGO to ensure the girl is safely transferred to the shelter home.

## Step 7 Filing of First Information Report (FIR)

NGO	ADVOCATE
The NGO should complete a Case Exploration Form and file a First Information Report (FIR) with the police station.	The Advocate should ensure that the FIR is registered with the applicable trafficking and other offenses included.

## Step 8 Shelter Care

NGO	ADVOCATE
At the shelter, the NGO staff should provide care, education, and assistance in accessing services and new opportunities.	The Advocate should follow up with the girl while she receives care at the shelter and keep her informed about the progress of her case.

## Step 9 Victim Interview

NGO	ADVOCATE
A female NGO staff member should conduct a detailed interview with the girl and complete the Victim Interview Form.	The Advocate should review the record of the interview for information relevant to the case.

## Step 10 Transitioning Victims Out of Shelter

NGO	ADVOCATE
The NGO staff should conduct a Home Situational Assessment to determine an appropriate place to repatriate the girl.	The Advocate should ensure that procedures are followed in repatriating the girl or taking her to protective custody.

# PROCEDURES FOR BORDER MONITORING INTERVENTIONS

## Step 1 Monitoring the Border

### NGO

The NGO should stand alert and look for signs of human trafficking

### NGO COMMENTARY

#### Signs to look for:

- Girls walking slowly, looking hesitant or nervous;
- A well-dressed man or woman with a girl from a village town;
- A village girl looking uncomfortable in new clothes;
- A girl looking drugged or drowsy;
- A girl carrying a baby;
- People who look nervous, scared, confused, or in a hurry to cross the border;
- A girl looking like she's waiting or looking for someone;
- A girl in new clothes with a typical village look; and
- An Indian man with a Nepali girl.

Usually the trafficker will not be travelling with the girl. She will be travelling alone or with a local agent hired to bring her across the border

### ADVOCATE

The Advocate should be available to answer questions and advise the NGO on legal issues that arise.

### POINTS TO NOTE

#### Strategies traffickers use to deceive the victim:

- False Marriage: One common technique used by traffickers is to marry a girl and then shortly thereafter, or on their honeymoon, take the girl to India. The girl will often not realize she is being taken to India or will think she is going there for some other reason. Then suddenly she will be abandoned and imprisoned in a brothel.
- False Jobs: Traffickers will offer girls lucrative jobs in India without informing them of the nature of the job.
- Education: Traffickers may deceive girls by promising them a good education in India.
- Becoming an Actress: Traffickers may even offer girls a chance to become an actress.

#### Techniques used to get girls across the border:

- Claim They're Visiting: Traffickers may coach victims to give different reasons for crossing the border when they are stopped by border staff, including medical treatment, visiting relatives, going on a tour, or going shopping.
- Pretend to be Brother and Sister: Traffickers will claim to be a brother, sister, or other relative of the girls with whom they are travelling.
- Carrying a Baby: The trafficker will ask a local mother with a baby to allow the trafficked girl to carry the baby across because if any monitors are watching, they would not assume that a girl with a baby would be a trafficking victim.

- Different Times and Places: Traffickers will seek to cross the border when there are no NGOs monitoring (early in the morning, such as 3-5 AM) or during times of heavy traffic at the borders.

**Don't be overly visible.** While you are monitoring the border, it is important not to make yourself overly visible. If you are too visible, word may quickly spread among traffickers and they will begin avoiding that route. Remember that traffickers can easily see and avoid border monitors who are well-known or highly visible.

## Step 2 Stopping a Girl for Questioning

### NGO

If signs of trafficking are observed, NGO staff should approach the suspected traffickee, present their ID card, and ask preliminary questions.

### NGO COMMENTARY

When approaching the suspected "trafficked person" and trafficker, look for signs of avoidance, nervousness, and fear. Hold up your ID badge and say, "Excuse me, I am working for the NGO and I would like to ask you a few questions. Would you mind?" If the person does not cooperate with you, you will need to involve the police. Without the police, you do not have the authority to forcefully stop people from crossing the border.

### ADVOCATE

The Advocate should advise the NGO staff on what actions they are legally entitled to take upon stopping individuals to avoid violating the rights of people who are not engaged in illegal activity.

