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To what extent and how should individuals and communities other than migrants be targeted by awareness raising campaigns as an effective strand of EU migrant smuggling prevention policy?

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Acknowledgements

This policy brief has been funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch Ministry of Defence under the PROGRESS research programme on Europe and its Neighbours, in which Chatham House partners with the Clingendael Institute and European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR).

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Introduction

Raising awareness of the risks of migrant smuggling to prevent migrants from ‘embarking on hazardous journeys’ is a component of the *EU Action Plan against migrant smuggling* (2015-2020). This policy brief considers to what extent and how individuals and communities other than migrants could be targeted by awareness raising campaigns aimed at preventing migrant smuggling. Given the dearth of smuggling-specific campaigns, insights from broader awareness raising campaigns and literature pertaining to it on irregular

migration (and human trafficking to a lesser extent) have also been drawn upon.¹ This Policy Brief has been drafted on the basis of a review of academic literature as well as publications and evaluations of international and non-governmental organisations with migration-related mandates. Ten key informants were also consulted, including representatives of UN and other relevant international organisations, NGOs and academia in countries of origin, transit and destination.

1. Awareness raising campaigns targeting individuals and communities other than migrants

Where migrant smuggling is addressed in awareness raising campaigns, it tends to be subsumed as a secondary message in a wider campaign aimed at preventing irregular migration. The primary targets of campaigns are commonly prospective migrants and their communities in countries of origin, with the objective of deterring irregular migration through messages that paint bleak pictures of life in Europe (as in the case of a video spot in Nigeria and Cameroon funded by Switzerland and the ‘Surprising Europe’ campaign part-funded by the Netherlands²), or point to loss of family livelihood resulting from death en route to Europe (as in the case of a Spanish-funded campaign in Senegal), or highlight restrictive migration or refugee regimes (as in Danish government advertisements in Lebanese newspapers informing readers of tightened regulations).

Following significant criticism from international and non-governmental organisations of EU or EU member State funded deterrent campaigns, there has been a shift away from purely deterrent messages towards positive messages that promote safe migration channels and aim to raise awareness about rights of migrants, with a view to protecting them. Such campaigns increasingly apply ‘Communications for Development’ (C4D) methodology to engage target audiences in designing messages so as to better understand their knowledge, attitudes and practices for the purpose of developing messages and tools that effect positive social behavioural change. These are very often multi-sector undertakings, with funding provided by EU member States, and implemented by international organisations often in partnership with local NGOs and broadcasters, telecommunications and private sector technology partners.

Awareness raising campaigns targeting families / diaspora communities

A prominent example is the ‘Aware Migrants’ campaign launched in July 2016 by IOM in partnership with the Italian Ministry of Interior and Horace, a communications agency, with support of Germany and with discussions with other EU States currently ongoing. The campaign targets diaspora communities as the bridge between origin and destination countries; families / communities in countries of origin as influences of migration decisions; and media in both origin and destination countries to highlight vulnerabilities and promote legal channels and economic development. The campaign uses testimonials of migrants who have reached Italy to raise awareness of risks en route. While testimonies focus on negative aspects of journeys including abuse by migrant smugglers, information is also provided on opportunities to migrate regularly or to remain in countries of origin in Africa. Now moving into its second phase, the campaign is expanding to more countries throughout West Africa

¹ Throughout this issue brief, the term ‘migrant’ refers to all persons who may engage smugglers to facilitate irregular migration regardless of their reasons or motivations, including refugees and asylum seekers.

² That said, Schans and Optekamp note that the campaign shows both positive and negative stories. See D Schans and C Optekamp, *Raising awareness, changing behavior? Combatting irregular migration through information campaigns*, (Ministerie van Veiligheid en Justitie, 2016), at page13.

and relying more heavily on peer-to-peer type negative testimonies from among migrants who have returned (or been returned) to countries of origin. This approach relies on ‘migrants as messengers’ considering them as ‘trusted messengers’ in contrast to sources that may be considered unreliable, such as international organisations or governments of destination countries.

