

# TECHNOLOGY AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Impact Evaluation Report  
of a Digital Information  
and Awareness Campaign  
for Human Trafficking  
Victim Identification

A Multi-Stakeholder Initiative  
led by Sintrata and Uber



## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report presents the results of an impact study conducted to evaluate the effect of a Digital Information and Awareness Campaign (DIAC) directed at Drivers and Couriers registered in the Uber apps. The principal objective of the digital campaign was to promote the identification of human trafficking victims in the context of cities in Mexico. The report aims to contribute to best practices for addressing and preventing human trafficking through one of the most utilized efforts worldwide – Information and Awareness Campaigns. In doing so, it predominantly focuses on the role that technology and Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives (MSIs) can have in scaling positive change.

## ABOUT SINTRATA

Sintrata is a civil society organization based in Mexico City that works to prevent human trafficking in all its forms and to promote access to justice for victims of sexual and labor exploitation by leveraging data, technology as well as through strategic partnerships. Sintrata was founded in 2012 and has experience supporting the social reintegration of survivors of sexual exploitation, as well as working locally for the protection of at-risk communities. Sintrata is currently dedicated to researching human trafficking regionally to develop best practices, policies, and digital tools to support key actors in the private and public sector in taking evidence-based action against human trafficking.

## ABOUT UBER'S COMMITMENT

Uber, as a technology company that facilitates transportation, is in a powerful position to raise awareness around human trafficking. For this reason, Uber users globally have been learning how to spot the signs of human trafficking and what to do when they suspect someone is in a potentially dangerous situation. In the United States, Uber has been working with ECPAT-USA and Polaris, having signed The Code<sup>1</sup>. In Mexico and Latin America, Uber works with Sintrata and the UNODC, directing reports to the Citizen Council in Mexico (El Consejo Ciudadano de la Ciudad de Mexico) and to Crime Stoppers for other countries in LATAM.

This research was funded by UBER.

The content of this report does not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of UBER.

The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this report reflect the collective judgement of the personnel involved in the advocacy and research teams at SINTRATA. It should not be viewed, or presented as, the individual product of any particular analyst.

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<sup>1</sup> The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.

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We would like to express our gratitude to the Consejo Ciudadano de la Ciudad de México (Citizen Council) for being a key partner in this initiative and for providing information from the Línea Nacional contra la Trata de Personas (National Hotline Against Human Trafficking).

**SINTRATA**

**Uber**







Durante un viaje, un socio conductor registrado en la aplicación de Uber en una ciudad del centro de México observó y escuchó ciertas señales que lo pusieron en alerta: un hombre solicitaba un viaje para trasladar mujeres de características similares a diferentes moteles en la ciudad, bajo una relación de vigilancia y control. Al terminar el viaje, el socio conductor utilizó la aplicación para llamar desde su teléfono móvil a la Línea Nacional contra la Trata de Personas - atendida por el Consejo Ciudadano de la Ciudad de México - y realizó un reporte anónimo de aquello que había atestiguado. A partir de la información proporcionada por ese reporte al Consejo Ciudadano, en agosto de 2019, la Fiscalía General del Estado logró el rescate de tres mujeres, quienes recibieron protección y acceso a un proceso de justicia, como es el derecho de las víctimas de la trata de personas.

## PREFACIO

Ese conductor, es uno de los más de 200,000 socios conductores y repartidores registrados en la aplicación de Uber en México que recibió información en su teléfono móvil sobre cómo identificar y reportar, de forma segura y anónima, la trata de personas. Con ojos en todas partes, la acumulación de reportes de estos ciudadanos que tienen alta movilidad y que conocen las ciudades y zonas donde trabajan, pueden ayudar a nutrir los datos e información que las autoridades necesitan para investigar y perseguir el delito.

La gran mayoría de las víctimas de la trata de personas pasan desapercibidas en lugares en donde podrían ser identificadas. Las campañas de información y concientización han sido uno de los esfuerzos más empleados por organizaciones internacionales, gobiernos e instituciones para hacer visible el delito. Asimismo, en medio del contexto actual del COVID-19, de un proceso de aceleración y democratiza-

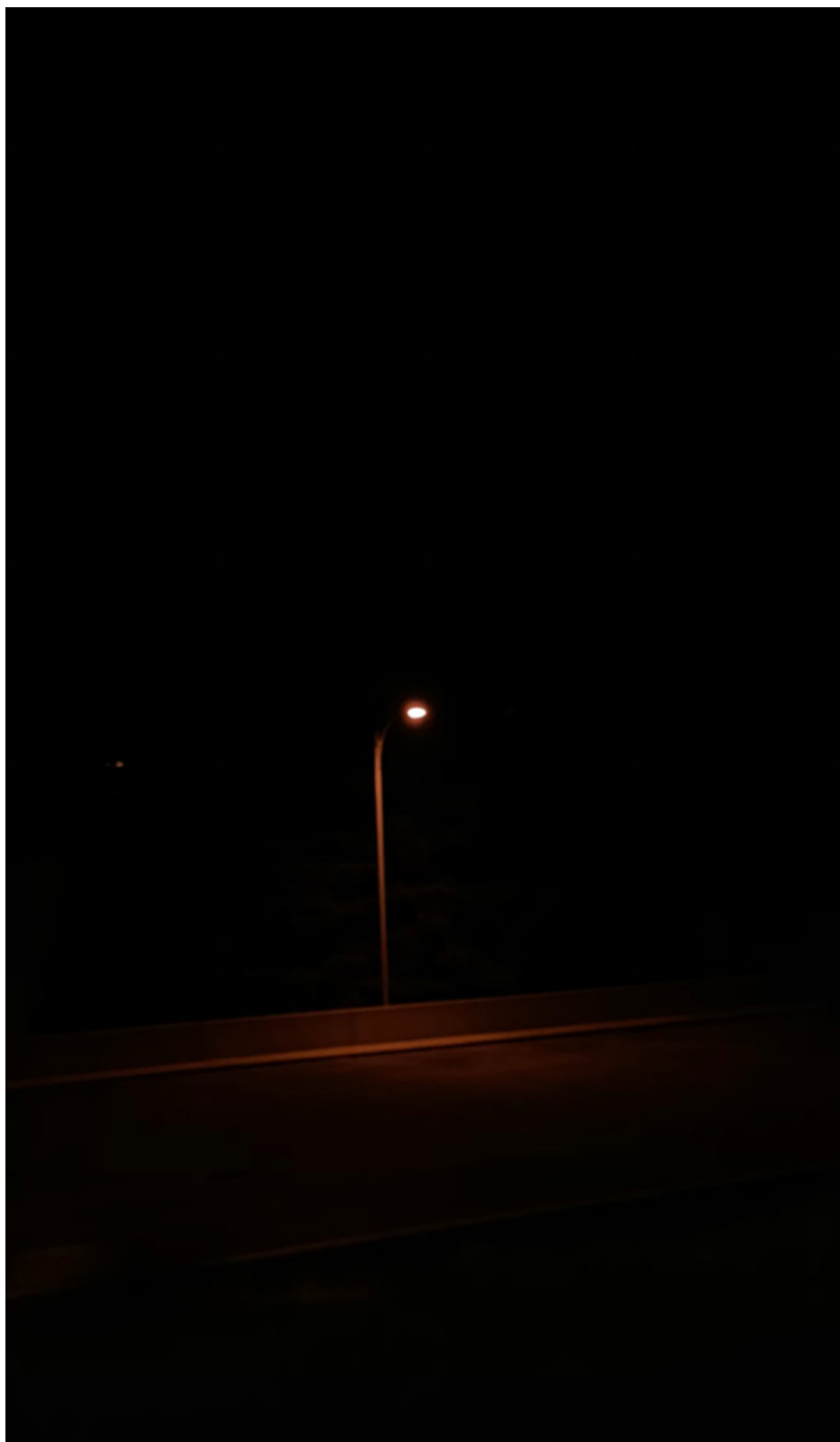
ción tecnológica, comprender cómo la tecnología puede modificar y potenciar estos esfuerzos es aún más pertinente.

En nuestra experiencia como organización de la sociedad civil nos hemos preguntado sobre el impacto de este tipo de estrategias, y sobre todo, cómo podemos hacerlas mejor. Habiendo encontrado muy poca información o evidencia para guiar el diseño de nuestras propias campañas, nos propusimos, con el apoyo invaluable de Uber, evaluar los efectos y el impacto de la campaña digital que realizamos en conjunto. Esperamos que los resultados y buenas prácticas que presentamos en este reporte, contribuyan al fortalecimiento de las acciones de la gran comunidad de actores que trabajan contra este delito.

Los hallazgos de este estudio nos llevan a comprender la importancia y el potencial de las alianzas multisectoriales para fortalecer la percepción de

seguridad y la confianza en las instituciones, uno de los mayores desafíos con los cuales nos enfrentamos en México y en Latinoamérica. Más allá, confirman el rol estratégico del involucramiento y liderazgo del sector privado en la lucha contra esta problemática global. La alianza multisectorial que llevamos a cabo junto con Uber, el Consejo Ciudadano de la Ciudad de México y la Oficina de las Naciones Unidas contra la Droga y el Delito (ONUDD), hizo posible este esfuerzo. Agradecemos infinitamente su voluntad y confianza para emprender junto con nosotras nuevas formas de abordar esta problemática.

En Sintrata buscamos catalizar el potencial de actores clave que tienen un rol único para interrumpir la historia de la trata de personas. Si más empresas como Uber toman acciones estratégicas, creemos que podremos llegar a una forma de prevención sistémica del delito en nuestras ciudades.



## MESSAGE FROM UBER'S CHIEF TRUST AND SECURITY OFFICER

Uber operates in more than 10,000 cities, across 71 countries on 6 continents. As a technology company that connects riders and drivers every day, we have a commitment to the communities we serve to help solve the challenges people face around the globe. One of these challenges is human trafficking.

At Uber, we understand that human trafficking is a global issue that plagues our communities. It knows no borders and affects all forms of transportation across various industries. Throughout my career, I have seen how pervasive human trafficking is in our society and have learned the importance of bringing together both the public and private sector to help fight this crime.

Partnering with Sintrata has been essential in generating trust and showing that we are a company that cares. With Sintrata's guidance, we have been able to educate drivers and couriers about what human trafficking is, how to spot it, and the actions they can take if they suspect someone is being trafficked.

While Uber is not an expert in this field, we have thousands of eyes and ears on the roads at any given time. We understand we are in a unique position and want to do our part by using our vast network. As the results from this study illustrate, drivers and couriers can make a difference simply with their willingness and ability to learn what to look for and how to report suspicious activity. Uber's technology holds the potential, through direct communication, to place crucial information and tools into the hands of drivers and couriers that help empower them to take action.

Through the power of education and this digital information awareness campaign, we have the ability to eliminate the obstacles that prevent drivers and

couriers from reporting—a lack of knowledge, anonymity and concerns for safety. This study shows that when drivers are aware and have the confidence to identify human trafficking, the willingness to report increases. The digital campaign included four key factors that helped increase their knowledge—an animated video, audio spot, blog, and infographic. This unique initiative with Sintrata has proven to be powerful, and we will aim to scale it in other countries.

Uber will join a long list of other private sector companies in taking a stand to combat human trafficking. We are proud to be considered for the Thomson Reuters Stop Slavery Award with Sintrata for the Campaigns category, along with other companies such as Delta Airlines and HSBC. In the United States, we were one of the first to sign on to The Code, a multi-stakeholder initiative created by ECPAT that provides tools and support for companies to prevent sexual exploitation of children and setting standards for best practices.

We know our work is not done; this is just the beginning. This report shows that the more awareness we draw to the issue through education and digital campaigns, the larger the reach we have globally and the better opportunity we have to combat human trafficking.

I want to express my gratitude for the individuals who worked tirelessly on this report. I also want to thank Sintrata for their partnership and playing a leading role in this initiative.



**Matt Olsen**

Chief Trust & Security Officer at Uber





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Human trafficking is a systemic problem that prevails in wide segments of society yet continues to go largely unidentified and under-reported. Estimates suggest that human trafficking affects more than 40 million people worldwide, yet, less than 0.1 percent of estimated victims are identified both in Mexico and globally.

Indeed, most victims trafficked for different forms of exploitation remain unaccounted for and are left behind. The number and type of victims that are identified are a direct reflection of the capacity to identify and protect victims within a specific context and country. This collective capacity to build an ecosystem of resilience to human trafficking needs both the public and private sectors. As the crime becomes more thoroughly documented, we come to understand how human trafficking works as an illegal business that makes use of various systems and services in cities to operate. Companies that have a unique role on account of their position in technology, transport, tourism, and banking – to mention some of the most important sectors in modern-day economy – are essential to disrupting and preventing human trafficking. Their role becomes more evident as operational networks of human trafficking adapt and benefit from the COVID-19 crisis aftermath. By creating the capacity to identify, react and report human trafficking in these systems and services, the business of trafficking will become more difficult to operate and face more risks in the process of moving and exploiting victims.

Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns have a unique ability to create and assemble collective capacity to take action on a social issue and are indispensable to building an ecosystem of resilience to human trafficking. Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns can have an essential impact by mobilizing widespread, strategic populations positioned within key sectors, to contribute to bystander recognition of victims of human trafficking and in time, their access to justice.