### POINTS TO NOTE

#### Do's and do not's when stopping people for questioning:

- DO NOT demand documents. Instead, politely ask to see them. You can look at documents, but do not take them.
- DO NOT search people's bags. You may ask to see what is inside, but you don't have the authority to search it yourself.
- DO NOT be rude, as you are serving these people and most of the people you stop are probably not being trafficked. You should not take up any more of their time than necessary.
- DO NOT call to people from far away but walk up to them and politely question them.
- DO NOT blame victims for what happened.
- DO say "excuse me" when you stop people.
- DO thank people after you have finished talking with them.
- DO have your ID out when you are stopping someone.

**Questioning.** Trafficked girls are trained by their trafficker on what to say in order to avoid suspicion. You will have to question her carefully, following up each answer with more questions to determine whether she is telling the truth. The first questions to ask are, "Where are you going and why?" As you go through the questioning process, look for signs of agitation, nervousness, fear, or being in a hurry. Extreme nervousness and agitation, strong indicators of lying, or directly catching them in a lie, are all red flags that should lead you to suspect that trafficking may be occurring.

**The Questioning Protocol.** The NGO should develop a "Questioning Protocol" for all Border Monitors that includes

a list of visual red flags that may indicate a girl is a trafficking victim and a line of questioning that will confirm such suspicions or provide further evidence of trafficking. The Questioning Protocol should be found on the front of the Interception Record Form (IRF) and provide instructions on how to question people who are stopped. An individual should be familiar with the Questioning Protocol before working as a Border Monitor. NGO staff should practice the Questioning Protocol by taking turns acting as the victim and the Border Monitor.

Step 3 Border Interview and Red Flags

NGO

If NGO staff notice a red flag in the initial questioning, they should take the girl to the booth for further questioning

NGO COMMENTARY

The first few questions asked after stopping a girl make up the border interview. This interview should be as short as possible, only seeking enough information to determine if a girl may be being trafficked (red flags).

If the border staff get a red flag or are suspicious that the girl may be being trafficked, the NGO should separately interview each individual in the party and ask them questions. This is the best way to find out if they are lying or have been coached to give certain answers. For example, if a girl says that the man is her husband, ask her what his mother or brother’s name is. Then separately ask the suspected trafficker the same question, and see if the answers match.

**Note:** when you separate the victim from the trafficker, never let the trafficker out of your sight or allow him to run away!

In the Questioning Protocol, a red flag is a sign that the case you are assessing may be a real trafficking case. Below are some examples of responses that are red flags warranting a booth interview.

ADVOCATE

The Advocate should advise the NGO staff on what actions they are legally entitled to take when interviewing in order to avoid violating the rights of people who are not engaged in illegal activity.

POINTS TO NOTE

**Signs of lying.** The following signs may be indications of lying:

Verbal signs:

- Denying lying, and making excessive claims to be telling the truth
- Unnatural pauses, and non-word sounds (“uh....” etc.)
- Speech errors
- Stuttering, stammering, and becoming tongue-tied
- Clearing their throats and making other noises
- Averting their gaze, avoiding eye contact
- Closing their hands / interlocking fingers
- Crossing their arms as if creating a barrier
- Shrugging their shoulder and flipping their hands palms up
- Hand-to-face grooming, touching face, hair, ears, nose

- Handling objects
- Frequent licking of the lips, puckering and tightening of the lips
- Sighing and taking deep breaths
- Smiling or laughing inappropriately

Nonverbal signs:

- Averting gaze, avoiding eye contact
- Closing their hands / interlocking fingers
- Crossing their arms as if creating a barrier
- Shrugging their shoulder and flipping their hands palms up
- Hand-to-face grooming, touching face, hair, ears, nose
- Handling objects
- Frequent licking of the lips, puckering and tightening of the lips
- Sighing and taking deep breaths
- Smiling or laughing inappropriately

Step 4 Booth Interview

NGO

At the booth, NGO staff should continue to follow the Questioning Protocol, complete the IRF, and attempt to contact the girl’s family.

NGO COMMENTARY

At the booth, the NGO should fill out the IRF and complete the answers to the Questioning Protocol, marking the red flags that come up.

During the booth interview, NGO staff should avoid congregating and make an effort to minimize the questioning process. Avoid making the girl feel uncomfortable about public probing into the details of her personal life. You only need to seek enough information in this interview to determine whether the girl is in fact being trafficked. Further details of the case can be learned later on, during the Shelter Interview.

Attach pictures to the IRF of all victims and all traffickers who are in the intercepted group.