Similarly, UNHCR uses mass information campaigns to raise awareness of risks along sub-Saharan irregular migration routes to Libya and Europe. By hosting structured dialogues with community-based diaspora organisations and relevant NGOs, its methodology also relies on recent testimonies of risks encountered en route. While its primary targets are those migrants who are on the move at direct risk of trafficking and exploitation, UNHCR also aims to engage diaspora, religious leaders, elders and others in select European countries and along the route to combat trafficking and smuggling of migrants.

Awareness raising campaigns targeting general public in destination countries

Government-led campaigns implemented in EU countries have been criticised for serving an objective of assuring the public that measures are being taken to address irregular migration. A case in point is the 2013 campaign mounted in the UK, in which two vans were driven around six boroughs in London bearing the message ‘Go home or face arrest’. The campaign, (reported to have resulted in one person leaving the UK, not on the basis of seeing the vans but on the basis of reading about them in mainstream media),³ claimed to target people irregularly in the UK but was criticised for rather aiming to appease public concern and striking a discordant, migrant-hostile tone in doing so. Similarly, the Australian slogan of “*You will not make Australia home*” can be criticised for speaking more to concerned Australians than aspirant migrants. Practitioners who work in migration and empirical studies report that campaigns that are politically motivated rather than evidence-based have little or no impact and may have the unintended negative consequence of discrediting the source of the information, undermining its capacity to mount trusted, effective and good faith campaigns in future.

Campaigns that are not State-driven have also targeted the public at large in transit and destination countries in the EU and elsewhere, to inform them about root causes of migration and human suffering involved in migration journeys with the objective of reducing discrimination and xenophobia against migrants. IOM’s “*I am a migrant*” campaign is a prime example, which aims to promote diversity and inclusion of migrants. No smuggling-specific message is conveyed through this campaign.

Migrant-smuggling specific awareness raising campaigns

A rare example of an awareness raising campaign specifically focused on migrant smuggling, is the EU-funded United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) campaign launched in 2016 under the catchphrase “*A Deadly Business*”. Its objective is to highlight the violence involved in the smuggling ‘business’, its linkages with other forms of organized crime, and to warn vulnerable migrants in origin countries and en route of the risks involved in using smugglers. Initially launched in the Americas with a view to scaling up elsewhere, the campaign targets migrants themselves as well as law enforcement officials (particularly those who encounter migrants at the frontline), families of migrants to inform them of the risks of paying smugglers, and the media, so it can more accurately report on the crime, the conditions in which migrants travel, and the criminality of smuggling. As is the case with IOM campaigns, UNODC applied C4D methodology to engage target audiences in

³ See for instance: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2013/oct/22/go-home-vans-scrapped-failure> and <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2013/oct/31/go-home-vans-11-leave-britain>

developing relatable messages and identifying channels for conveying them. The impact of this campaign is yet to be evaluated.

Specific counter-smuggling campaigns have also been commissioned or implemented by the Australian government in origin and transit countries, with the explicit objective of deterring 'people smuggling'. While some have sought to raise awareness about regular options available to would-be migrants, messages have mostly been negative; in 1999-2001 its message was "*Pay a smuggler, you'll pay the price.*" Its current slogans are "*No way*", "*Don't be fooled*", and "*Don't throw your money in the water.*" In 2016 a film company was commissioned to produce a straight-to-TV film, *Journey*, depicting the ill-fated and sometimes fatal experiences of a group of Afghans who pay smugglers. While potential migrants in countries of origin and in transit are the primary target audience, messages have been calibrated to also speak to a secondary audience of their family members, also with negative messages such as "*I lost my son. The people smuggler's boat sank halfway*"; "*Remind family it could take longer, but the legal way is the right way into Australia*", and "*If your loved ones want to travel illegally to Australia by boat. Don't let them go!*" Diaspora communities in Australia have also been targeted in the hopes that messages such as "*Don't be sorry*", "*No to people smuggling*" and "*Pay a people smuggler, and you'll pay a price*" would filter to would-be migrants abroad, to deter them from being smuggled to Australia.