## TECHNOLOGY ALLOWS FOR SYSTEMIC IMPACT

New technologies offer possibilities to exponentially scale initiatives while maintaining a local impact. Firstly, digital platforms allow for seamless communication with key populations in issuing a tailored call to action, within the social environments they populate. This makes it possible to reach a target audience, which would otherwise be unattainable due to economic and human resource constraints. Uber's technology allowed for the Digital Information and Awareness Campaign on human trafficking to reach on average 200,000 Drivers and Couriers, spread throughout Mexico. It also allowed for the creation of a mechanism that facilitates reporting – a dedicated button in the Help section within the Uber app, which eases access to the National Hotline Against Human Trafficking – making



a call to action possible through technology that is already widely in use. Subsequently, Uber's digital infrastructure also made it possible to conduct a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) – the gold standard for impact evaluation – also, digitally. Results presented in this report confirmed the pertinence and the positive impact of the Digital Information and Awareness Campaign in developing the willingness and abilities of Drivers and Couriers, as Key Citizens, to report human trafficking, and contributed concrete knowledge to best practices.

## **ENABLED WITH THE RIGHT INFORMATION, DRIVERS AND COURIERS BECOME KEY CITIZENS**

Drivers and Couriers registered in the Uber and Uber Eats apps constitute a strategic group, on account of their high urban mobility and the range of social interactions they have and witness on a daily basis in the cities where they operate, increasing their probability of encountering potential situations of human trafficking. This assumption was supported with more than 90 percent of Drivers and Couriers believing that they are in a key position to help identify victims of human trafficking and that the information from the Digital Campaign is useful to this end. After receiving the Digital Campaign, approximately 15 percent reported believing they may have witnessed a possible human trafficking situation in their daily activity. Drivers and Couriers described encountering more forms of trafficking than anticipated, including the exploitation of minors and women, of indigenous communities and of migrants, in the contexts where they circulate. Their role as key citizens in society, as well as the likelihood of spotting human trafficking, is likely to rise as they become more aware and capable to react.

## **THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVE COMPENSATES FOR STRUCTURAL BARRIERS TO REPORTING**

Reporting through a mechanism backed by a Multi-Stakeholder Initiative (MSI) increased the perception of safety to take action in Drivers and Couriers, and the belief that it could make a difference. This points to the value of MSIs and the role they can play in compensating for structural mistrust of institutions in Mexico. The framework of the MSI permitted a unique collaboration that united the different visions and expertise of Uber and Sintrata. In addition, the National Hotline Against Human Trafficking administered by the Citizen Council served a fundamental role by anonymously gathering data from citizens and coordinating efforts with federal and local law enforcement to reduce impunity for human trafficking crimes. Evidence conveys the importance for hotlines to be anonymous and operated independently from the government. In the same manner, the involvement of NGOs and international organizations – such as the UNODC and Sintrata – garners trust in the populations they serve. Notably, the impact evaluation also revealed that Drivers and Couriers have high levels of trust in Uber and that they are willing to report suspected human trafficking in direct response to Uber's call to action. As a

company, addressing security and social issues such as human trafficking increases the perception of safety in Drivers and Couriers as well as the appreciation of belonging to a responsible community.

## **DID IT WORK?**

Drivers and Couriers have a positive predisposition to reporting – more than 95 percent affirm that they would report a human trafficking situation if they thought they were witnessing it – however, evidence also shows that they share concerns that inhibit actual reporting. Willingness to Report in Drivers and Couriers is comprised of a positive perception of safety while reporting, alongside the ability to both identify and report human trafficking. In fact, Drivers and Couriers assert that they would be more inclined to report if they knew that their report was to be completely anonymous, if they could be more confident in their ability to identify human trafficking situations, and if they were able to report quickly from a safe place.

Evidence from the evaluation confirms that the Digital Information and Awareness Campaign directed at Uber Drivers and Couriers had a significant positive impact in increasing their willingness and abilities to identify and report human trafficking. The Digital Campaign adequately addressed the concerns of Drivers and Couriers. One in every two people who were not willing to report prior to participating in the study changed their opinion after receiving the Digital Campaign. Moreover, the participants that received it consistently performed better on every parameter, compared to those who did not receive the targeted information. For instance, participants who received the Digital Campaign are 15 percent more likely to declare that they would feel safe while reporting. Likewise, on average 22 percent, more Drivers and Couriers now know how to report after receiving the Digital Campaign, and would consult the Uber in-app Help section to do so. Interestingly, statistical analysis revealed that individuals who engaged more with the information experienced the most improvement in their ability to identify and report human trafficking. These highly engaged participants perform on average 20 percent better, knowing where to report and how to react safely, and feeling more confident in their abilities to identify a possible victim of human trafficking.

## **THE DIGITAL INFORMATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN WAS EFFECTIVE AND IS LIKELY TO HAVE A GREATER IMPACT IF TARGETED COMMUNICATION IS REPEATEDLY SENT OUT, AND THE RESPONSES ARE CONTINUOUSLY MONITORED AND EVALUATED**

These results and impact are attributable to one single targeted message received by Drivers and Couriers within the human trafficking Digital Information and Awareness Campaign, conducted by Sintrata and Uber in July 2020. Findings confirm that targeted information sent regularly can progressively influence more substantive or “real” willing-

ness to report, by acknowledging and addressing the concerns and information needs of the strategic populations. This goal can be achieved by monitoring and evaluating the Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns, to continuously tailor targeted information in order to develop the individual and collective capacities in strategic populations, to increase substantive willingness to report as well as actual rates of reporting.

In recent decades, raising awareness through campaigns has been one of the main objectives of most local, international organizations and government agencies working against human trafficking. By presenting evidence in favor of the impact and potential of Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns, we seek to contribute to the antitrafficking movement as well as support other important stakeholders with concrete lessons learned from our experience, in order to strengthen the collective capacity to combat human trafficking. Taking a stand through concrete, smart and strategic action is the way for companies such as Uber to be good partners to the cities in which they operate. A mature articulation of these mechanisms through key sectors and industries can become a way of systemic prevention – disrupting the circulation and exploitation of victims, increasing risk in human trafficking operations, and promoting recourse to justice for victims through increased reporting.





# DEFINITIONS & KEY CONCEPTS

## AI

Ability to Identify

## AR

Ability to Report

## Carbon Card

An Uber in-app push notification, containing a call to action with a link that leads the user to a video, audio, infographic, or blog post with tailored information on identifying and reporting human trafficking.

## Citizen Council

Refers to *El Consejo Ciudadano de la Ciudad de México*, a non-governmental organization that serves as a body for consultation and analysis, which coordinates, with federal and local governments, law enforcement efforts to react to crime. It is responsible for the administration of the *Línea Nacional contra la Trata de Personas* (National Hotline Against Human Trafficking), 800 5533 000.

## DIAC

Digital Information and Awareness Campaign

## Drivers and Couriers

Independent contractors registered in the Uber apps to provide services as drivers and/or couriers to final users in Mexico.

## Hotline

Stands for *Línea Nacional contra la Trata de Personas* (National Hotline Against Human Trafficking - 800 5533 000). Administered by the Citizen Council.

## Human Trafficking

According to the United Nations Trafficking in Persons Protocol (Palermo Protocol): the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the removal of organs.

## IAC

Information and Awareness Campaign

## In-app Help Button

A button (function) in the Uber app Help Section dedicated to inform and redirect Drivers and Couriers to the hotline number to report suspected human trafficking.

## Key Citizens

For the purpose of this report and initiative, Drivers and Couriers are considered to be “Key Citizens”. Their high urban mobility and the range of social interactions they could witness on a daily basis in the cities where they operate increases their probability of encountering potential situations of human trafficking. Giving them “tools” to identify and react safely is a way of focalizing DIAC efforts and impact.

## MSI

Multi-Stakeholder Initiative

## NGO

Non-Governmental Organization

## Palermo Protocol

Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000), from United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

## RCT

Randomized Controlled Trial, considered the gold standard for experimental research.

## WR

Willingness to Report





Human Trafficking is a widely under-identified and undocumented crime. These are mutually reinforcing facts that hinder our capacity not only to measure the full scale of the problem but to identify the intersections with basic services and systems in cities where victims are being extracted, transported, or exploited. Gaining insight into these logistics could help increase victim identification, which would, in turn, amplify our knowledge and capacity to continue allocating resources effectively to this same end. We place information at the center of attention to discuss how it has defined the problem of human trafficking, how it has been administered as a tool for awareness, and the ways in which evidence-based approaches need to evolve.

## BACKGROUND

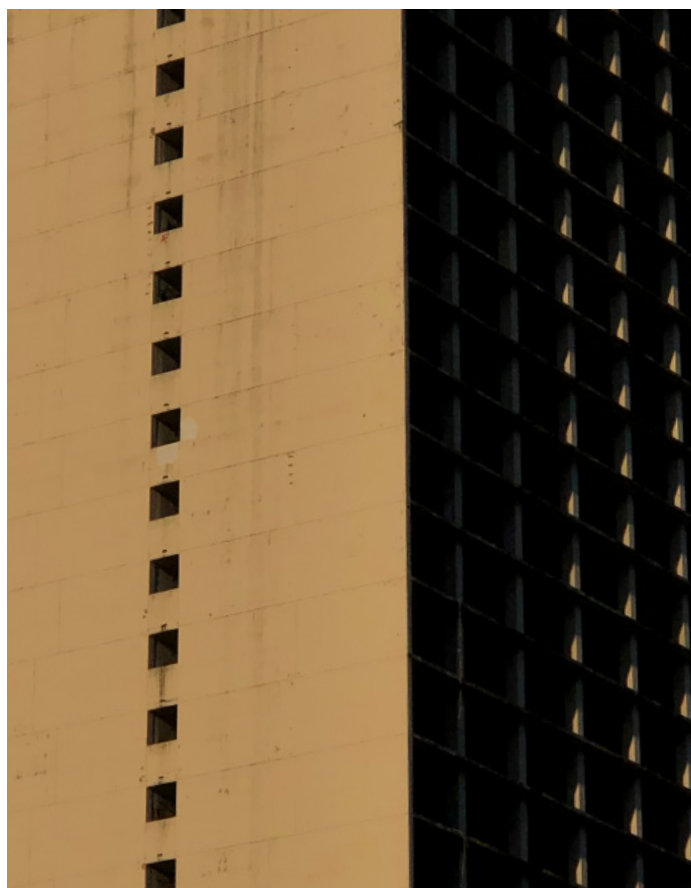


## VICTIM IDENTIFICATION AS A COLLECTIVE CAPACITY

It is estimated that human trafficking affects more than 40 million people worldwide<sup>2</sup> (ILO, 2017). Nevertheless, across 148 countries only 49,032 victims have been detected<sup>3</sup> (UNODC, 2021, p.25). In Mexico, conservative figures estimate that more than 340,000 people are subject to human trafficking (GSI, 2018), from which only 1,310 have been identified by authorities between 2015 and 2018 (UNODC, 2021). Given the hidden nature of the crime, it is very difficult to fully grasp its scale and estimations are still being discussed. However, these numbers suggest that both globally and in Mexico, **less than 0.1 percent of estimated victims are being identified.**

What we do know about human trafficking, according to data collected in the 2020 report of the United Nations Office Against Drug and Crime (UNODC), is that women continue to be disproportionately affected by this crime globally. For every 10 victims detected, on average five are adult women and two are girls. This trend is confirmed throughout the American continent, with a majority of women victims targeted for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Reports from North America – including Mexico – state that from cases detected, 72 percent correspond to sexual exploitation while forced labour represents 22 percent. Other forms of exploitation, such as criminal activity and forced begging, represent the remaining six percent (UNODC, 2021).

One of the findings of the same report shows that there has been a change in the profile of victims detected over the last 15 years. The proportion of adult women victims detected is declining in comparison



<sup>2</sup> In this report we are using the Global Slavery Index (GSI) proposed by the Walk Free Foundation and the International Labour Organization (ILO), as the best statistical approximation to the reality of human trafficking. These estimates are some of the most agreed upon from the international community and NGOs working in the field. The GSI is a product of a “Multiple Systems Estimation, a methodology used to estimate the total (unidentified and

identified) victims of trafficking at country level. This is based on the analysis of the overlap of multiple lists of human trafficking cases provided by different actors in the counter-trafficking field, such as NGOs, law enforcement, other authorities and international organizations” (ILO, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> Data from the year 2018.



to the share of boys and men, who are increasingly more represented in the total number of victims identified. Furthermore, almost all countries have improved the identification of domestic trafficking – that is, of national victims – and in some cases of labour and other forms of exploitation. It must be noted that the reported continuous increase in domestic trafficking, as well as its specific forms (ie, sexual exploitation of children), may be the result of national authorities prioritizing different modalities of exploitation in policy initiatives, as well as greater detection on account of more effective training of law enforcement, service providers and the public to identify victims. (UNODC, 2021, p.58). This is not to say that the exploitation of these persons, on this scale, did not exist before.

