

# Strengthening Cross-Border Collaboration: Multi-Agency Simulation-Based Training in Busia, Kenya and Uganda

Évènement

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## Enhancing the Fight Against Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling

On January 31, 2025, CIVIPOL successfully concluded its inaugural Cross-Border Multi-Agency Simulation-Based Training in Busia, Kenya, and Uganda. This ground-breaking initiative brought together key stakeholders from both countries, fostering stronger multi-agency collaboration in investigating and prosecuting human trafficking and migrant smuggling while enhancing mechanisms for identifying and referring victims to assistance.



The training culminated in a joint closing session by Renson Ingonga, CBS, OGW, Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Kenya, and Lady Justice Jane Frances Abodo, Director of Public Prosecutions Uganda. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to implementing the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Investigating and Prosecuting Trafficking in Persons Cases, developed with CIVIPOL's support in BMM, emphasizing the necessity of cross-border coordination and a victim-centred approach.

## A Milestone in Regional Anti-Trafficking Efforts

The Multi-Agency Simulation-Based Training, implemented under the Better Migration Management (BMM) Programme, funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) builds on previous Multi-Agency Simulations carried out by CIVIPOL at country level since 2021 in Kenya, Uganda, Djibouti and Ethiopia.

To enhance the region's ability to combat transnational crimes, for the first time, the simulation took place in two countries simultaneously, allowing police, prosecutors, immigration officers, labour inspectors, and NGO service providers to move across borders, conduct joint investigations, and refer trafficked persons to assistance.

### Key Objectives of the Simulation

- ✓ Strengthening investigation and prosecution capacities in trafficking cases, including in a transnational dimension and with the set-up of Prosecution-guided Joint Investigation Teams.
- ✓ Enhancing victim identification, protection, and referral mechanisms, including operational exchanges and practical referrals across countries.
- ✓ Promoting multi-agency collaboration, with a focus on human rights and trauma-informed approaches.
- ✓ Implementing SOPs on investigating and prosecuting TiP cases and National Referral Mechanism

Guidelines.

- ✓ Fostering international police and judiciary cooperation, including transnational referral procedures for victims.

## Two-Phase Training Structure

### 1. Inception Training Week (January 13 – 17, 2025)

- Participants were introduced to key concepts, including:
- The distinction between Trafficking in Persons (TiP) and Smuggling of Migrants (SoM).
- Legal and policy frameworks, such as the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and the Standard Operating Procedures on Investigating and Prosecuting TiP
- Multi-agency and transnational cooperation in investigating and prosecuting trafficking cases.

This phase set the foundation for the practical exercises in the simulation week.

### 2. Simulation Week (January 27 – 31, 2025)

Participants engaged in real-case scenario simulations across Busia, Kenya and Uganda, assuming their professional roles in multi-agency teams. Key activities included:

- Joint investigations and victim referrals across borders.
- Daily debriefings and analysis of the simulation exercises.
- Applying TiP Investigation and Prosecution SOPs, Referral Guidelines, the draft Guidelines for Labour Inspectors in combating TiP (which CIVIPOL is supporting) and legal frameworks in real-time case handling.
- Strengthening inter-agency collaboration through practical engagement.

This interactive approach reinforced regional cooperation, ensuring that anti-trafficking practitioners are well-equipped to handle cross-border trafficking cases.

## Key Partners

- **Kenya:** Counter Trafficking in Persons (CTiP) Secretariat; Office of the DPP; National Police Service; Directorate of Criminal Investigations; Border Management Secretariat; Labour Officers; Kenya National Commission on Human Rights; Specialized NGOs.
- **Uganda:** Office of the DPP; Uganda Police Force/CID; Coordination Office for Prevention of Trafficking in Persons (COPTIP) – Ministry of Internal Affairs; Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control; Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development; Coalition Against Trafficking in Persons (CATIP-U).
- **International Partners:** INTERPOL and CIVIPOL's EU funded Project Regional Operational Centre in support of the Khartoum Process and AU Horn of Africa Initiative (ROCK Project),

## A Step Forward in Combatting Transnational Crime

This initiative sets a strong foundation for enhanced regional collaboration against human trafficking and migrant smuggling. The commitment by Kenya and Uganda to implement SOPs and reinforce cross-border partnerships marks a pivotal step toward justice, protection, and victim support.

The success of this training underscores the importance of multi-agency coordination, international cooperation, and continued efforts to strengthen legal frameworks in the fight against human trafficking.