Though no evaluation information is available for these Australian campaigns and the evidence base on which they were designed is unclear, they have been praised for understanding the role social networks play in smuggling decisions, for clearly targeting audiences and for basing messages on largely accurate information. They have also been criticised for negative messaging and their failure to present alternative positive choices. That shortcoming was partly addressed by broadening messages to also include information about registering with UNHCR for partner and family migration to Australia. Whether these campaigns have reduced smuggling of migrants by sea is uncertain given that subsequent reductions in boat arrivals may be attributable to increased securitization of sea borders.

Awareness raising campaigns targeting migrant smugglers or potential migrant smugglers

Few campaigns have directly targeted migrant smugglers or potential migrant smugglers. Those that have been attempted have been based on assumptions rather than empirical evidence about their drivers and motives, resulting in messages that do not achieve behavioural change. One example is the 2010 "I know smuggling irregular migrants is wrong" campaign targeting Indonesian fishermen, boat owners and boat builders who are recruited by migrant smugglers to transport migrants to Australia. That campaign emphasised the criminality of smuggling, the penalties imposed, and the risks posed to one's reputation, and attempted to present migrant smuggling as contrary to religion. This four-month campaign by the Australian Customs Service in partnership with IOM in Indonesia, was exceptional in that it was designed on the basis of extensive research, including mapping household and community decision-making processes, assessing consumption methods and media networks, and working with Indonesian authorities to determine which geographical areas to target. Messages were targeted at identified audiences, with largely positive messages conveyed concerning the pride and dignity of being a fisherman who does not participate in smuggling. Qualitative and quantitative assessments of this campaign concluded that there had been a shift in public perception about smuggling, though the short duration of the campaign and evaluation limitations meant that long-term impact could not be assessed, nor evidence yielded to determine whether it served to reduce smuggling.

2. Shortcomings of awareness raising campaigns

Lack of evaluation of awareness raising campaigns

The widely acknowledged lack of impact evaluation of awareness raising efforts, contributes to its use as an 'easy' prevention measure, whose ineffectiveness can never be verified. The number of people reached by messages is sometimes counted, and increasingly, shifts in attitudes/perspectives are being measured through incentivised feedback platforms attached to campaigns (notably including IOM's 'community response map'). Nonetheless, whether messages result in actual behaviour change is rarely known, for several reasons. Firstly, baseline smuggling data with which to accurately measure change is lacking. Secondly, causally attributing any reduction in smuggling to information campaigns is difficult given the multitude of other influencing factors at play, including changes in migration and border management policies. Thirdly, measuring 'success' of campaigns is problematic in the absence of clear, smuggling-specific objectives. Where 'reduced smuggling' is equated with 'reduced irregular migration', reduction in either may be a 'success' from the perspective of those who have an interest in curtailing irregular migration flows, but be a failure from ethical, moral and rights-based perspectives where smuggling is a means by which people flee conflict, violence and/or persecution.

Notwithstanding the lack of evaluations carried out, some lessons can be learned from these campaigns that are of relevance to any efforts taken to raise awareness of individuals and communities other than migrants.

Concepts confused and conflated

In migration messaging there is an evident disconnect between discourse about the positive contribution of migration, and deterrent campaigns that offer a negative picture. On the one hand, positive campaigns promote integration by highlighting the success of migrants in destination countries, while on the other, deterrent campaigns inaccurately imply that success is only achieved through regular migration (or not migrating) and that failure, death or danger will result from migrating irregularly or being smuggled. These messages are readily rejected on the basis of evidence in the form of remittances sent by successfully smuggled migrants, their positive reports about destination countries, and their triumphant returns to origin countries.

In highlighting risks posed to smuggled migrants, awareness-raising messages commonly conflate trafficking and smuggling. As an example, the German government #RumoursAboutGermany website purports to offer migrants 'facts' to counter rumours, but inaccurately conflates human trafficking and migrant smuggling. This conflation of concepts often arises in 'deterrence' campaigns that aim to warn smuggled migrants about the dangers of falling into trafficking situations, without reflecting the nuance of abuse and exploitation that non-trafficked migrants may be subject to at the hands of smugglers. The two terms may even be used interchangeably, so that 'trafficker' becomes a euphemism for 'smuggler'. Where smugglers do not in fact turn out to be traffickers, but deliver much needed services as promised, campaigns that attempt to discredit them, instead discredit themselves.