These statistics are obtained through analysis of official data and court cases in the public record, as provided by national authorities. Effectively, this characterization does not reveal the extent nor the accurate reality of the problem, with many victims trafficked for the purpose of different forms of exploitation left behind. To bring about access to justice, a number of attached mechanisms have to be in place: from the existence of appropriate national legislation and policies, the cooperation of governmental agencies, and the training of law enforcement, to the involvement of service providers and the public for bystander recognition and reporting.

In 2000, the United Nations adopted the Palermo Protocol within the framework of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime – A ***Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children*** – ratified by 117 countries (UNTOC, 2000). It assigned governments and institutions a responsibility to act within three main policy dimensions: ***prosecution***, ***protection***, and ***prevention***, which came to be known as “the 3Ps framework”. More than 20 years later, ***partnerships*** – a 4th P – have

The number and type of victims that are identified as well as the forms of their exploitation – beyond representing the whole scope of the problem – are a direct reflection of the intentional capacity to identify and protect victims within a specific context and country

4 In 2018, Polaris published a report entitled *Typology of Modern Slavery*, which classified 25 distinct types of human trafficking business models in place in the United States and describes how they intersect with specific systems or industries.

been proposed. Whereas these responsibilities had been mainly attributed to the government, other actors, and more specifically private actors, are uniquely positioned to not only contribute but lead important efforts.

As the documentation of the crime has increased, we have come to understand how human trafficking works as an illegal business that makes use of various infrastructures and services to operate<sup>4</sup>. For example, traffickers take advantage of the tourism infrastructure for the sexual exploitation of children in hotels of all types (ECPAT, 2017). They use transport infrastructure, such as airplanes and buses, to move victims from rural or small town areas to large cities or the more economically prosperous areas (UNODC, 2021). Traffickers use the internet and new technologies for internet-based advertisement of victims; they employ advanced combinations of smartphone apps to recruit and transport victims or transfer money, while operating in multiple locations at the same time. This trend is reported to have increased during the COVID-19 crisis (UNODC, 2021).

Collective Capacity is about building an ecosystem of resilience to human trafficking that includes both the public and private sectors

Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives (MSIs) have been leading some of the most advanced efforts to generate this type of capacity against human trafficking. The standard MSI setting comprises multinational companies, governments, and civil society organizations to address international human rights concerns linked to business activity. Appropriate roles assumed by MSIs include building trust and relationships, learning and knowledge exchange, and experimentation (MSI Integrity, 2020). In the case of the tourism and hospitality sector, for instance, The Code<sup>5</sup> is an MSI started by ECPAT<sup>6</sup> that provides tools and support for companies to prevent the sexual exploitation of children, setting standards for best practices within the sector that did not exist before<sup>7</sup>.

5 The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.

6 ECPAT - End Child Prostitution and Trafficking - a nonprofit international organization.

7 Other examples of MSIs include: Tech Against Trafficking, a coalition of technology companies collaborating with global experts to help eradicate human trafficking using technology; IHG, one of the biggest hotel companies,

has partnered with different NGOs and the International Tourism Partnership to design a program to prevent and react to human trafficking and Modern Slavery across their business; Truckers Against Trafficking provides tools to members of the trucking, bus and energy industries to identify and report human trafficking, more specifically sexual exploitation, by partnering with law enforcement and government agencies to provide valuable information and facilitate the investigation of the crime.

Companies that have a unique role on account of their position in tourism, transport, technology and banking, to mention some of the most important sectors in the modern-day economy, are essential to disrupting and preventing human trafficking. By creating capacities to identify, react and report human trafficking in these systems and services, the business of trafficking will become more difficult to operate and face more risks in the process of moving and exploiting victims. **A mature articulation of these mechanisms through sectors and industries can become a way of systemic prevention.**

## DO DIGITAL INFORMATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS WORK?

Raising awareness has been one of the main objectives of most local, international organizations and government agencies working against human trafficking in the last decades. It responds to the need to recognize human trafficking as a pervasive social issue. Information and Awareness Campaigns (IACs) have been a way for organizations to unlock support, partnerships and political platforms for legislation in many countries<sup>8</sup>. With the goal of prevention, IACs have also been used in disseminating educational campaigns intended to address general and at-risk populations. However, some of the most successful examples can be found in public health approaches that strategically direct information to care professionals, service providers, and specific communities to help identify human trafficking and adopt behaviors of reporting. In turn, this enables access to justice for victims, as part of their right to be identified and protected.

Technology offers new opportunities for these efforts to be scaled. Hence, Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns (DIACs) have facilitated the reach of larger audiences in shorter periods of time. However, there are concerns regarding IACs that are scaled when transferred to the digital space. It is a strategy of intervention that faces

8 In the UK, ECPAT UK and Walk Free Foundation gathered 80,000 citizen signatures and united with government officials to call for better protection measures in the Modern Slavery Bill. A “statutory defence to protect victims from being criminalised, a clause to ensure children without proof of age are treated as children, and a commitment to roll out nation-

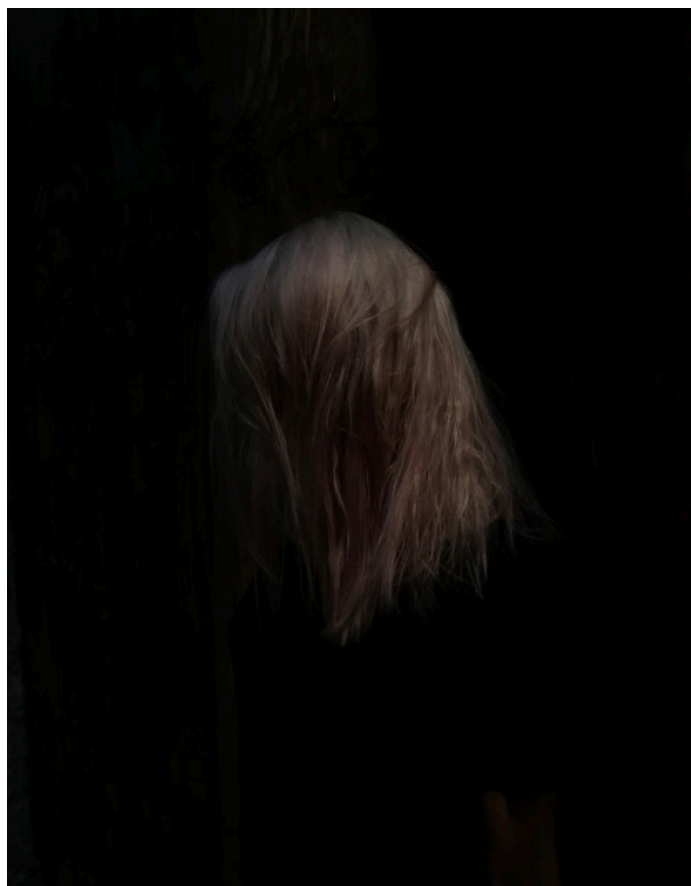
wide a trial ‘advocates’ scheme for child victims of trafficking” were added to the Bill (Ewart-James, 2019, para. 5).

considerable constraints of time, know-how, and specific resources, and is one that is still in the nascent stages of development. Addressing these concerns is necessary in a context where technology is being more recognized as a tool, especially now that the Covid-19 crisis has rapidly accelerated the spread of technology as well as driven larger segments of the population into the digital world.

The 2019 expert panel review, produced by Brown and Yale Universities' specialized Centers for the Study of Slavery, referenced DIAC experiences in different countries and discussed the question if, essentially, they had an impact (Shih & Quirk, 2019). In the review, Matthew Friedman concluded; "while campaigns to raise awareness of human trafficking may have their limitations and flaws, their overall contribution remains indispensable, and they could be made even more effective" (Friedman, 2019).

Among the main concerns that could influence the efficacy of DIACs is the culture of representation of victims in campaigns. Disempowering and violent representations of victims in images and narratives may fail to represent the complex realities of the distinct manifestations of human trafficking. Victims that do not meet the standards of mediatic representations would not be perceived or recognized as victims in the eyes of a witness or even authorities. This fact, along with the focus on the sexual exploitation of women over other modalities of human trafficking, is likely contributing to why victims – or certain types of victims – are not identified; they are not adequately represented.

On the other hand, **failures in targeting have become widespread in efforts that have no clear call to action and therefore do not address any specific populations' need for tailored information.** As has been asserted in a report by Polaris; "If an anti-trafficking group is providing training for hotels, generic 'Human Trafficking 101' training is less effective than training that focuses on the types of trafficking that actually use hotels as part of their business model" (Polaris, 2017, p.5). Resources and materials in circulation tend to be generic and recycled.





There are other, less-explored possibilities that DIACs offer, such as the capability to strategically target populations with tailored information through distinct communication channels. Additionally, there is the capability to generate valuable data and information in the process or after implementation of the DIAC, to understand how preferences and concerns of a target audience could influence their opinion or behavior. However, the impact of most campaigns is barely mentioned or shared publicly. And when it is, mentions rely almost completely on media impressions as the sole reference of impact. There is therefore negligible accumulated knowledge that can guide, shape, and optimize future campaigns, or inform what type of channels, data, and partnerships could have a positive impact.

There is a pressing need to monitor and evaluate DIACs. Even though there are some examples of DIACs that arguably effected change<sup>9</sup>, overall, there is little documented evidence that digital campaigns work.

Doing research in this field has its challenges on account of the fact that there are fewer incentives and resources to mobilize for the evaluation of a campaign than for the campaign itself. A practice of accountability that focuses more on learning would allow efforts to mature and bring longer-term benefits for better resource allocation and higher confidence in impact. Monitoring and evaluation of DIACs has the potential to enable the anti-trafficking movement to start accumulating the necessary knowledge to strengthen collective capacity to identify victims.

It is with this spirit and context in mind that we publish the present report. We proceed by setting an intention to collect and analyze specific data in order to understand the effects, and to identify best practices, in conducting a DIAC within a Multi-Stakeholder Initiative against human trafficking.

9 See MSI Rescue and Restore campaign by Polaris “Look Beneath the Surface”. The campaign increased the hotline response action by 40 percent, along with annual increase in the number of identified victims in the USA (Chon, 2019).



In 2018, Uber and Sintrata partnered to take action against human trafficking in Mexico. We considered independent contractors in Mexico registered in the Uber and Uber Eats apps as drivers and/or couriers (hereafter “Drivers” and “Couriers”) to be “key citizens”, on account of their high urban mobility and the range of interactions they could have and see in cities daily. The objective of the partnership was to provide focalized information to this population, in order to increase their ability and willingness to detect and report human trafficking, throughout Mexico. The Digital Information and Awareness Campaign (henceforth, “Digital Campaign”) was named *Ojos en todas partes*<sup>10</sup> (Eyes Everywhere).

## CONTEXT OF THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVE



<sup>10</sup> *Ojos en todas partes* is a campaign name previously used in other Latin American countries, such as Colombia, by public and private stakeholders in the form of a hashtag. By choosing it we wanted to join the broader effort in the region. It can also be related to successful DIAC experiences in the U.S. such as: “See Something, Say Something”.

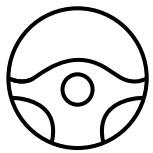
Our theory of change<sup>11</sup> involved articulating a reporting mechanism that would be suitable to this population and that could work at a national level. For this reason, all reports from Drivers and Couriers through the Uber and Uber Eats apps were directed to the National Hotline Against Human Trafficking (henceforth, “Hotline”), administered by the Citizen Council. This anonymous hotline has had a fundamental role to play, as it amasses reports at a national level in order to direct them to corresponding local authorities and law enforcement officials in Mexico. Campaign efforts were also attached to the international UNODC *Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking*, thereby forming a Multi-Stakeholder Initiative (henceforth, “Initiative”).

We considered Drivers and Couriers to be “key citizens”. Other key citizens or frontline responders that have been targeted with IACs for their role in society are, for example, health care workers, or personnel from hotels and airports. These citizens have a higher probability of encountering a potential human trafficking situation than most citizens on a regular basis.

Between 2018 and 2020 the initiative’s efforts consisted of a Digital Campaign that was sent annually to Drivers<sup>12</sup> and Couriers using Uber’s digital platforms: apps, emails and blogs. Sintrata and Uber also conducted in-person information sessions with Drivers and Couriers in cities where Uber operates, which Sintrata chose based on the recognized prevalence of human trafficking. In each city visit, local law-enforcement participated in order to generate additional trust in the process of reporting.

The Digital Campaigns were sent out in 2018, 2019 and 2020 on July 30, the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.

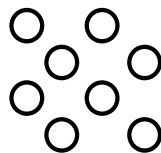
## REACH OF THE INITIATIVE BETWEEN 2018 AND 2020:



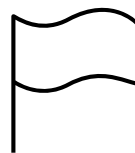
Approximately 200,000<sup>13</sup> Drivers and Couriers received DIACs yearly



51 cities in Mexico reached through DIACs



21 in-person information sessions in 10 cities



Replicated in 3 countries: Guatemala, Panama and Costa Rica

<sup>11</sup> A theory of change is a framework that defines long-term goals and then maps backwards to identify necessary preconditions for social change (Brest, 2010).

<sup>12</sup> In 2018 the initiative was targeted only at Drivers. Couriers were included as a key population in 2019 and 2020.

<sup>13</sup> In 2018, 256,000 Drivers took part in the Digital Campaign; 167,459 Drivers and Couriers in 2019; 122,988 Drivers and Couriers in 2020.