As part of the Questioning Protocol, you will make phone calls to verify the girl’s claims.

For example, depending on the nature of the case, you may need to call the place where she is supposed to be working, an educational institute, or a hospital. You should call the girl’s family to inquire about the case and to make sure that they know she is going to India. You should cross-check the name of the victim(s) and trafficker(s) in the NGO database, to see if they have been involved in previous incidents at this or other border stations.

ADVOCATE

The Advocate should advise and assist the NGO staff while they are questioning the girl.



POINTS TO NOTE

**Interception Record Form (IRF).** An IRF is used to record all the information obtained during an interception and should be completed for each girl encountered during an interception. The Questioning Protocol should appear on the front of the IRF to provide a handy reference for Border Monitors.

**Counselling and convincing.** Most trafficked girls do not know where they are going and have no idea of the awful fate that awaits them if they end up in a brothel. Make sure to speak clearly and convincingly, explaining that you wish to help her, and describe the life that awaits those who are trafficked. Educate her with written materials about trafficking, with pictures of girls who have been trafficked. Tell their stories and show the film “The Day My God Died.” Emphasize the deception in the traffickers’ promises, the horrors of life in a brothel, and the imprisonment and deadly diseases that can result from it.

- Common signs that indicate trafficking:**
- Newly married or couple that has eloped (the parents don’t know)
  - The girl does not know where she is going
  - The girl is lying about something
  - She is travelling with a person who is not with her while she is crossing the border
  - The girl was offered a job by an agent in a suspicious manner (for example, he is not charging her a fee, etc.)

Each of the above is a red flag. These signs suggest that a girl may be being trafficked for sexual exploitation. But none of them alone necessarily indicate that.

You will have to learn as much as you can about the situation to determine what type of case it is. Other information that may play into your decision include:

- Whether she has the relevant documents
- Her age, caste, appearance, etc.
- Her manner (whether she is scared, acting strange, confused, etc.)
- Information you gain from interviewing her or contacting her relatives

**How to prevent border crossing in a suspicious case.** After your investigation, you will have to make an evaluation about whether to try to stop her. Remember, you don’t have the legal authority to prevent her from going. But if you believe she is being trafficked, you can stop her in the following ways:

- Convince her of the dangers of trafficking and that you have good reason to believe she is being trafficked. Tell her that many girls in her position don’t believe that they are being trafficked. But then they end up being tricked and trapped, and their lives are ruined.
- Involve the police. If she is going to a Gulf country for work (which is illegal) or if your investigation has revealed evidence of trafficking, the police can use their authority to prevent her from crossing the border.
- Contact her family. Her family is very concerned about her welfare (unless they were involved in trafficking her), and they have the moral and legal authority to forbid her from crossing the border.

**Traffickers may try to escape.** Once they realize that you’ve caught them trying to traffic someone, traffickers may use all sorts of tricks to try to escape. For example, they may say that they need to go to the bathroom, to buy cigarettes, or a recharge card, and then run away. To avoid this, don’t let traffickers out of your sight during an investigation.

- Being resourceful in stopping trafficking:**
- Border monitoring staff in one area discovered that many victims being trafficked were coached to say that they were going to visit a certain hospital across the border. The NGO learned the names, specialties, and schedules of

- doctors in that hospital in order to verify such claims.
- If a victim of trafficking is crossing the border alone, the NGO can follow the girl to the bus stand in India and catch her trafficker there. Or they can go with the girl to her village and find out from the villagers who her real trafficker is. The villagers can also be trained through awareness programs to call the staff to catch traffickers.

Step 5 Police Permission

NGO

Once NGO staff makes a positive determination that a girl is being trafficked, they should contact the police.

NGO COMMENTARY

When the girl is ready, the NGO should escort her to the local police station and stay with her for as long as the police will allow. At the police station, the NGO will do the following:

- Obtain police permission before taking a girl to the shelter.
- Obtain the police’s signature on the IRF to verify the intercept.

ADVOCATE

The Advocate should accompany the NGO staff and victim to the police station to ensure that proper procedures are followed and the victim is treated fairly.

ADVOCATE COMMENTARY

At the police station, the Advocate should ensure that the victim is treated fairly and not harassed by the police while she is giving her statement. If the victim is willing to file an FIR at that point, the Advocate should do so.