Further confusion emerges from the conflation of migrant smuggling with facilitation of irregular migration. In the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol (Smuggling Protocol) migrant smuggling is characterised by the intention to financially or materially benefit from the facilitation of another person's illegal border crossing; the target is not persons who assist him or her with no profit motive, nor smuggled migrants themselves (to whom a non-criminalization provision applies). However, many EU States approach mere facilitation of

irregular migration as smuggling, irrespective of whether its purpose is profit. *EU Council Directive 2002/90/EC of 28 November 2002 defining the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and residence* and the Council Framework decision implementing it, require Member States to sanction those who intentionally assist a person into a State in breach of the laws of that State, and provide only the option of not imposing sanctions where this is done for humanitarian purposes. In the Netherlands, the smuggling offence set out in Section 197a of the Criminal Code does not require a financial or material benefit for enabling illegal entry but only for assisting another person to gain residence. This lack of harmonization across EU and third States as to who is a migrant smuggler obfuscates the objectives of awareness raising campaigns and frustrates attempts to achieve a baseline for measuring change.

The conflation of migrant smuggling with irregular migration can result in awareness-raising campaigns with objectives that are and/or are perceived to be disingenuous. Messages that profess concern for lives and safety of migrants (and indeed are funded as humanitarian initiatives) may in reality serve migration policies and betray an agenda of migration deterrence. Campaigns that caution of the risks posed by smugglers generally disregard the dangers posed by State counter-smuggling measures alongside them. Where the language of 'illegality' or 'immorality' is applied to irregular movements and actions of migrants themselves, the result can be that public sentiment in Europe turns not only against migrant smugglers, but also against migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who use their services. A complex picture emerges from this harmfully simplistic messaging; on the one hand, poorly framed discourse can fuel racism, xenophobia and anti-migrant sentiment, while on the other, open discussion about migration may be stifled by concerns about allegations of racism, xenophobia and anti-migrant sentiment. Where the nuance and complexity between these two dichotomous positions is lost, so too is capacity to meaningfully discuss realities and calibrate valuable, fact-based messages in information campaigns.

Causes and drivers often overlooked

Campaigns that assert that smuggling is not worth the risk, discount the fact that for many people it is. When conflict, violence and/or persecution and a lack of regular migration channels leave people with no meaningful choice but to be smuggled, the dangers of smuggling journeys are not dissuasive. Rather, measured decisions are taken in full awareness of risks, to determine that the prospect of a different life outweighs the dangers involved in pursuing it. Simplistic messages that focus on risk of death overlook the reality that statistics may speak in favour of undertaking dangerous journeys to Europe. IOM reports that 149,785 migrants arrived by sea in the first ten months of 2017 with almost 2% (2826) people reported dead or missing. Even if the number of people who die or go missing while attempting the crossing were to rise to 5% (amounting to almost 7500 deaths) prospective migrants would still be left with a 95% chance of surviving it. Accordingly, awareness raising campaigns that highlight ill-fated journeys may not deter would-be migrants, but simply underline that the odds of successfully reaching Europe are on their side.

Smuggling decision making processes and influences overlooked

Awareness raising campaigns that seek to influence migrant smuggling decisions have been criticised for being based on misguided assumptions that such decisions are made in a vacuum, in which not migrating is a viable option. Assertions that awareness raising campaigns should be short-term, fast and responsive may be applicable to discreet flows, but overlook the complex economic, cultural and social factors at play in many others. Unless people are mobilising in response to a humanitarian crisis, migration and smuggling decisions can take many years to make, and be shaped by personal issues or events, family and community expectations, and layers of norms and attitudes that impact on identity and

aspirations. Smuggler-facilitated migration may be a cultural rite of passage to transition to adulthood and a means of obtaining status. Against this backdrop, information campaigns - particularly those originating in destination countries - will be rejected where they merely undermine and criticise normalised and highly respected activities that have been entrenched over several generations.