Uber's technological infrastructure allowed digital access to a key citizen population of up to 200,000 Drivers and Couriers that use the Uber apps regularly.

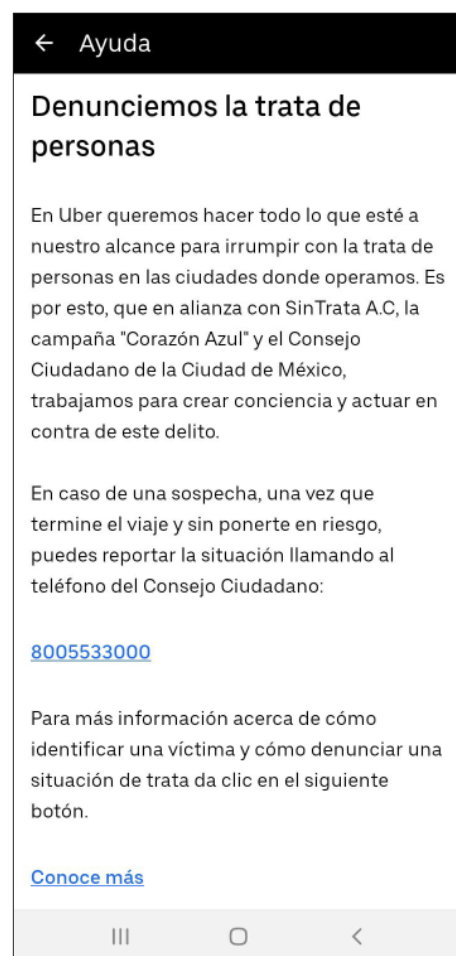
# THE DIGITAL CAMPAIGN

The principles and practices behind the design of the program were:

- To study the key citizen population and design content that would be specifically relevant to their needs and concerns. Indicators, messages and images from the DIAC were targeted to this specific audience;
- To administer a DIAC using Uber's digital standard communication formats that were familiar to Drivers and Couriers. In DIACs, using technologies that are already a part of the life of the population is a best practice to increase adoption<sup>14</sup>;
- To support the call to action by adding an in-app Help Button<sup>15</sup> for reporting human trafficking through the Uber and Uber Eats apps' Help Section (henceforth, "in-app help button"). This function is intended to provide a memorable, easy channel to access the hotline for inquiries and reporting.

The predominant goal of the Digital Campaign was **to increase the Willingness to Report (WR)** of the Drivers and Couriers, not only as individuals but also as a collective. The messaging in the digital campaign focused on creating awareness of how they – as key citizens – could have a unique role to play against human trafficking, through reporting. Then, we aimed to **develop specific action-oriented skills in Drivers and Couriers to increase their Ability to Identify (AI) and Ability to Report (AR) potential situations of human trafficking in a safe manner**. We sought to achieve this through provision of specific messages, including select indicators and instructions to recognize human trafficking, and by increasing familiarity with the hotline.

Indispensable knowledge on how to communicate digitally with this specific population was gained first and foremost through conducting in-person sessions, where Drivers and Couriers expressed their opinions on the initiative. Indicators to be used to recognize human trafficking were selected in consultation with human trafficking survivors and based on best practices utilized by other international organizations.



**Figure 1:** Help section in the Uber app. Title in english: "Help report human trafficking".

<sup>14</sup> Some experts in developing new technology and applications for learning or education online report challenges in making sure it is utilized, since the incentive to utilize is low and not a "regular" part of life of users.

<sup>15</sup> A button in the Uber app Help Section dedicated to inform and redirect Drivers and Couriers to the hotline number in order to report suspected human trafficking.

The Digital Campaign consisted of a personalized call to action that first appeared as an in-app push notification (henceforth, “Carbon Card”), which led the user to the informational content. There were different formats of communicating content employed: an infographic, a blog, an animated video, and an audio spot. Each format conveyed the same information which consisted of a call to action, select indicators and instructions on how to report anonymously and safely.



**Figure 2:** Sample of communication sent in 2018 via the Digital Campaign. Text translation: “With eyes everywhere, together we can interrupt the story of human trafficking in our cities”.

As the initiative was replicated in other countries where Uber operates, the need to assess the effectiveness of the program after two years of its implementation in Mexico became ever more relevant. In 2020, adopting the best practice of monitoring and evaluation, an impact evaluation was formulated as the next goal of the partnership, in order to speak to whether these efforts were relevant, if they were having an impact on target populations and if the practices in place could be improved.







Monitoring and evaluating the impact of DIACs is an important practice that allows not only for specific initiatives to improve but for anti-trafficking efforts to collectively evolve based on evidence.

# THE IMPACT EVALUATION



In order to evaluate the causal impact that the Digital Campaign has had on Drivers and Couriers when it comes to identifying and reporting human trafficking, in collaboration with Uber, Sintrata's research team conducted an Impact Evaluation consisting of a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT). RCTs are considered the gold standard of impact evaluation and are usually expensive and complex to implement. However, Uber's technology allowed us to perform a digital RCT. A unique aspect of this evaluation experience is that both the project (a targeted Digital Campaign with a vast reach) and its evaluation (the RCT) took place digitally. Significant lessons can be learned on the role of technology for the future of these initiatives.

Our aim in this impact evaluation was to assess if DIACs had an impact on positively influencing the opinion or willingness of the population towards reporting the crime of human trafficking<sup>16</sup>. The primary objective was to learn something about the key citizens' behaviour and motivations in this context and to determine whether targeted messaging could develop specific skills in the population, in this case, the Ability to Identify (AI) and Ability to Report (AR) human trafficking. The secondary objective was to understand the type of opportunities technology offers in the context of DIACs, as well as the best practices in information provision that would ensure both the capability to influence individuals' willingness to take action, and improve their ability to do so.

Thanks to Uber's digital infrastructure, we had the unique opportunity to do a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) digitally. RCTs are considered the gold standard for impact evaluation.



<sup>16</sup> Between January 2019 and November 2020, the National Hotline Against Human Trafficking received 4,259 reports and contributed to 11.3 percent of the case files initiated at a national level in 2019, 8 percent in 2020 (CCSJCM, 2020). Since the calls to the hotline are anonymous and it is difficult to track the calls coming specifically from Drivers and Couriers, this report focused on the willingness to report rather than on the actual reports made.



## What is a Randomized Controlled Trial?

RCTs are often referred to as the gold standard of quantitative impact evaluation. They have a long history in the field of medicine but are now widely applied in economics and other social sciences. Notably, Esther Duflo, Abhijit Banerjee and Michael Kremer received the 2019 Nobel Prize in Economics for their research intended to alleviate global poverty, which uses RCTs.

Researchers have used RCTs to investigate a variety of issues related to the effects of information provision. For example, analyzing individuals' perceptions of the returns on education and the effects that accurate information has on schooling decisions. Researchers in the Dominican Republic found that students significantly underestimated the returns of secondary education. Providing them with information about the actual returns led them to complete 0.2 additional years of schooling (Robert, 2010). This shows that low-cost interventions such as providing information can have an important impact on people's lives.

## How do RCTs work?

An RCT aims to evaluate the effect of a **treatment**, that is, a particular intervention provided to a particular group of subjects. The effect is measured along with the variation of a target variable. Researchers would like to know what would have happened if the treatment was not given (**counterfactual**) so that they can compare it with the situation where it **was** given. The RCT provides a strategy to estimate this counterfactual while minimizing potential biases.

The RCT randomly divides subjects into two groups :

The **treated group** that receives the treatment and which under goes the impact of it;

The **control group** that does not receive any treatment (or some times, a placebo)

The control group is then used as a proxy for what would have happened to the treated group (**counterfactual**), had it not received the treatment. We can then evaluate the impact of the treatment as the difference between the two groups. Since, due to randomization, individuals in these groups are believed to be identical in every respect except for the treatment, the observed differences — in terms of health, skills, or other outcomes — can therefore be attributed to the intervention.





To evaluate the impact of the Digital Campaign, we used a mixed-methods approach with an Explanatory Design<sup>17</sup>. First, we conducted a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT), an experiment to generate quantitative evidence through a survey filled out by Drivers and Couriers post Digital Campaign. Results were then complemented by a qualitative analysis of Focus Group discussions.

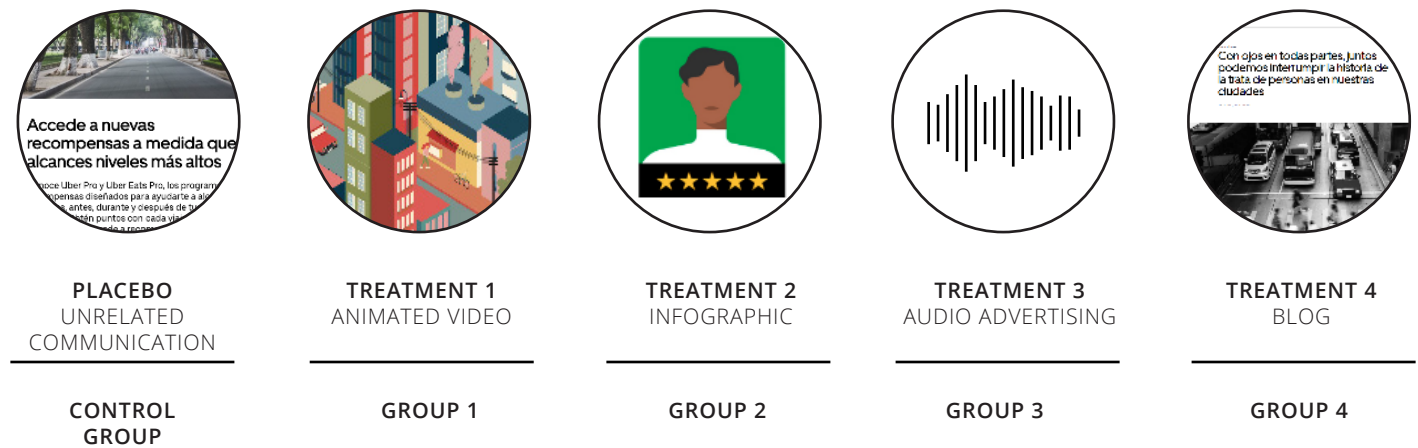
## METHODOLOGY



<sup>17</sup> The Explanatory Design is one of the four major types of Mixed Methods design. It consists of a two-phase mixed methods design, one quantitative phase followed by a qualitative one. The qualitative data helps explain or build upon initial quantitative results (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

## THE RCT: EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

The main objective of our experiment was to measure the impact of the Digital Campaign on Drivers and Couriers. The RCT aimed at evaluating the impact of four Digital Campaign treatments, against a placebo treatment.

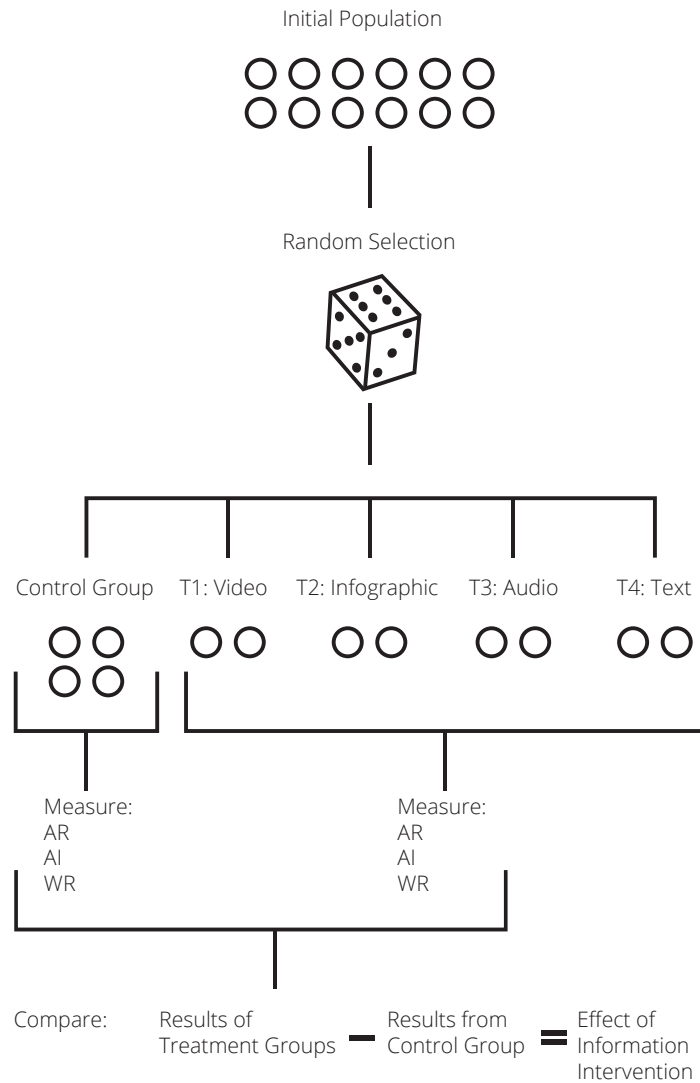


**Figure 3:** Different treatments and groups used for the experiment.

Following the RCT methodology, individuals were randomly assigned to five groups: Control Group received a message not related to human trafficking (placebo communication), Group 1 received Treatment 1 (the video), Group 2 received Treatment 2 (the infographic), Group 3 received Treatment 3 (the audio), Group 4 received Treatment 4 (the blog).

