



Save the Children



FROM WORDS TO ACTION

A decade fighting child trafficking in Mozambique

PROJECT SUMMARY

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Human traffickers sell children to the highest bidders, abusing them and leaving emotional scars for life. In Mozambique, criminals take advantage of children living in poverty by promising them prosperity in the cities or South Africa. When they arrive at these destinations, children are met with extreme violence and held in captivity to provide slave-labour or sexual services (UNODC, 2014; US Department of State, 2016).

Since 2006 and with funding from the Norwegian Government, Save the Children has implemented an anti-trafficking project in Mozambique. Major developments have taken place since the project's initiation, including the approval of the Anti-Trafficking Act (06/2008) and a strengthened protection system, which incorporated the obligations laid out in the Act. The implementation of this Act is evident in the government-initiated investigations of human trafficking, raising from 0 in 2008 to 95 investigations in 2015 with 35 ending in prosecutions (US Department of State, 2016).

Without a doubt, in 2017 the protection system is much more robust than the one that existed in 2007. It now has a legal foundation and a structure to govern its operation. The system includes a referral mechanism consisting of a nation-wide organizational structure and a formalized collaboration with South Africa. The referral mechanism is vital for children exposed to trafficking to access the services (such as health, education and the judiciary), and for cases to be prosecuted. A regional collaboration with participation from South Africa, Zambia, Swaziland, Malawi, and Zimbabwe has also been established to address cross-border trafficking and to exchange lessons learned. In 2016, the referral mechanism expanded its mandate to include all forms of abuse. In 2017 alone, the referral network dealt with 46 cases of sexual abuse, 49 cases of negligence, 78 cases of child labour/exploitation, and eight cases of forced marriages.

Considering the project's duration and continued funding, it is essential to understand Save the Children's contributions to these achievements. To capture the richness of the project's experience

(Yin, 2009) a case study approach was used. Case studies are well equipped to examine complex real-life phenomena, and this allowed the investigation to go beyond the descriptive understanding (what), and to try to understand how and why change occurred. A political context is complex, with many relationships and feedback loops. As such, it will not be possible to attribute success directly to a specific intervention by Save the Children. This case study has therefore looked at Save the Children's contribution to the overall development of the Anti-Trafficking Act and its implementation in Mozambique.

This project focused on systemic advocacy that aimed at influencing change in systems, policy and laws. Advocacy, as a working methodology, needs time to produce results, as was the case with the anti-trafficking project. Predictable and long-term funding allowed the time needed for the project's interventions to contribute to a strengthened protection system. Over the project's lifecycle, most initiatives became sustainable. It can further be argued that the project has also had a catalytic effect. For example, the government expanded the number of referral groups that Save the Children established from three to 11 districts.

The findings from the case study revealed a sequence of events that closely mirrors those described in the policy-cycle framework (Kingdon, 1995). This classic approach to policy making breaks the process down into five phases: agenda setting, text formulation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation. The first four were experienced in this project. However, the Anti-Trafficking Act has not yet been evaluated. Based on the findings of the case study, advocacy strategies were modified throughout the

different phases of the policy-cycle and adapted to the opportunities and threats of the specific policy environments.

Goal of the agenda setting phase, was to ensure that the relevant target groups recognized trafficking as a social problem that required political solutions. Developing a common understanding of the problem was the first step. Save the Children invested resources to consult with a diversity of stakeholders and conduct field studies to develop an understanding of the triggers, movement trends, and legal protection mechanisms. A well-defined narrative was useful to engage the public, broader civil society actors, and the media. Public pressure, and especially media involvement made, policy makers recognise trafficking as a challenge in Mozambique. Towards the end of this phase human trafficking entered the political agenda.

The decision-making phase was closely interwoven with the text formulation phase. Therefore, the case study combined these two phases into one. The main task in this phase was to initiate a dialogue with decision makers and to build consensus on which political solutions were desirable and feasible. Civil society actors in Mozambique developed a shared set of arguments, which made their voice stronger and more influential. By working with the government and building trust, the civil society alliance that Save the Children took a part in was invited to provide inputs and suggest text for the law. This seems to have been successful, as the Anti-Trafficking Act incorporated text provided by the civil society alliance.

