

STATEMENT OF WORK (DRAFT)

“Understanding of Human Trafficking in Iowa”

SOLUTION AND METHODOLOGY

Little is known about the prevalence of human trafficking in the state of Iowa. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to begin gathering information about prevalence of both sex and labor trafficking in Iowa, level of awareness among stakeholders across the state on definitions and occurrence of human trafficking, services available that are specific to survivors of human trafficking, and the experiences of survivors who may or may not be utilizing these services. The first goal of the study is to identify the gaps and strengths in service delivery for human trafficking victims throughout the state of Iowa. The second goal is to ensure that the information gathered will be relevant to the Crime Victim Services Division within the Attorney General's Office through Ms. Janelle Melohn as the point of contact, to consider funding priorities. It is ICF's goal to provide information that will ultimately raise awareness in the community concerning human trafficking, inform training needs for service professionals, and foster collaboration between agencies addressing human trafficking in Iowa. ICF will implement our study in close coordination with Ms. Melohn to ensure that any feedback is incorporated into all study activities, from methodology development and data collection to data analysis and reporting.

ICF will use a participatory action research design that incorporates the feedback and perspective of Ms. Melohn and allied professionals/stakeholders such as the state victim service coalitions. This design blends both qualitative and quantitative research methods with victim services subject matter expertise to assist with interpretation, developing strategies, and incorporating findings in partnership with organizations and survivors that are part of the network under study. To kick off the project, ICF will meet with Ms. Melohn, her staff and stakeholders who will be involved in the effort. We will use this opportunity to gather resources, interview staff on the desired outcomes of the project, confirm timelines to complete the project, agree on acceptance criteria for deliverables, and set up a regular reporting schedule. ICF will work with Ms. Melohn to obtain any additional e-mail addresses and listservs for inclusion in the study; this list will supplement the roster ICF has developed of statewide service provider networks needs assessment. ICF will work closely with Ms. Melohn and stakeholders to update and verify stakeholder information and the appropriate persons to contact.

Our work will be informed by literature and prior studies that have been conducted to gain a better understanding human trafficking in other states and to examine prevalence of human trafficking and the provision of services to survivors. For example, it is important to understand the current laws pertaining to human trafficking in Iowa and the challenges that exist for law enforcement and prosecutors.

Project Administration

Upon contract award, ICF's Project Investigators, Samantha Lowry and Alana Henninger, will schedule a kickoff meeting between the ICF team, AG staff, and any statewide stakeholders identified by the Ms. Melohn. This meeting will occur within 2-3 weeks of award if it held in person, or sooner if conducted by phone or video conference. Ms. Melohn will have direct access to all team members throughout the life of the project, and Ms. Lowry will maintain regular contact with Ms. Melohn, oversee all contract matters, and provide liaison to the rest of the team as necessary.

Stakeholder Survey

In Phase I of the project, ICF will draft three separate stakeholder surveys to gather prevalence information from service providers, law enforcement, and medical providers. Although one survey will be

created for each group, the majority of the questions will be the same with a few targeted questions for each type of responder. The survey will be conducted in two stages. In the first stage, an initial survey will provide definitions of both labor and sex trafficking to stakeholders who will be asked to give estimates as to how many adult and child victims they have served over last three years, perspectives on and experiences with the current provision of services, and challenges of providing these services. The survey will stay open in the field for approximately 4-6 weeks, with follow-up emails sent to increase response rates for non-responders. In the second stage, ICF will conduct phone interviews with respondents who reported having encountered victims of human trafficking and other key informants in the state with extensive experience working with victims of trafficking. This phone interview will allow us to collect more detailed data on the services provided, characteristics, and number of victims of human trafficking served by respondents in the sample. We will also explore asking law enforcement and prosecution officials to discuss cases they have worked that have been identified as or suspected to be cases of trafficking, and then review these case files. If possible, we will also attempt to collect information on perpetrators of human trafficking. Our targeted approach will rely on input from both Ms. Melohn and the field using a snowball sampling approach. Once an interview is conducted, additional contact information will be obtained for other potential stakeholders that should contribute to the study. One week prior to the survey launch, a brief letter will be sent to each respondent explaining the purpose and importance of the survey, as well as provide definitions, characteristics, and examples of human trafficking.