Every treatment was delivered to participants through a two-step engagement process: first, a Carbon Card was sent, which contained a call to action with a link. This link led the participant to the treatment they were assigned (video, audio, infographic, or blog), depending on the group they belonged to.





**Figure 4:** RCT. Measuring the effect of the DIAC.

In the second step of the engagement process, the effect of the treatments was evaluated along with three target variables, key to victim identification<sup>18</sup>: Willingness to Report (WR), Ability to Identify (AI) and Ability to Report (AR). **The experiment's evaluation tool was an on-line survey, sent out after Drivers and Couriers received their respective treatments. It consisted of 16 questions used to measure the differences between treated and non-treated groups in terms of target variables.** The questions were the same for all Drivers and Couriers and designed in accordance with the information provided through the treatments<sup>19</sup>. Analyzing the answers of the different groups to the survey allowed us to assess the impact of the different treatments and compare their effectiveness.

<sup>18</sup> See above "About the Digital Program" for more details.

<sup>19</sup> Refer to Annex B to view the form of the survey used during the experiment.

1



**Aprende las señales y reporta de manera anónima y segura**

Las víctimas están más cerca de lo que pensamos. Aún así solo identificamos al 1%.

Juntos tenemos ojos en todas partes. Si ves algo sospechoso, reporta a la Línea Nacional Contra la Trata de Personas 800-55-33-000. Encuéntralo en el app de Uber en AYUDA, Denunciamos la trata de personas.

Conoce la opinión de un socio conductor después de recibir esta información.

[Conoce la opinión de un socio conductor](#)

2



3



**Ayúdanos a contestar esta encuesta anónima sobre la trata de personas y el reporte ciudadano**

Tu opinión sincera es importante para fortalecer el trabajo contra de la trata de personas.

Esta encuesta es completamente anónima y voluntaria. Son 16 preguntas y te tomará menos de 10 minutos. Los resultados serán utilizados en una investigación de Sintrata, una asociación civil que trabaja contra la trata de personas en México.

[Contesta esta encuesta](#)

**Figure 5:** Illustration of the treatment delivery process. A Carbon Card was sent to the participants with a link that led to the assigned treatment. Two days later, the first survey was sent, also through a Carbon Card.

## EXPERIMENT SAMPLE AND TIMELINE

The treatments were sent to more than 100,000 Drivers and Couriers<sup>20</sup>. **Our evaluation was based on a sample of 2,519 individuals, with around 500 participants per group, providing sufficient statistical power** (see annex C). For this experiment, we restricted ourselves to the Mexico City Area, Monterrey and Guadalajara<sup>21</sup>. From the sample,

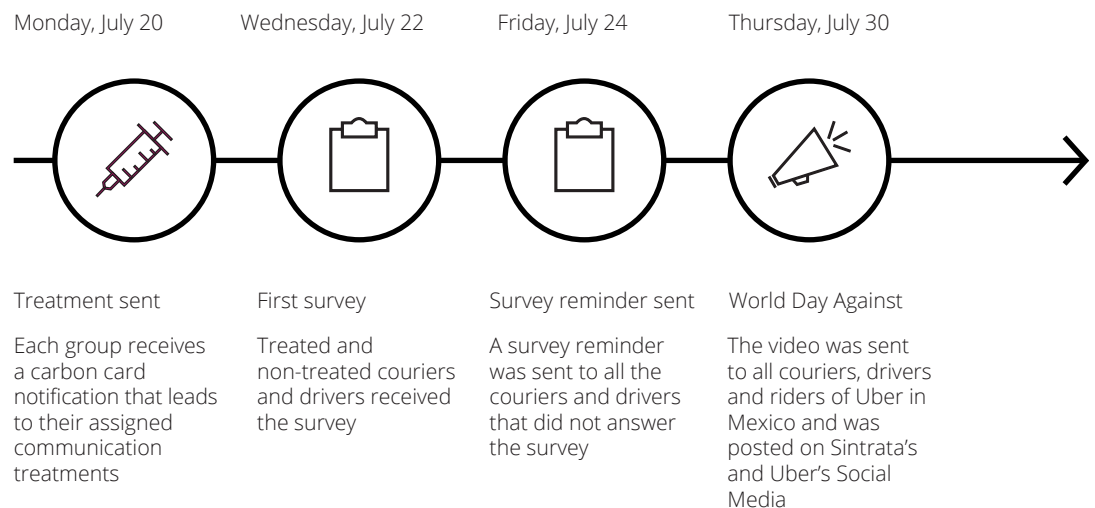
<sup>20</sup> 85,154 individuals received a treatment and the evaluation survey. Our evaluation, however, could only take into account the individuals that had responded to the survey before the World Day Against Human Trafficking since the annual campaign implemented on July 30 would contaminate the studied groups.

<sup>21</sup> These cities allowed us to have similar sociodemographic characteristics for homoge-

neous groups, a requirement of RCT design. Comparability between groups can be seen in Annex D. Other cities were used for a complementary experiment aiming at controlling for spill-over effects. The results from this experiment will contribute to research around reducing spill-over effect and will be analyzed in the future.

roughly 65 percent of individuals operate in the Mexico City Area, 20 percent in Guadalajara and 15 percent in Monterrey. The vast majority of the sample identifies as male (95.2%), the average age is 40-years-old, Drivers represent 79 percent of the Experiment Sample while Couriers represent 21 percent. The sample groups are comparable and have the same composition in terms of gender, age, geographic location, and mix of Drivers and Couriers.

The experiment took place between July 20 to August 5, 2020. On July 20, each group received a Carbon Card that led them to the different communication treatments, depending on the group to which they were randomly assigned. On July 22, the online, self-administered survey was sent through a Carbon Card to the treated and non-treated Drivers and Couriers in each city for the first time. A reminder to respond to the survey was sent on July 24 to the Drivers and Couriers that did not respond the first time. On July 30, which marks the World Day against Trafficking in Persons, the video was sent to all of the Drivers and Couriers that had not been a part of the evaluation and therefore had not received any communication throughout the month of July. On that same day, the Digital Campaign was also published on both Sintrata and Uber's social media.



**Figure 6:** Timeline of the experiment.

In total, 67,897 Drivers and Couriers received one of the treatments and the survey, and 17,257 received the placebo communication and the survey. To reduce the potential spill-over effect of the World Day Against Human Trafficking and the annual campaign implemented on that day,



only the responses from the individuals that answered the survey before July 30 were taken into account in this evaluation. Before July 30, a total of 8,118 Drivers and Couriers received the Treatment 1 (the video), 8,103 the Treatment 2 (the infographic), 9,118 received the Treatment 3 (the audio), 9,109 the Treatment 4 (the blog), and 9,135 a non-human trafficking related communication (the placebo communication).

## THE FOCUS GROUPS

After the implementation of the experiment, the objective of the qualitative research was to corroborate and further explore the results of the survey. A secondary objective was to collect the preferences of the research subjects regarding the content of messages, the format and other details on how to better communicate digitally with this population. We held three focus group sessions with Drivers and Couriers on March 9, 10 and 18, 2021, almost nine months after they had initially received the treatment and participated in the survey.

The sample consisted of 19 participants and was representative of the target and evaluation population in terms of gender, age, geographical location and mix between Drivers and Couriers. As such, participants identified as male, between the ages of 26 and 55. The majority had high-school education with three having attended university. They were mostly from Mexico City and the metropolitan area, followed by Monterrey, Guadalajara and Durango among other cities. Sessions had an average duration of two hours, they were held virtually over Zoom; the tool Mentimeter<sup>22</sup> was used to collect data. Sessions were facilitated by Sintrata and participants received a financial incentive from Uber to attend.

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND EXTERNAL VALIDITY

An outline of the research design and survey was sent for revision to the Human Subjects Research Committee at Columbia University. The experiment was considered as non-human subjects research, there-

<sup>22</sup> Mentimeter is an interactive presentation software that stimulates the participation of digital audiences through interaction in real time and allows for data collection. Participants can answer questions anonymously, view and discuss the results in real time.

fore it was deemed that an official Institutional Review Board (IRB) assessment of proposed research was not necessary. Despite this, the survey and focus group methodology and design were revised by a number of academics, experts in the field as well as Uber's Legal Team to ensure adherence to ethical and legal standards. No Personally Identifiable Information (PII) was collected or stored from the survey or during the focus group discussions, or during the whole evaluation. All participants from the focus groups signed informed consent forms, agreeing to participation and recording.

It is worth noting the general shortcomings to the RCT experimental design in regard to using individual and group perception data, as well as external validity. Involving an element of stakeholder participation in an impact evaluation study is invaluable to generating insights into the impact of Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns, however, there are limitations to the validity of information based on stakeholder perceptions due to the risk of performance bias, which may influence the validity of the data collection and analysis. To address this concern, we conducted research using mixed methods, which corroborated certain insights and offered nuance to the results of the experiment.

Proponents of RCTs also acknowledge external validity as a concern, that is, the extent to which results from an experiment undertaken within a specific environment can be generalized. It is therefore not possible to affirm that the impact of one particular Digital Information and Awareness Campaign could be replicated in the same manner elsewhere. External validity does not reflect uniquely the differences across social, cultural, economic and geographic contexts of the participants, but also distinct particularities of the program. In the case of a Digital Information and Awareness Campaign, the political and socio-economic situation in the partner country, the details of how the program is implemented, and the identity of the organization(s) executing or involved in the MSI, are all factors that could modify the effects. This has implications for what can be expected if the project is scaled up (Olofsgård, 2014).







This section presents the results and evidence of the mixed methods approach. We seek to identify the factors that determine the individuals' Willingness to Report and show how Digital and Information Awareness Campaigns can improve this propensity when Drivers and Couriers perceive themselves as having a positive social role to play in preventing human trafficking. Understanding the role technology holds in enabling participants to self-identify as "key citizens" speaks directly to the design and objective of the overall initiative. Furthermore, we document the ways in which different treatments are effective in increasing the Ability to Identify and Ability to Report a potential human trafficking situation. Six takeaways are presented for how to improve digital communication to enhance collective capacity of the Uber community in preventing human trafficking, within the framework of the multi-stakeholder initiative.

## RESULTS AND IMPACT



## HOW TO READ THE RESULTS

A summary of the main findings appears in the first paragraph of each result section. The evidence and details of both the experiment and the focus group sessions are considered in the main body of the report with the aid of graphs to illustrate the most significant results. Quotes from focus group sessions held in March 2021 are also included. Key terms are outlined as follows:

- **“Treated” or “Received Information”:** Refers to groups or individuals, who during the experiment received the Digital Campaign via video, infographic, audio, or blog containing information about human trafficking.
- **“Control” or “Non-Treated”:** Refers to groups or individuals who did not receive the Digital Campaign on human trafficking, but instead received a *placebo* communication, unrelated to human trafficking. The presence of the control group allows for the evaluation of the Digital Campaign’s impact, between the group that did receive the Digital Campaign and the group that did not.
- **“Participants”:** Refers to all the participants in the Control Group and Treatment Groups, namely all of the Drivers and Couriers who participated in the experiment and answered the survey.
- **Percentages:** All percentages are calculated from the answers provided in response to the survey. A percentage change is calculated as a percentage over a percentage: (% of positive answers in Treatment Groups / % of positive answers in Control Group).
- **Statistical Significance: results are significant at a 0.05 level, unless otherwise stated.**

### **Highly-Engaged Participants<sup>23</sup>**

As part of the quantitative analysis, we identified the subgroup of participants who engaged more with the information treatments, something which is not directly observable. To do so, we assumed that participants who reported having heard about human trafficking through Uber (around 30 percent of the respondents) engaged the most meaningfully with the information. Note that these are the only participants which clearly remembered and associated the communicated information with Uber — suggesting this to be a reasonable assumption. We, therefore, define this subgroup as: “highly engaged participants.”

This exercise aimed to capture the potential difference between individuals who paid close attention to the information and those who did not. To do so we follow the methodology described above: comparing the results of the highly engaged subgroup of treated participants with those of the control group.

The impact of the Digital Campaign was remarkably larger and more consistent among the highly engaged participants in comparison to the other treated participants. Results suggest that populations of key citizens who engage or pay more attention to the received information become more willing to act, as well as improve their ability to identify and report.

<sup>23</sup> This group systematically performed better than other groups. For this reason it was not included as a category, it will be highlighted only when the difference is considered particularly relevant.

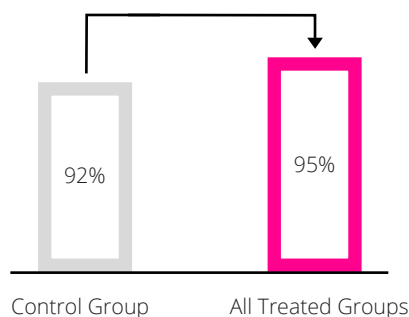
## 01. UBER DRIVERS AND COURIERS AS KEY CITIZENS

More than 90 percent of Drivers and Couriers believe they are in a key position to help identify victims of human trafficking, and that the information from the Digital Campaign is useful to this end. After receiving the Digital Campaign, approximately 15 percent believe they may have witnessed a possible human trafficking situation in their daily activity. Their role as key citizens in society, as well as the likelihood of recognizing human trafficking is likely to rise as they become more aware and capable to do so.