In many cultural contexts, parents have been identified as key influences in migration decisions, with mothers sometimes pressuring sons to support their families through migration. An example of an awareness raising initiative that emerged organically within the cultural context of an origin community is found in Senegal. In this case, mothers of sons who died at sea trying to reach the Canary Islands formed the Women's Collective for the Fight against Irregular Migration in Senegal. Members of the Collective visit families whose sons are thinking of leaving for Europe, to raise awareness of the dangers they face, while also working to create dignified work to give men opportunities to remain. The mother-son relationship at the heart of West African migration decisions is a factor here; mothers play a key role in encouraging and financing their sons' migration to Europe, or in this case, in counselling them to remain. However, where these sons have no prospects at home and have some 30 or so relatives relying on them for their survival, it is unclear whether this shift in narrative will be convincing enough to effect behaviour change.

Campaigns to raise awareness of risks of trafficking and promote safe migration have increasingly been served by an understanding of how people consume information as paramount to effectively reaching them. However, this depth of analysis is yet to be applied in the design of campaigns specific to migrant smuggling to understand how migrants consume information about smuggling with a view to identifying who the key influencers of their decisions are and identifying potential targets of awareness raising campaigns among them. It can be speculated that the direct and personal contact between smugglers and their clients or prospective clients creates a level of trust that less personal awareness raising campaigns are unlikely to be able to compete with. Where smugglers prove to be honest and trustworthy, information campaigns that brand all smugglers as dishonest, untrustworthy thieves will instead be rejected as baseless and inaccurate.

3. Policy recommendations for raising awareness of individuals and communities other than migrants

The interrelated policy recommendations below are offered in respect of two broadly conceived categories of potential target audience:

- 1. Individuals and communities who migrants rely on to make migrant smuggling decisions, with the objective of equipping the former with accurate information to convey to would-be migrants.** This category includes religious and community leaders, parents, smugglers, and others who shape smuggling decisions. A strategic approach is required to better understand knowledge, attitudes and practices around smuggling in a given location to identify target audiences and tailor messages to them. Rather than investing resources in campaigns targeted at migrants in transit and prospective migrants in countries of origin that may not be given as much weight as other sources of information, investment could instead be made to better understand what sources of information are relied on in making short and long-term smuggling decisions, towards strengthening the accuracy of the information that those sources are equipped with and in turn convey to prospective migrants.
- 2. Actors who come into direct contact with migrants during smuggling journeys, with the objective of strengthening their capacity to respond, as**

both a measure of prevention and a measure of protection. Migrants who are en route may encounter *state actors* such as law enforcement, border, immigration and other officials; *private sector actors*, such as airlines, shipping lines or other commercial carriers; and *non-state actors* including international organisations, NGOs and community actors during the course of their smuggling journeys. Those actors may lack adequate understanding of the risks smuggled migrants face and be ill-equipped to take action to mitigate those risks. For these actors, awareness raising efforts must be complemented by capacity building measures.

Anchor campaigns in international law to pursue protection over prevention

The objective of any awareness raising campaign mounted in response to migrant smuggling should align with international law to guard against messages that are contrary to or are perceived to be contrary to human rights obligations. Accordingly, awareness raising campaigns may ultimately be a more successful arm of EU migrant smuggling policy when they serve protection rather than prevention objectives. Messages that inform smuggled migrants of their rights and where they can seek assistance from NGOs, consular officials and other service providers are more likely to be trusted and relied on than those aimed at deterring their migration. A strong evidence base is required to design messages in accordance with international law, that are nuanced enough to serve protection objectives without, at the same time, promoting irregular migration or undermining efforts underway to prevent smuggling.