The survey will be submitted to Ms. Melohn for approval and, upon making necessary revisions, ICF will submit the protocols to ICF's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for expedited approval related to human subjects protection. At the same time, we will work with Ms. Melohn and stakeholders to identify a robust list of victim service providers across the state . both community-based and systems-based (e.g., law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim witness coordinators), to serve as respondents to the survey.

ICF will process and analyze the quantitative survey data in SPSS (statistical software) in order to provide Ms. Melohn with concrete information about the prevalence estimates, perspectives on the current provision of services, and challenges of providing these services. During this time we will also conduct interviews with a sample of survey respondents, to better understand the findings and gather additional recommendations. A draft summary report will be provided in Month 3 to provide preliminary recommendations and information regarding the understanding of human trafficking in Iowa. In Month 6, a final report and research brief will be provided.

Victim Interviews and Focus Groups

In Phase II of the project, ICF will conduct interviews or focus groups with up to 15 victims of human trafficking to gain the perspective of survivors. Based on the comfort of the survivors, one-on-one interviews will be conducted or a group of 3-5 survivors will be interviewed at the same time. These focus groups will serve to provide more detailed and contextual information, as well as an opportunity for survivors to make recommendations for action steps Ms. Melohn can take to respond to the needs of victims of trafficking. Service providers will be contacted to assist with recruitment based on consent obtained in the needs assessment and targeted outreach for individuals recommended by Ms. Melohn and other leaders in the state. Our team members, who have extensive experience recruiting and engaging victim survivors and conducting research on sensitive topics, will work with Ms. Melohn to recruit survivor participants throughout the state. This version of the survivor phase would be completed in an estimated six months for protocol development, IRB approval, data collection, and reporting.

The second option for the survivor phase would include respondent driven sampling (RDS) to gain access to survivors that may not have been in contact with victim service providers and the criminal justice system. RDS is a method of finding a few seed+survivors (e.g., sex trafficking, prostitutes, labor

trafficking) through contact with service providers or other key informants and building off of their relationship with other human trafficking survivors for recruitment. Each need+survivor (approximately five to six in total) will receive an incentive for participating in the study and then an additional incentive for each survivor that he/she successfully recruits for an interview. This method has been used in other human trafficking studies and those that require participation by deeply imbedded populations that are typically hidden from services and care. The purpose of these interviews is to explore their experiences (e.g., why they chose or did not choose to seek help from legal, medical, or victim service professionals) and to begin to gauge the prevalence within the state. This phase is more time intensive and estimated to take up to 12 months, with 6-8 months of data collection involving recruitment and interviewing. The needs+will be placed within the first 3 months of the project once protocols have been developed and approved by IRB. And the last three months of this phase will be utilized for data synthesis and reporting.

Intensive Case Review

An optional Phase III of the project would provide more detailed prevalence information should a select number of law enforcement agencies in the state agree to participate in the study. For this phase, ICF would conduct a review of cases covered in the media and cases within each jurisdiction that have been identified by law enforcement as human trafficking and an additional sample of prostitution cases. Prior research has shown that law enforcement may misidentify sex trafficking cases as prostitution cases. Cases will be coded to identify the characteristics of sex trafficking victims and perpetrators, factors related to victim identification, victim-offender relationship, methods of recruitment, mechanisms for victim referral, types of services available to victims, agencies involved in the victim response, and case outcomes. Inter-rater reliability will be calculated by having all coders code two cases independently and then discuss decisions and reach a consensus on any disagreements. Contingent on the comfort levels of the participating agencies, ICF may code data for analysis while onsite or may request to collect/securely deliver (e.g., through password-protected CD via FedEx or FTP) data for coding and analysis at ICF. Depending on the agency, availability and quality of data, and their frequency of sex trafficking cases, ICF will determine the appropriate period for including cases to allow for the best chance at meaningful analysis. ICF will require that all law enforcement cases be closed and de-identified. This same methodology can be applied to the Department of Labor and labor trafficking cases should a Memorandum of Understanding be executed to provide access to case files. The timeline for this optional phase would align with the Victim Phase and be executed within 12 months.

Reporting

ICF will present findings and priority areas for funding consideration based on all data collected. We will submit a final written report that provides detailed information on our methods, analytic techniques, and all thematic findings resulting from the perspectives of stakeholders, service providers, and survivors as well as recommendations for improvement and strategies for addressing the gaps in services that have been identified and ways to increase knowledge and awareness. We will also create a practitioner-friendly brief summarizing assessment results for wider dissemination by Ms. Melohn.