Results from the survey show that more than 90 percent of the respondents believe that “as citizens, reporting could contribute to the identification of victims”. **Moreover, after treatment, out of every seven people that didn't believe that reporting could make a difference, two changed their mind (see figure 7).** This illustrates that communication through the Digital Campaign influenced them to see themselves as key in the process of victim identification, as well as increased their confidence in the outcome of reporting.

**Figure 7:** Question 7 of the survey. Drivers and Couriers feel that reporting can contribute to the identification of victims.

*As citizens, reporting could contribute to more victims of human trafficking and exploitation being identified.*



**Reinforcing this result, over 90 percent of treated and untreated participants believe that receiving information on human trafficking is useful.** Uber's community has positively engaged with the Digital Campaign and is willing to and interested in receiving more information about how they can identify human trafficking. According to focus



group discussions, this is because they consider that they will need this knowledge in the context of their daily activity, whether driving or delivering.

**In fact, on average, 15 percent of the participants<sup>24</sup> that received the Digital Campaign (compared to 12 percent in the control group<sup>25</sup>), believe that they may have witnessed a possible human trafficking situation in the city while using the app. If we compare these results between treatments, we observe that the group that received the video had the highest score (17 percent).**

Likewise, in focus group discussions, Drivers and Couriers, recalled situations that matched experiences shared by other participants. Both of these results suggest that the more Drivers and Couriers know about human trafficking, the more likely they will be to acknowledge it. Their likelihood of recognizing human trafficking could become even more evident to Drivers and Couriers as they become more aware and capable of discerning that, which they witness. “I think that I may have seen human trafficking but I didn’t detect it at the time. Now that I have learned this information, I will be able to see and report”. (Participant, Focus Group 1, March 9, 2021)

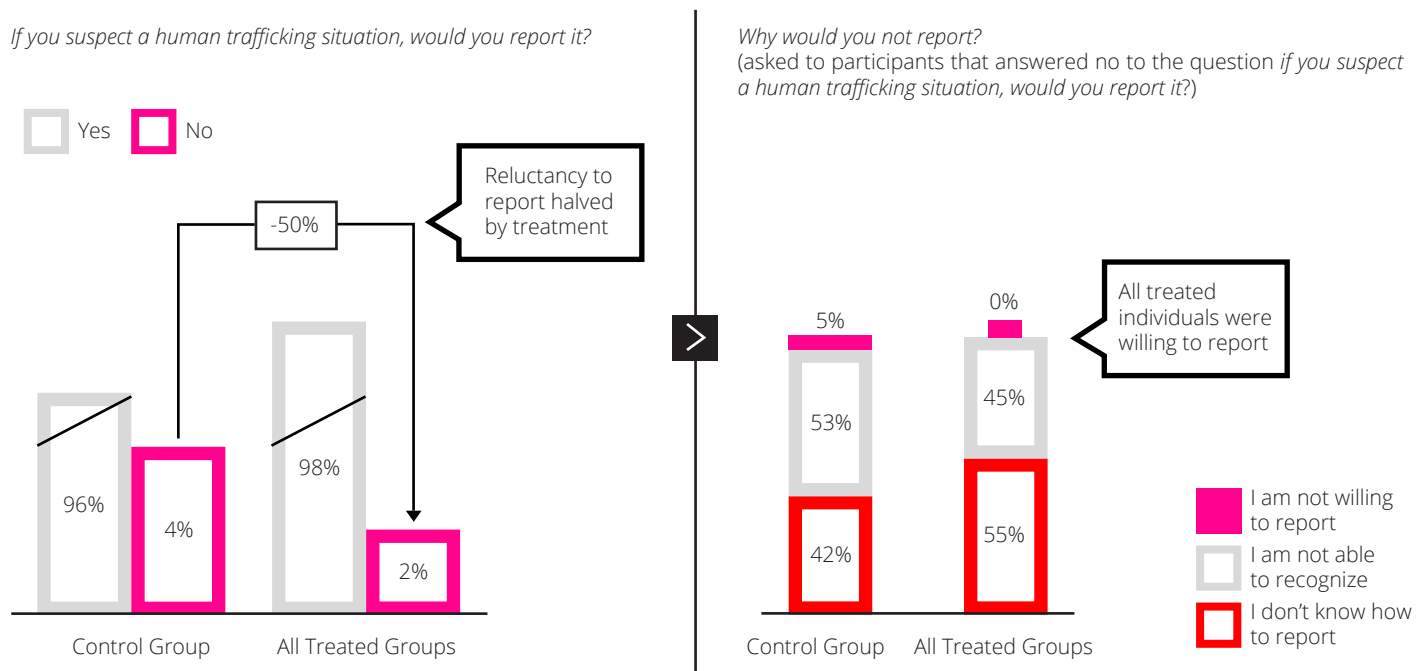
24 If we zoom in on the data, Couriers are the group of participants that is the most convinced of having witnessed a possible human trafficking situation, compared to Drivers. This could mean that Couriers are more exposed to a certain victim’s environment or that a socio-demographic factor or context could be influencing their perception.

25 Difference significant at the 0.15 level.

## 02. THE BASIS OF WILLINGNESS TO REPORT

Willingness to Report is directly dependent on the perception of safety while reporting. It is also influenced by the confidence of participants in their own Ability to Identify human trafficking, and how accessible the mechanism to report is. The degree of Willingness to Report among Drivers and Couriers is very high, and improved further with the Digital Campaign, changing the opinion of one in every two people who were not willing to report, into willing to report after receiving targeted messaging. Targeted information addressing perception of safety and the Drivers and Couriers' abilities to identify and report is likely to translate Willingness to Report into action.

**Figure 8:** Questions 3 and 4 of the survey. Drivers and Couriers that received a treatment are more willing to report than the control group.



Self-declared willingness of Drivers and Couriers to report human trafficking is overall very high. According to the survey, more than 95 percent affirm that they would report a human trafficking situation if they suspected it.

**Participants that received targeted messaging are on average significantly more willing to report, since 50 percent less people in the treated groups chose to not report (see figure 8).** Furthermore, when asked about reasons why they would not report, only two per-

cent answered that they “do not want to report”. Those who stated that they were not willing to report noted it was because they “do not know how to identify” or “how to report” human trafficking. **Remarkably, none of those that received messaging through the campaign answered that “they do not want to report”** (see figure 8). We can thus conclude that the Digital Campaign changed the opinion of one in every two people not willing to report prior to the Digital Campaign, to being willing to report suspected situations of human trafficking. In fact, all of the participants that received the treatment are willing to report.

This same high initial disposition to reporting was seen in the focus group discussions. However, when further discussed, respondents reveal doubts and concerns that would inhibit them from actual reporting. Most important factor is their perception of how safe it is to report. Participants shared negative accounts of locals’ interactions with authorities. In the same vein, according to results of the survey, 66 percent would be more willing to report if they knew that their report is completely anonymous (see figure 9). Subsequently, the second most important factor that would inhibit Drivers and Couriers from reporting is related to their confidence in their Ability to Identify (AI) situations of human trafficking, and being concerned with not being able to discern exploitation when they see it – whether child labour, begging or prostitution.

Going into further detail (see figure 9), **65 percent would be more inclined to report, if they could increase the certainty with which they could identify a human trafficking situation, followed by being able to report quickly from a safe place (52%),** and knowing what will happen with the report (42%). Reacting does not seem necessarily linked to understanding the issue of human trafficking thoroughly (23%), more so, actively reporting is closer tied to understanding the specific indicators of human trafficking and the reporting process better.

Willingness to Report of Drivers and Couriers could therefore be positively influenced by receiving specific messages that address their concerns on safety, information on how to identify human trafficking and the process of reporting. We can also conclude that the mechanism of reporting that was offered to participants – being able to report quickly and anonymously to the hotline from a safe space through the Uber



app – is a factor that contributes to promoting Willingness to Report. Therefore, we understand that substantive Willingness to Report, comprises perception of safety along with an increased confidence in Ability to Identify and Ability to Report, which can be addressed and bolstered with targeted information.

**Figure 9:** Question 5 of the survey. Principal concerns of Drivers and Couriers when reporting a human trafficking situation. The color pink represents safety concerns.

*What would you need to be more inclined to report an human trafficking (HT) situation?*  
Select all that applies:



### 03. INCREASING PERCEPTION OF SAFETY WHILE REPORTING

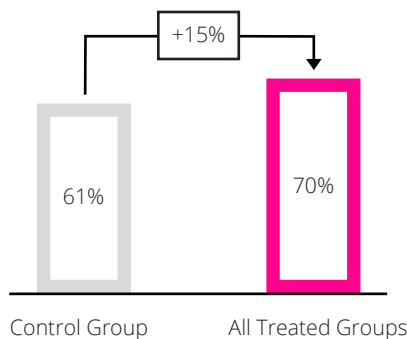
The Digital Campaign alleviated concerns around anonymity and safety, previously identified as the main obstacles to reporting. Participants who received targeted information through the treatments are 15 percent more likely to declare that they feel safe while reporting within the Multi-Stakeholder Initiative (MSI). A Digital Campaign, which unites in a cooperative effort NGOs, private and public sectors, has the potential to increase the perception of safety, making individuals more likely to report.

Perception of safety while reporting is the leading motive that defines Willingness to Report (WR). As shown in figure 9, **66 percent of participants would be more likely to report if they knew their report was completely anonymous, while 55 percent would be more inclined to report if they trusted the authorities to whom they were reporting.**

The Digital Campaign had an important positive impact in addressing safety concerns. **As demonstrated in figure 10, individuals that received the Digital Campaign are 15 percent more likely to feel safe to report, than those that did not receive targeted messaging.**

**Figure 10:** Question 6 of the survey. The DIAC improved the perception of safety while reporting.

*I feel safe reporting*  
(% of respondents answering "yes")



According to focus group discussions and the survey, most recurring concerns about the hotline and reporting relate to:

- Whether the hotline is “really” anonymous and operating independently from the government;
- Perception of safety while reporting;
- What happens after calling the Hotline, as well as during the follow-up process with authorities;
- Ability to track the progress of reports submitted;
- Proper protection and treatment of victims.

Reactions to the National Hotline Against Human Trafficking were favorable. The reporting number (800 55 33 000) inspired trust among the participants because it presented an alternative to official and commonly known helplines. The notion that calls to the hotline were not answered by the police was particularly approved of. Importantly, Drivers and Couriers noted that an initiative from a joint partnership that involved NGOs (Citizen Council and Sintrata), as well as international organizations (UNODC), garnered more trust and support from them. This points to the value of MSIs and the role they can play in compensating for structural mistrust in law enforcement and governmental institutions in México<sup>26</sup>.

*“Even calling 911 makes you worry that they could track your number or name” (Participant, Focus Group 1, March 9, 2021)*

*“If in the Hotline they are really ordinary citizens, I would be willing to report as long as I know that they do their job well” (Participant, Focus Group 2, March 10, 2021)*

**Focus group participants revealed that they are more willing to report and engage in the topic because they trust Uber’s recommendation.** They feel safe to react through the Uber in-app help section.

*“Uber is concerned about safety, while I’m with Uber, I will do it” (Participant, Focus Group 1, March 9, 2021)*

<sup>26</sup> Trust in authorities may depend on local city or state contexts. Responses to the survey suggest that the group of participants who feel the least safe reporting reside in Guadalajara, while participants in Monterrey and Mexico City feel safer. Although this analysis couldn’t be verified statistically from our data, it could offer a partial explanation for the variance in reporting trends across cities, states and countries.



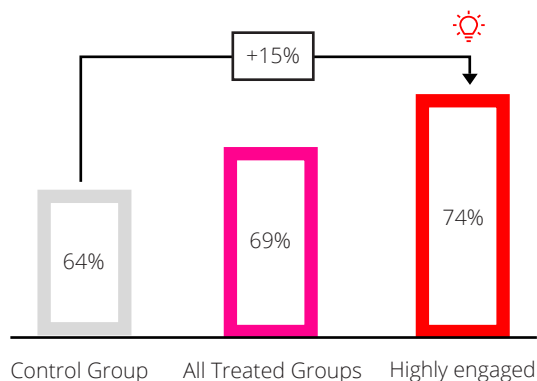
## 04. DEVELOPING THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Ability to Identify a human trafficking situation is the second most quoted concern to reporting. 65 percent of participants said that they would be more Willing to Report if they were certain in their abilities to recognize human trafficking. Our findings show that the ability of Drivers and Couriers to discern indicators needs to be substantially improved, and that higher exposure to this learning objective in the form of story-telling has a positive impact on cultivating Ability to Identify.

The Digital Campaign increased participants' confidence in their Ability to Identify (AI). **While 64 percent of the individuals from the control group stated that they could recognize a human trafficking situation, this increases to 69 percent among treated groups; and even more so, up to 74 percent in the highly-engaged participants group (see figure 11).**

**Figure 11:** Question 12 of the survey. The Ability to identify of Drivers and Couriers increases after receiving and interacting with the treatments.