Where the objective of a campaign is prevention, the aim must be to prevent criminal smuggling of migrants, not mere facilitation of irregular migration. While international law does encourage messages about the criminality of (profit-driven) smuggling, caution must be taken in designing any messaging that speaks to ‘illegality’, lest migrants themselves, or actors who provide them with assistance and support on a voluntary or humanitarian basis be stigmatised as a result. Such messages must be reconciled with positive migration discourse, so that warnings about the dangers of migration (often the result of restrictive migration policies) are supplemented with and balanced by messages that promote lawful and positive behaviour.

Information campaigns that portray non-profit actors as criminal smugglers, or aim to discourage irregular migration itself, or discourage assistance to irregular migrants, are all open to criticism that messages do not accord with international law. Campaigns that aim to deter irregular movement and/or the use of migrant smugglers for the purpose of fleeing persecution, discrimination, torture or other rights violations, have no basis in the Smuggling Protocol. On the contrary, there is a strong international legal basis *not* to mount such campaigns. While the Smuggling Protocol does not impose a positive obligation on States to provide information to migrants about safe and regular channels of migration, it does require them not to disseminate misleading or inaccurate information and to ensure that any campaigns against migrant smuggling do not compromise established rights and obligations, notably including the right to leave one’s country and the right to seek asylum from persecution.

Build evidence base for identifying target audiences and calibrating messages

To better identify target audiences and effectively design messages that resonate with them, a strong evidence base is required as to who key influencers are and what the nature of their influence is. Accordingly, any funding or support provided to raise awareness of individuals and communities other than migrants should be conditional on this evidence base existing or being obtained, and sufficient to allow evaluation. The Netherlands would add significant

value and raise standards by requiring such evidence, and providing sufficient funding for external evaluations of impact of campaigns.

Significant investment must be made into researching how smuggling decisions are informed and the extent to which migrants rely on or reject the information they receive throughout their journeys. Here, the methods and social media channels that sources of information - including smugglers - use to persuade migrants, could be learnt from and replicated in designing information campaigns that effectively inform, reach and resonate with their target audiences. The following considerations are offered towards building evidence on which to tailor messages to local realities and specific audiences.

Diaspora communities: Individuals within diaspora communities, whether family members or leaders in the community, may encourage migrants to be smuggled either directly through the information they provide, or indirectly by the example they set. Further evidence is required to understand their specific role and impact on smuggling, to determine whether and how to calibrate messages to specific groups therein. The ramifications of their financing of smuggling need to be better understood; networks of families and friends may constitute social capital that can reduce vulnerability to torture and detention en route, particularly in the absence of economic resources, or may heighten vulnerability to extortion. Members of diaspora communities may be well aware of the risks facing smuggled migrants, but less aware of the risks accruing directly to themselves including extortion by smugglers, prosecution for assisting migrants, or even prosecution for exploiting them after their arrival (for instance, where migrants work off debts owed to them for smuggling fees or ransoms). In targeting diaspora communities, the risks of marginalising and stigmatising those communities must be understood and mitigated to avoid contributing to counterproductive and divisive discourse.

Public awareness raising in transit / destination countries: Public perception of migrants impacts on the policy choices States can make. This can detrimentally result in short-term, populist policies such as ineffective border controls and deterrent messages that may cost lives, increase demand for smuggling and cause backlash against actors who assist migrants, while failing to address the concerns they claim to be mounted in response to. Public perception of migrant smuggling needs to be better understood to design messages with the objective of shifting attitudes from 'blaming' individuals who have successfully migrated and NGOs and others who rescue or otherwise support them, onto the States that have failed them and the criminals who exploit them. Raising awareness of the profit ('financial and material benefit') element of the smuggling offence can serve to counter the notion that international and non-government organisations or local community actors who assist or otherwise provide services to migrants are somehow 'colluding' with smugglers. Raising awareness about the refugee component of mixed migration flows can draw attention to rights and protection obligations under international law, to increase support for investment in programmes to address root causes for prevention. In targeting the public at large, care must be taken in calling for action; engaging the public to identify victims of trafficking can be helpful, but public participation in identifying smuggled migrants may be harmful where it is tantamount to denouncing irregular migrants.