POINTS TO NOTE

**Preparing victim for police questioning.** If the victim is willing to file a case against the trafficker, prepare her for what will happen at the police station. Explain to the victim that the police will be asking her questions about what happened and that she should be honest in telling her story.

- Informing the NGO about the intercept.** After you have finished at the police station, you should contact the NGO to provide information about the intercept, including:
- The number of victims intercepted;
  - Their ages;
  - The type of intercept; and
  - The status of the traffickers (whether they are in custody, etc.).

- Determine which type of intercept has occurred and note on IRF:**
- Gulf Countries: Since it is illegal and very dangerous for women to go to Gulf Countries for work, all such women should be stopped. In these cases, check the box.
  - Indian Trafficking: You can never be certain that a girl is being trafficked for sexual exploitation, but there are signs that indicate it is likely. If you are more than 50% sure, you should check the box for “Human trafficking.”
  - Indian Circus: In some cases, you may find children being trafficked to work in the Indian circus.
  - Runaway: If a girl has run away from home and is going to India, there is a good chance she could be acting under the direction of someone who is trying to traffic her.

**Send IRF to NGO office.** The IRF should be scanned and sent by email to the NGO office the same day, as this will allow them to identify any repeat traffickers (or a repeat victim) who may have been involved in an intercept at another station. This may help you to more effectively file a case against a trafficker (i.e., if there is written evidence that he has trafficked before). It will also allow the NGO or Investigations Department to ask any additional questions they might have while she is still in your custody.

**Police corruption:** Police may be susceptible to bribes and corruption, so make sure to stay involved in the process as much as possible.

### Step 6 Shelter Arrival

NGO
The NGO staff should follow safety protocol in travelling with the girl to the shelter and register her with the shelter upon arrival.
NGO COMMENTARY
The girl should be transported to the shelter on a motorcycle if possible, using a pre-planned indirect route. In the middle of this route, you should stop and wait, looking back and checking to make sure that you are not being followed. At the shelter, her information should be registered in the Shelter Logbook.
ADVOCATE
The Advocate should advise and assist the NGO to ensure the girl is safely transferred to the shelter home.
POINTS TO NOTE

**Arriving at the shelter.** The following should take place when a girl arrives at the shelter for the first time:

- Her mobile phone should be taken away and put somewhere safe by NGO staff. Her phone should be labeled and marked in the Shelter Logbook. Explain to her that this is shelter policy intended for her safety and that her mobile will be returned to her when she leaves.
- Fill in the Shelter Logbook.
- Introduce the girl to the other girls and shelter staff. She should be made comfortable and given food. Do not overwhelm her with questions about her case when she first arrives. Take the time to earn her trust before conducting interviews.

### Step 7 Filing of First Information Report (FIR)

NGO
The NGO should complete a Case Exploration Form and file a First Information Report (FIR) with the police station.
NGO COMMENTARY
The Case Exploration Form (CEF) should be completed with the victim at the shelter and used to determine if an FIR should be filed.

ADVOCATE
The Advocate should ensure that the FIR is registered with the applicable trafficking and other offenses included.
ADVOCATE COMMENTARY
The Advocate should ensure that the FIR contains information of the commission of one or more offenses under the HTTCA and is filed with the officer-incharge of the police station.
POINTS TO NOTE

See Step 1.2 of the human trafficking SOPs of this Toolkit for more information on filing a human trafficking complaint.

**Case Exploration Form (CEF).** The NGO should develop a CEF that can act as a guide to determine whether a case should be filed against the perpetrator. The CEF should elicit information that will assist the NGO in making a legal analysis about the strength of a case and whether an FIR should be filed. If it is determined that a case should not be

**Attach FIR to CEF.** A copy of the FIR should be attached to the CEF.

**What to do if the police do not file the case.** If a victim says she was trafficked, the police are legally required to take her to the district court to certify her statement as soon as possible; if the case is a foreign employment complaint, the police or NGO must ensure the case is lodged with the Department of Foreign Employment. If the police do not follow these procedures, the Advocate should take the matter to their senior police officers. If that does not work, you should take the matter to the CDO.