*I feel like I could recognize a human trafficking situation*



According to the survey, most respondents have the understanding that victims of human trafficking are women, that children in prostitution situations are always victims, and that signs of physical abuse, poor health or neglect are prevalent red flags. However, survey results did not show a significantly better performance of treated groups in comparison with the control group for other less common indicators that were evaluated. On the other hand, analysis of focus group discussions

shows that participants did not remember many specific indicators eight months after the Digital Campaign, but preserved an instinctive feeling for something “not being right” (Participant, Focus Group 1, March 9, 2021) and that if they “see something suspicious, they would make a report” (Participant, Focus Group 2, March 10, 2021).

## RETROSPECTIVE IDENTIFICATION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Another way we measured the Ability to Identify was by asking participants whether they thought that they had already witnessed situations of human trafficking in the past. One of the treatments in particular—the animated video – contained visuals portraying scenarios of human trafficking. Individuals that watched the video were more likely to affirm that they had witnessed human trafficking in the survey – **17 percent of participants in the group that saw the video, in contrast to 13 percent in control group and the 13 percent average observed for all other treatments<sup>27</sup>**. Identification of human trafficking cases in retrospect was also observed during focus group discussions after Drivers and Couriers listened to experiences shared by other participants in which they had suspected human trafficking.

Storytelling and indicators increased the participants’ belief that they may have witnessed not only sexual exploitation, but also labour exploitation, particularly of indigenous communities or children. Some of the specific and less well-known indicators that triggered retrospective identification were:

- Groups of people with similar characteristics living together (age, gender, nationality);
- A relationship of economic exploitation;
- Organized movements of groups of people with similar characteristics: pick-up and drop-offs;
- Little “real” freedom to move or interact “normally”.

27 Difference between video and control is significant at the 0.1 level. Difference between video and other treatments is significant at the 0.1 level. Difference between average treated and control is significant at the 0.15 level.

Communicating examples or scenarios that could resemble human trafficking situations can develop the Ability to Identify. Another actionable conclusion from focus group discussions was that learning from other discussants' experiences, in this case fellow Drivers and Couriers, remarkably triggered the identification in retrospect.

Overall, the Digital Campaign was not effective enough to fundamentally increase the ability to identify human trafficking according to certain criteria, due to the lack of sufficient and adequate exposure to the tailored content. However, we have enough evidence to argue that DIACs could help make invisible victims "visible", including victims exploited in other, less-known modalities of human trafficking, and that increased interaction with this learning objective could further develop identification skills among target audiences.

*"I learned that there are situations that seem common or that go unnoticed but in which we need to be attentive to help" (Participant, Focus Group 2, March 10, 2021).*

*"Before, I did not have a lot of information about human trafficking. After seeing the video, it was clearer to me. I know that for the future" (Participant, Focus Group 2, March 10, 2021)*



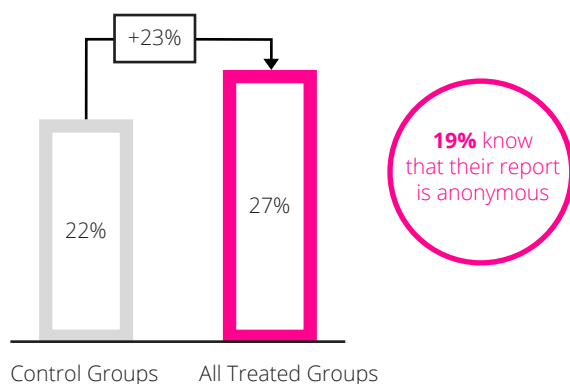
## 05. REMOVING KNOWLEDGE AND ACCESS BARRIERS TO REPORTING

Reaching participants with a targeted Digital Campaign increases the Ability to Report (AR) human trafficking. On average, 22 percent more Drivers and Couriers now know how to report after receiving the Digital Campaign, and would consult the Uber in-app help section to do so, being a more accessible and memorable call to action. However, reporting channels and other essential instructions remain unknown to the majority. Meaningful engagement with information on reporting can remove fundamental barriers to reporting a human trafficking situation.

The Digital Campaign had an impact in creating awareness around both the Hotline and the Uber in-app help button. **Following the Digital Campaign, 22 percent more Drivers and Couriers know that the hotline exists (see figure 12). Likewise, 22 percent more Drivers and Couriers say they would consult the Uber in-app help button in order to report a suspected human trafficking situation (see figure 13). Remarkably, up to 58 percent more participants in the highly-engaged group report they would do the same.** Individuals that meaningfully engaged with information conveyed on reporting are more likely to know how and where to report, having identified a possible human trafficking situation.

**Figure 12:** Questions 10 and 11 of the survey. More Couriers and drivers know about the Hotline after receiving the treatment.

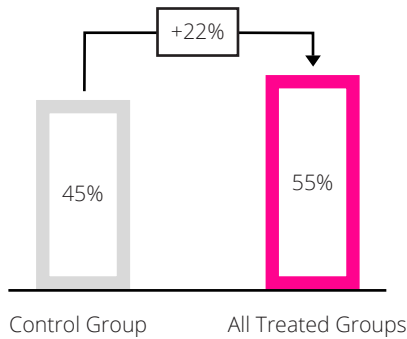
*Percentage of drivers and couriers that know the National Hotline of the Citizen Council.*



**Figure 13:** Question 9 of the survey. More drivers and Couriers remember that they can consult the in-app help button to report after receiving the treatment.

## 22% more treated partners consulting the HELP button when suspecting human trafficking

*To report, I consult the HELP section of the Uber application*  
% of partners selecting the statement



Survey results reveal that nearly all participants have a basic understanding that they should not intervene directly in a suspected human trafficking situation. However, a modest number of participants – around 20 percent – believe they *should* intervene if in doubt and would look to interact with suspected victims before reporting. In the focus groups, several participants expressed the same inclination. It is therefore important to continue providing information on how to react adequately since certain reactions could compromise the safety of both the victim and the witness.


*“I felt a lot of frustration, at that moment, you just want to help. This communication is good because this way we will know what we can and should do in the future” (Participant, Focus Group 1, March 9, 2021).*

Among the highly-engaged group, the increase in Ability to Report is much greater than in other groups, as measured across several criteria: 58 percent more, know *where* to report (by turning to the Uber in-app help section) ; 21 percent more, know *how* to react (observe without intervening) ; and 20 percent more, feel more confident in knowing how to identify a victim.

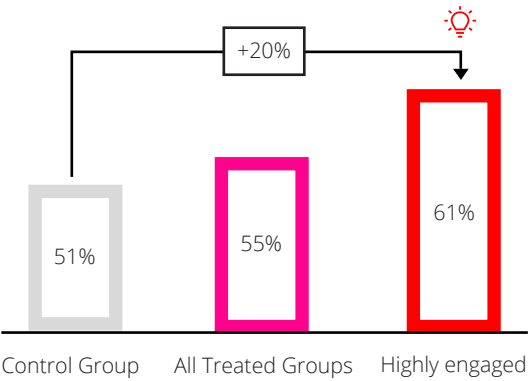
Efforts need to be put in place to bridge a wide gap in knowledge before all Drivers and Couriers are fully aware of the reporting tools and specific instructions related to reacting. Almost 80 percent of all participants remain unaware or uncertain of the existence of the hotline, and an even higher percentage remain oblivious to the fact that it is anonymous, as illustrated in figure 12.

However, results are encouraging and lead us to believe that regular communication could achieve close to full awareness of reporting channels.

Figure 14: Question 8 of the survey.

 **The Highly-Engaged participant group was 20 % more likely to know where to report human trafficking.**

*If you suspect a Human Trafficking situation, do you know where to report?*  
(% of positive answers)



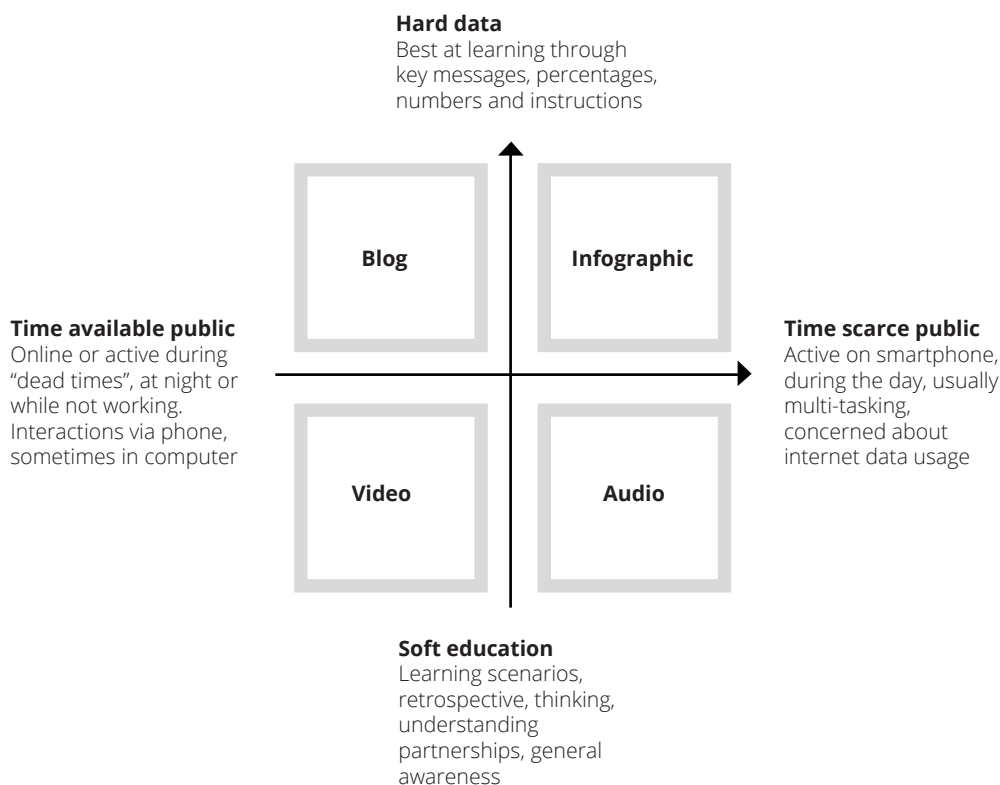


## 06. EFFECTIVE TARGETING OF COMMUNICATION THROUGH DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS

Results of the experiment show us that the format of targeted messaging has an influence on different learning outcomes. Overall, the most effective treatments were the infographic, the audio, as well as the blog. Our analysis suggests that this is partly explained by the particular characteristics of the target populations' habits and preferences linked to consuming digital information.

Drivers and Couriers consume digital content via smartphones, while multitasking, and are concerned about the costs of mobile data. For this reason, we identify Drivers and Couriers to be a "time scarce public" in regard to their digital interaction tendencies, as shown in figure 15. The evidence highlights the importance of understanding the target audiences' habits of consuming digital information.

**Figure 15:** How digital information format and goals meet the needs of the population.



It is very important to note that there was no negative impact observed in response to any of the treatments used throughout the Digital Campaign. However, some treatments were more or less effective depending on the purpose of the learning outcome (figure 16).

The parameters here – high, medium, low – reference impact of the treatments according to format in comparison with each other, in accordance with the results from the evaluation. High Impact means that we are confident that there's an effect and the treatment has the largest positive effect when compared with the control group. Medium Impact means that we are confident that there's a positive effect but the treatment didn't have the largest effect. Low Impact means that we're not confident that the treatment has a positive impact as the evidence is not robust.

**Figure 16:** Effectiveness of each treatment regarding the willingness to report, ability to identify, the ability to report and the perception of safety of Drivers and Couriers according to survey and focus groups results.

	<div> <div>High Impact</div> <div>Medium Impact</div> <div>Low Impact</div> </div>			
	Willigness to report	Ability to Identify	Ability to Report	Perception of Safety
Video				
Audio				
Infographic				
Blog				

Note: Appreciation of impact magnitude is derived from the results of the quantitative survey when significant differences are observed. Otherwise, the direction of the result given by the survey is completed by qualitative data from the focus groups and Sintrata's experience.

## KEY LESSONS LEARNED REGARDING FORMAT OF THE DIGITAL CAMPAIGN:

### THE BLOG

The blog was observed to be the best channel<sup>28</sup> of communication when it came to increasing the participants' Willingness to Report, with more than 98 percent of the respondents stating that they would report a suspected case of human trafficking, having read the blog post. This treatment also contributed to strengthening the perception of safety while reporting: 20 percent more participants in the blog treatment group, in comparison with the control group, reported that they would feel safe when reporting a human trafficking situation. This format permitted the inclusion of examples of the type of information Drivers and Couriers could be asked while reporting, or how to prepare when calling the hotline.

### THE INFOGRAPHIC

The infographic was one of the best formats for the Drivers and Couriers to learn specific information, instructions and hard data. Visual communication through percentages and icons were appropriate for communicating indicators and instructions, contributing both to the reported increase in ability to identify as well as ability to report. A substantial 12 percent more participants in the infographic group, in comparison with the control group, recognized the in-app help function as a channel for reporting, and nine percent more participants that received the infographic remembered that only one percent of human trafficking victims are identified.