The implementation phase is still ongoing. The success of the implementation phase has largely depended on the political will of decisionmakers to prioritize implementation in plans and budgets. Save the Children entered into a strategic partnership with the General Attorney's office and drafted an action plan for implementation of the Anti-Trafficking Act. This served as guidance for

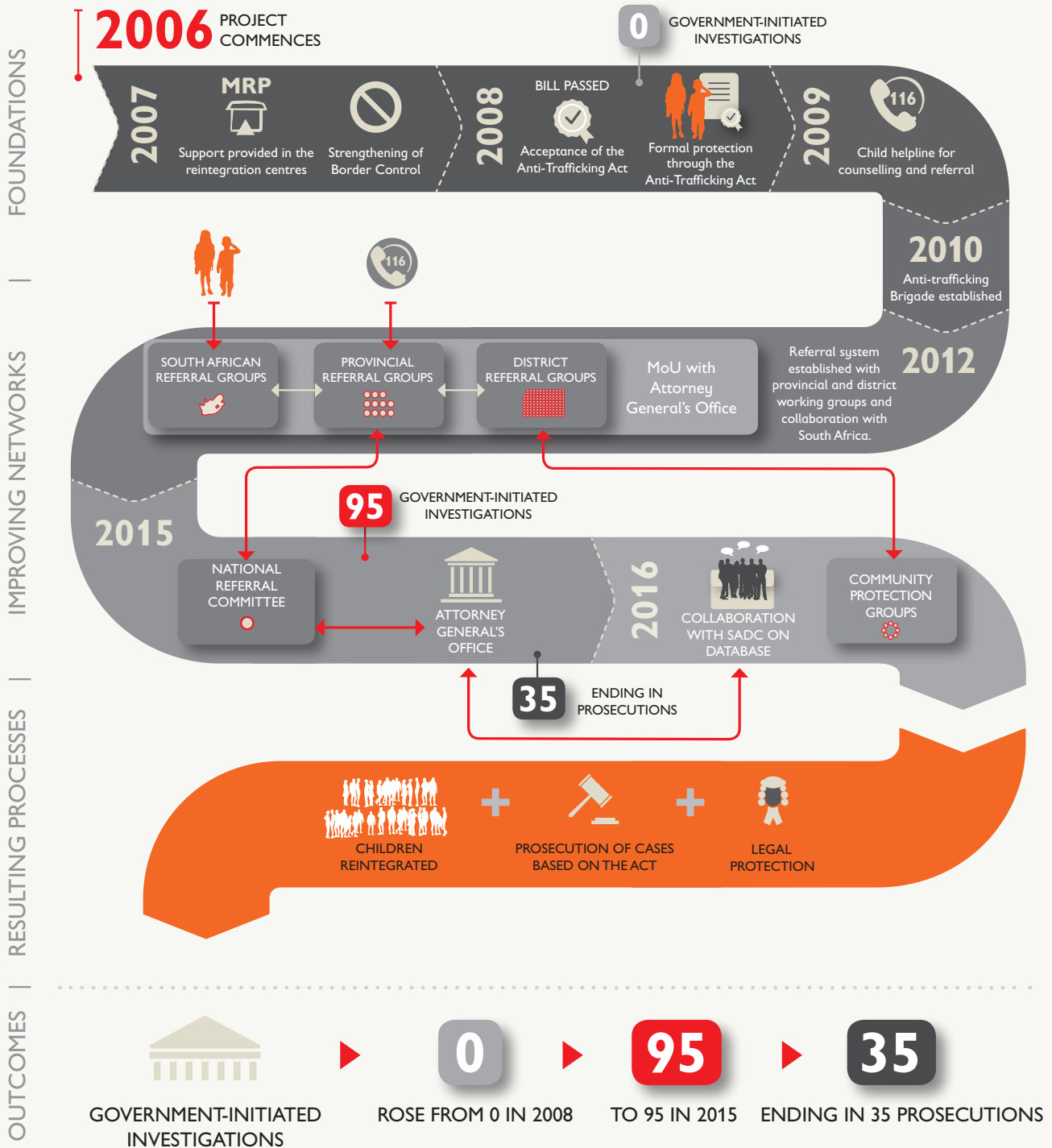
implementation of central elements of the law, like the referral system.

The findings of this case study demonstrated the importance of long-term and predictable funding, when the goal is to contribute to systemic change. This allowed for time to gradually build commitment within the system, and for the line ministries to allocate the needed resources for implementation. The combination of capacity building, awareness raising, strategic partnerships and advocacy work was crucial to the project's success. Throughout the project, there has been continuous interaction between the project components. Even if the awareness raising and capacity building activities did not target policy change, they have certainly contributed to strengthening Save the Children's credibility in policy forums. One lesson learned from this project experience suggests that one project component alone would not have led to the sustainability of the investments made. Advocacy and strategic partnerships were essential to the sustainability, and should be integrated into project designs at an early stage.

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OVERVIEW OF THE CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL SYSTEM FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN, OR WHO ARE AT RISK OF BEING, TRAFFICKED



Every child has the right to a future.

Save the Children works around the world to give children a healthy start in life, and the chance to learn and to be safe.

We do whatever it takes to get children the things they need – every day and in times of crisis.



Cover photo: Isidro Afonso,

Adam,* 16, is greeted by his mother having returned home through Save the Children and partners' anti-trafficking project.

*Not his real name

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