### Step 8 Shelter Care

NGO
At the shelter, the NGO staff should provide care, education, and assistance in accessing services and new opportunities.
NGO COMMENTARY
<p><b>Education.</b> Offer the girl a chance to watch the films “The Day My God Died,” “Chori,” “MTV Exit,” and the Nepalese Homes video about trafficking. Read “Precious Daughter” to her and provide a brochure about trafficking.</p> <p><b>Accessing opportunities.</b> If the girl has nowhere to go or no prospects for the future, the NGO should assist in finding a job, vocational training, a school, or a place to stay. Give her a copy of the book “Top Jobs for Women,” and help her to choose a job path that she can pursue.</p> <p><b>Foreign employment training.</b> The girl should be given a training about Foreign Employment and receive a certificate to become a trainer about Foreign Employment in her village.</p>

ADVOCATE
The Advocate should follow up with the girl while she receives care at the shelter and keep her informed about the progress of her case.

POINTS TO NOTE

**Medical treatment:** In some cases, the NGO will pay for the girl to receive medical testing or treatment at a Nepali Government hospital if the Aftercare Coordinator believes that she has had sexual relations with her trafficker or someone else during the process of her being trafficked. Girls can receive medical treatment in other cases, but your station must receive permission from the NGO before taking the girl for treatment.

Step 9 Victim Interview

NGO
A female NGO staff member should conduct a detailed interview with the girl and complete the Victim Interview Form.

NGO COMMENTARY

After gaining the girl’s trust, the NGO should conduct the victim interview and complete a Victim Interview Form (VIF), which is a form recording all the information obtained during the interview. This interview should take place in a private room with no more than two female staff present. The interview should be recorded (with the girl’s consent) and kept private except for official use.

ADVOCATE
The Advocate should review the record of the interview for information relevant to the case.

ADVOCATE COMMENTARY

The Advocate should review the VIF for information that may assist in the prosecution of the trafficker, if an FIR has been filed.

POINTS TO NOTE

**Confidentiality of interview records.** VIFs are strictly confidential and should not be shared with anyone except NGO staff and the police. The records should be stored in a safe place. Audio recordings should be labelled (according to VIF #s) and stored in a safe place for at least two years after the girl’s interview. Inquiries into a girl’s case should not take place in the presence of anyone other than shelter staff.

**Importance of VIFs to NGO.** Like IRFs, VIFs should be scanned and sent by email to NGO staff on the same day that they are completed. The VIF is important because the information can be used by the NGO to identify trafficking rings, safe houses, and other important structures in the Nepal trafficking industry.

**VIF for each girl.** If a group of girls is intercepted at the same time, only one IRF needs to be filled out but a VIF should be completed for each girl.

NGO
The NGO staff should conduct a Home Situational Assessment to determine an appropriate place to repatriate the girl.

NGO COMMENTARY

The Home Situational Assessment is a section of the VIF that requires the NGO to make a recommendation on whether the girl should be returned home. Generally, a girl can go home if:

- She has parents or guardians who are willing and able to care for her
- Her parents or guardians were not involved in her trafficking.

ADVOCATE

The Advocate should ensure that procedures are followed in repatriating the girl or taking her to protective custody.

ADVOCATE COMMENTARY

If it is determined that the girl should not return to her family, the Advocate should ensure the girl is presented to the Child Welfare Board for protective custody

POINTS TO NOTE

**Sending girls home.** In most cases, girls should go home within a few days of being intercepted. The NGO should arrange for someone to escort an intercepted girl back home, such as her immediate family members or other relatives (with the permission of her guardians). If no one can be found to take her home but the NGO still believes she should be taken home, the NGO staff should take her home or arrange for police escort.

**Long-term cases.** In the following cases, the girls cannot or may not want to go home:

- Their parents were involved in trafficking them;
- They have filed an FIR and they are afraid of the traffickers;
- They were abused along the way and fear that their family will reject them; or
- They are uneducated older women with no options who fear their family will not accept them back.

It is important (especially in the latter two cases) to do everything possible to convince the girls to go home or the family to accept them back. But in a case where that is not possible, the NGO should arrange for an alternate place for the victim. A border station shelter does not provide a good long-term environment, and no one should stay at a border station shelter for more than a few weeks.

**Special cases.** There are also two special cases:

- Girls who have serious trauma or psychological needs that NGO staff are not qualified to address should be transferred to another NGO with the training and experience necessary to effectively handle these cases. Contact the NGO National Engagement Coordinator for help arranging this.
- Girls with ongoing legal cases who are being bribed or threatened by traffickers to change their story may have another option, such as a witness protection home.