Media: Media influence in countries of origin, transit and destination may far exceed that of information campaigns. The media can provide vital information and stay abreast of fast-changing drivers of migration in a way that awareness campaigns cannot. But media can also downplay rights and security threats posed by migrant smuggling, or contribute to confusion and conflation of issues. Indeed, even reputable mainstream media outlets use 'smuggler' and 'trafficker' as interchangeable terms, misuse terms such as 'economic migrant' and 'asylum seeker', and use sensational and inflammatory language such as 'illegal', 'influx' or

'tides'. In response, international organisations and NGOs have provided training and made media-friendly 'glossaries' of migration-related terms available, though the extent to which they have been disseminated, used and applied is unclear. The Netherlands could fund or otherwise support efforts of international and other organisations to strengthen journalistic and editorial capacity to responsibly report on smuggling-related issues, and provide media with up-to-date, accurate and verified information in appropriate languages. In doing so, it is essential that any funding or other support provided does not compromise editorial independence or the perception of it, but promotes media freedom and independence, and calls it to account when it publishes inaccurate information.

Smugglers and potential smugglers: The Smuggling Protocol encourages awareness raising about the criminality of profit-driven smuggling, making smugglers and potential smugglers a logical target audience for campaigns. However, the low prosecution rate that keeps smuggling a low-risk, high-profit crime reduces the likelihood that the threat of conviction can achieve meaningful deterrence. Therefore, rather than deterrence messages, the awareness raising objective should be to change knowledge, attitudes and practices of smugglers. This objective should be pursued on the basis of a stronger understanding of smugglers' profiles, motivations, and the norms that legitimise what they do, not as a criminal activity but as an economic activity that complies with a given community's sense of justice and morality. Evidence of perceptions and attitudes of communities towards smugglers is also needed. Simplistic messages that portray smugglers as criminals are easily dismissed where smugglers provide valuable services to individuals and communities that States have failed to. In designing campaigns to target smugglers, care must be taken to mitigate potential negative consequences including inadvertent promotion of smuggling services and diversion of migrants into the hands of less scrupulous criminals.

State and private/commercial actors: Actors that come into contact with smuggled migrants en route may be in a position to disrupt smuggling and divert migrants into safe, alternative channels, or simply provide useful and accurate information to them. Among these actors are law enforcement, border and immigration officials, the corruption of whom is a common tactic of smugglers to circumvent border controls. Private transportation actors including overland, shipping and air carriers who are used by smugglers may also encounter migrants. International organisations have implemented projects to raise awareness and build capacity of such actors, for instance, by raising awareness about obligations to rescue persons in distress at sea, by delivering training to airline staff on identifying trafficked victims (and to a much lesser extent, smuggled migrants) and by providing operational training to law enforcers, touching on protection and assistance obligations. The role that these stakeholders can play needs to be better understood to determine how to best engage them. For some actors, resources earmarked for prevention may be more productively invested in measures that aim not to raise awareness, but rather to build capacity to take tangible measures against migrant smuggling and to protect rights of the smuggled migrants they encounter.

Harmonize awareness raising with addressing root causes, drivers and aspirations

That awareness raising efforts must be based in a wider framework of prevention measures is consistent with the *EU Action Plan against Migrant Smuggling (2015-2020)*, which explicitly embeds itself in "the broader context of EU efforts to address the root causes of irregular migration, in cooperation with countries of origin and transit, and prevent the loss of lives caused by smugglers." Similarly, cognisant of the fact that awareness raising campaigns can only be effective where they form part of a wider prevention approach, the Smuggling Protocol calls on States parties to take such efforts "taking into account the socio-

economic realities of migration... in order to combat the root socio-economic causes of the smuggling of migrants, such as poverty and underdevelopment.”

One such effort is the ‘EU Trust Fund for Africa and IOM initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration of Returnees along the Central Mediterranean migration routes’ launched in December 2016. This initiative has an awareness-raising component aiming to provide accurate information to an estimated 200,000 migrants and 2000 communities in the course of its three-year implementation phase. The campaign targets potential migrants, stranded migrants and returnees, to provide reliable information on costs and risks associated with irregular migration, European asylum law and realities of migrating to Europe, safe and legal alternatives, rights and obligations and opportunities for voluntary return and integration. That work could be harnessed to also raise awareness about the risks of migrant smuggling specifically, and be strengthened by broadening target audiences to include specific key influencers in smuggling decisions and prospective smugglers.

As underscored in the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants*, mounting campaigns that shift the culture of migration and attitudes in countries of origin requires increased understanding of the economic, cultural, social, religious and other realities in a given community that cause and drive smuggling. Shifting the prevention lens from smuggling deterrence towards addressing root causes and drivers, requires that resources be diverted from short-term and reactionary awareness raising campaigns into longer-term undertakings. The Netherlands could fill a significant gap in this respect by investing in long-term and large-scale investments that will not yield immediate returns but have as their objective positive and sustainable impact over time in changing migration cultures, shifting attitudes about migrant smuggling and addressing the aspirations that people currently pursue through irregular migration. Again, the point is underlined that messages need to be anchored in a robust evidence base concerning the economic, cultural, social, religious, gender and other factors that contribute to smuggling from a given origin community, to arrive at realistic messages that resonate with key influencers and decision makers, and achieve meaningful social and behavioural change. Social marketing campaigns and models that have been used in health and other sectors to influence social and behavioural change - including the C4D model - could be learnt from and adapted to the specific context of migrant smuggling.

It is essential that awareness-raising campaigns do not overlook the complexities of international migration that may be driven by conflict, violence, environmental issues and other humanitarian crises that make efforts to reduce smuggling irrelevant (or potentially even dangerous, where smuggling offers a route to safety). This reality speaks to the need for campaigns to be embedded within a wider prevention framework not only to address root causes of migration but also humanitarian crises. As root causes have proven to be heavily conflict-driven, the EU’s role in crisis prevention, resolution and management is emphasised for further exploration.⁴

In addressing root causes, it is crucial that delivery of aid is not rejected or questioned as being an instrument to serve European political objectives rather than development needs. Indeed, development aid can be harmful if it is aimed at or perceived to be aimed at stemming migration flows from the countries it is provided to. Measures to address root causes of smuggling will be more widely accepted and trusted if they are underpinned by acceptance of migration as itself a positive driver for development. The 2030 Agenda for

⁴ See: Amanda Gray Meral, *Addressing the external dimension of EU refugee and migration policy: compacts with non-EU states and alternative approaches* (Chatham House Policy Brief, July 2017)

Sustainable Development offers a foundation for grounding this migration-development nexus, and it is hoped that the Global Compact for Migration will complement that framework. Awareness raising campaigns that aim not only to combat migrant smuggling but also incentivise regular migration by complementary programmes to build capacity to meet labour demands in destination countries may be beneficial in this respect.

Calls are widely made for more regular channels to be made available for migrants to enter Europe as key to preventing smuggling. This is an important measure. Consideration could also be given to raising awareness of the regular channels available into other countries. By way of example, it is notable that while many migrants may be aware of risks involved in being smuggled to Europe, they may be unaware of the opportunities to safely and regularly migrate elsewhere. Shifting messaging to emphasise opportunities in countries outside of Europe would be an ambitious component of the external dimensions of EU migrant smuggling prevention policy, but one that resonates with the aim of cooperative, cross-border approaches. Longer term the effectiveness of this approach would be dependent on strategic engagement with countries outside the EU to encourage their expansion of safe and legal migration channels and their commitment to ensuring adequate protection standards for migrants in their jurisdiction.

In summary: Awareness raising campaigns targeting individuals and communities other than migrants are more likely to be effective in achieving behaviour change if they serve protection rather than prevention objectives. Counter-smuggling awareness raising policy, identification of target audiences and design of key messages must be formulated on the basis of robust evidence as to who the key influencers in migrant smuggling decisions are, and what the nature of their influence is. Any efforts undertaken or investments made by the Netherlands and other EU member States to raise awareness as part of counter-smuggling policy must be prepared to commit to long-term strategies that allow messages to be designed and delivered in a way that resonates with their target audiences, and be trusted by them.