### THE ANIMATED VIDEO

The video treatment had the lowest performance in comparison to the other treatments in terms of promoting the willingness to report and the ability to report of Drivers and Couriers. It was, however, the most expensive treatment. Nevertheless, the video

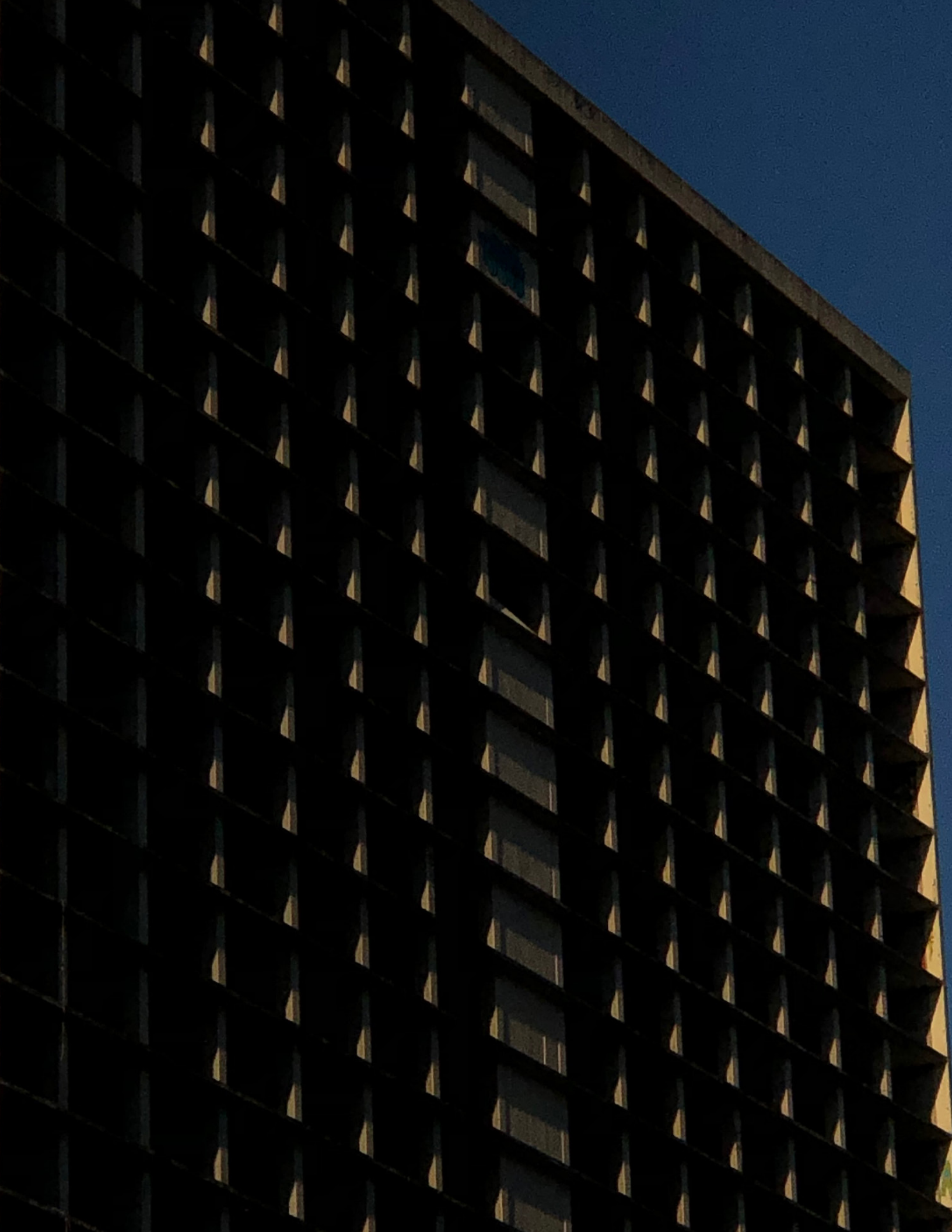
did have a noteworthy impact in triggering retrospective identification of human trafficking with 17 percent<sup>29</sup> of participants that received the video affirming that they may have witnessed human trafficking in the past, compared to 13 percent of the non-treated group. Scenarios or examples of human trafficking conveyed through story-telling in the video triggered a sense of heightened awareness of the problem, as the participants in this group appeared to retain memory of most of the examples mentioned. According to the focus groups, videos, photographs and images are some of the preferred formats of communication. However, the participants in these groups reported that the video was complex to follow and too long, making it hard to watch while going about their normal working day. Some also found the animation not to their taste and had a preference for a more "realistic" rendering of human trafficking scenarios.

### THE AUDIO SPOT

The audio treatment was the most effective in increasing the ability to report. Audio created a sense of general awareness and comprehension of the initiative and the partnership behind it. It allowed for successful story-telling as well as the communication of specific facts and figures. Alongside the infographic, participants were most receptive to the audio format, due to the ease with which they could learn new information while going about their daily activities. The audio was particularly useful in communicating information about the hotline – in the survey conducted, 27 percent of participants in this group (in contrast to 21 percent in the control group) reported knowing that the hotline is administered by the Citizen Council.

28 While the blog has the strongest impact observed among treatments (and the strongest significance), sample size did not allow for statistical differentiation of the treatments.

29 Difference is significant at the 0.1 level.





# CONCLUSIONS AND BEST PRACTICES

## **THE DIGITAL INFORMATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN WAS EFFECTIVE AND IS LIKELY TO HAVE GREATER IMPACT IF TARGETED COMMUNICATION IS REPEATEDLY SENT OUT, AND THE RESPONSES ARE CONTINUOUSLY MONITORED AND EVALUATED**

The present report points to the evidence that the Digital Information and Awareness Campaign directed at Drivers and Couriers produced favorable results as well as a positive impact in increasing their willingness and abilities to identify and report human trafficking. Notably, the participants that received the Digital Campaign consistently performed better on every parameter, compared to those who did not receive the information. Results also show that the Digital Campaign changed the opinion of one in every two people who were not willing to report, into willing to report after receiving information. Important to note, that there was no negative impact or backlash to communications that could be observed.

Statistical analysis showed that individuals who engaged more with the information experienced the largest improvements in developing specific skills – they know better where to report, how to react and feel more confident about reporting – suggesting that increasing interaction with information could exponentially increase actual reporting.

Monitoring and evaluation of the Digital Information and Awareness Campaign points to concrete lessons, specifically in terms of ability to identify and ability to report, where results signal a need for substantial improvement of these capacities.

### **Best Practices:**

- To sustain and develop their impact, Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns should be sent to target audiences regularly. Most effective messaging is short in length and well-synthesized, incorporating story-telling, relatable voices and experiences. Calls to action benefit from including a message from a fellow driver or courier sharing a positive experience of engagement with the in-app reporting mechanism.
- Effective digital communication should take into consideration that distinct digital formats (animated videos, infographics, audio or blog posts) influence different learning objectives in a target audience. Capitalizing on the results of this report

can help strengthen the abilities of Drivers and Couriers to learn specific information on how to identify and report human trafficking.

- International awareness months, such as the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, present unique opportunities and should be used to double-up on efforts to raise awareness. On these dates, initiatives are more likely to have an impact in terms of increasing the rate of reporting to the Hotline (see Annex E).
- Monitor, evaluate and adjust Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns regularly, tailoring content to target audience needs of information. This will improve impact on the Drivers and Couriers' substantive willingness and ability to identify and report human trafficking. It is only through developing these capacities first that we can accomplish an increase in actual reporting and access to justice for victims.

## ENABLED WITH THE RIGHT INFORMATION, DRIVERS AND COURIERS BECOME KEY CITIZENS

Within our theory of change, Drivers and Couriers constitute a strategic group that we acknowledge as “Key Citizens”, on account of their high urban mobility and the range of social interactions they could witness on a daily basis within the social environments they populate. In terms of their role in society, these Key Citizens could be comparable to that of frontline responders to human trafficking since they have a higher probability of encountering a human trafficking situation than regular citizens. This hypothesis was validated in the course of the impact evaluation by the participants themselves, as almost all Drivers and Couriers in the study believe they are indeed in a unique position, are concerned with taking action to prevent human trafficking and want to receive information on the concrete steps to take.

Following the Digital Information and Awareness Campaign, a substantial number of Drivers and Couriers became more aware of the problem and identified cases of suspected human trafficking in retrospect, including more forms of trafficking than anticipated by the report's researchers, sharing recollections of encountering sexual exploitation of minors, indigenous communities and of migrants, as well as forced begging. They also reported increased concern that their own communities may be at risk. Because the messaging was tailored to them, the Drivers and Couriers felt that their concerns around safety during reporting were heard. In turn Drivers and Couriers acknowledged the role they can play in making a difference as Key Citizens – a rhetoric that resonated with and was adopted by many participants observed:

*“We, as Couriers or Drivers, are everywhere all the time and we are thousands. Having eyes everywhere will benefit society against these types of crimes”. (Participant, Focus Group 1, March 9, 2021)*

Repeated Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns that develop Drivers' and Couriers' skills to identify and to report to the Hotline could significantly contribute to the identification of human trafficking as Drivers and Couriers become more aware and vigilant. When the collective capacity of this group can be further translated into substantive willingness to report, we are likely to witness an impact in the prevention of human trafficking in cities.

### **Best Practices:**

- Identify and understand the target population and its sub-groups to be able to empower them in becoming actors for change – that is, Key Citizens. Recognize the cultural, economic, and political contexts as well as habits of the Drivers and Couriers – their daily activity, attention span, use of smartphones – and tailor the Digital Information and Awareness Campaign accordingly.
- Prioritize learning from qualitative methods (such as focus groups) when designing and monitoring Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns: identify the population's concerns regarding taking action, understand what type of exposure they may have to human trafficking in their daily activity and search for any unexpected effects of the Digital Campaign.
- Promote a call to action that involves people as “citizens” to reinforce the positive association with acting in a socially responsible manner and to further cultivate willingness to report. Recognize the importance of the work done by citizens who report in an effort to sustain commitment (UN, n.d.).

## **TECHNOLOGY ALLOWS FOR SYSTEMIC IMPACT, BASED ON EVIDENCE**

This report demonstrates that digital communication technologies offer impressive possibilities to exponentially scale initiatives while maintaining a local impact. Firstly, digital platforms allow for seamless communication with key populations and subgroups in issuing a call to action within the social environments they populate. This allows for reaching a target audience that would otherwise be unattainable in terms of economic and human resources. Uber's technology permitted the initiative to reach on average 200,000 Drivers and Couriers that are spread through the country, on a yearly basis. Remarkably, it also allowed for the evaluation of its impact through a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT), the gold standard of impact evaluation, which is usually expensive and complex to implement. New technologies present endless opportunities for initiatives and policies to evolve through constant monitoring and evaluation. Taking an evidence-based approach, gathering data before, during and after implementation can help decision makers acquire the information and understanding they need to make informed decisions, identify critical objectives and the most valuable and efficient use of resources.

Uber's technological platforms also allowed for the creation of a mechanism that facilitates reporting. Taking action through apps is more common everyday and inherently easier for those routinely using apps in their daily activity. Being able to report using the Uber in-app help button is valued by Drivers and Couriers due to ease of access to key information, namely, the Hotline. This was confirmed in the survey, as in the focus group discussions, when participants recalled knowing about the in-app help button eight months after the Digital Information and Awareness Campaign even if they could not remember the name or number of the Hotline. Consequently, since the Drivers and Couriers already consider reporting to the Hotline to be a best practice, they are very likely to turn to Uber when needing assistance to report, knowing that this feature is available in-app.

### **Best Practices:**

- Identify how digital platforms can be used to engage directly with target audiences. Especially those technologies that are already used by the target populations in their daily life; for example, the Uber apps. Facilitate a user interface that is intuitive and easy to interact with, so there is low friction to their adoption.
- Eliminate any obstacles to reporting by intentionally creating a direct link between digital platform users and the hotline. This will reduce concerns regarding how time consuming and safe reporting is and reinforce the idea that reporting through their mobile phones is a best practice, which can result in increased reporting.
- Harness the possibilities that technology offers to monitor and evaluate digitally quantitative and qualitative data. Evaluating initiatives digitally is time and budget friendly, and allows for continuous monitoring for more effective identification of critical objectives as well as program optimization.

## **THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVE COMPENSATES FOR STRUCTURAL BARRIERS TO REPORTING AND SHOULD BECOME COMMON PRACTICE**

Digital Information and Awareness Campaigns have a unique ability to create and assemble collective capacity to take action towards a social issue. However, the success of such initiatives is determined by the joint action and cooperation of the private sector, the public sector, and NGOs within the framework of a Multi-Stakeholder Initiative. This is partly because, according to evidence, substantive or "real" willingness to report depends heavily on the perception of the safety of Drivers and Couriers. Reporting within the framework of a multi-stakeholder initiative alleviates concerns regarding being directly in touch with authorities in Mexico thanks to the Hotline and the in-app reporting mechanism, but it also increases the belief that reporting could make a difference.

Importantly, the impact evaluation also revealed that the Drivers and Couriers have high levels of trust in Uber, and that they are willing to report suspected human trafficking in



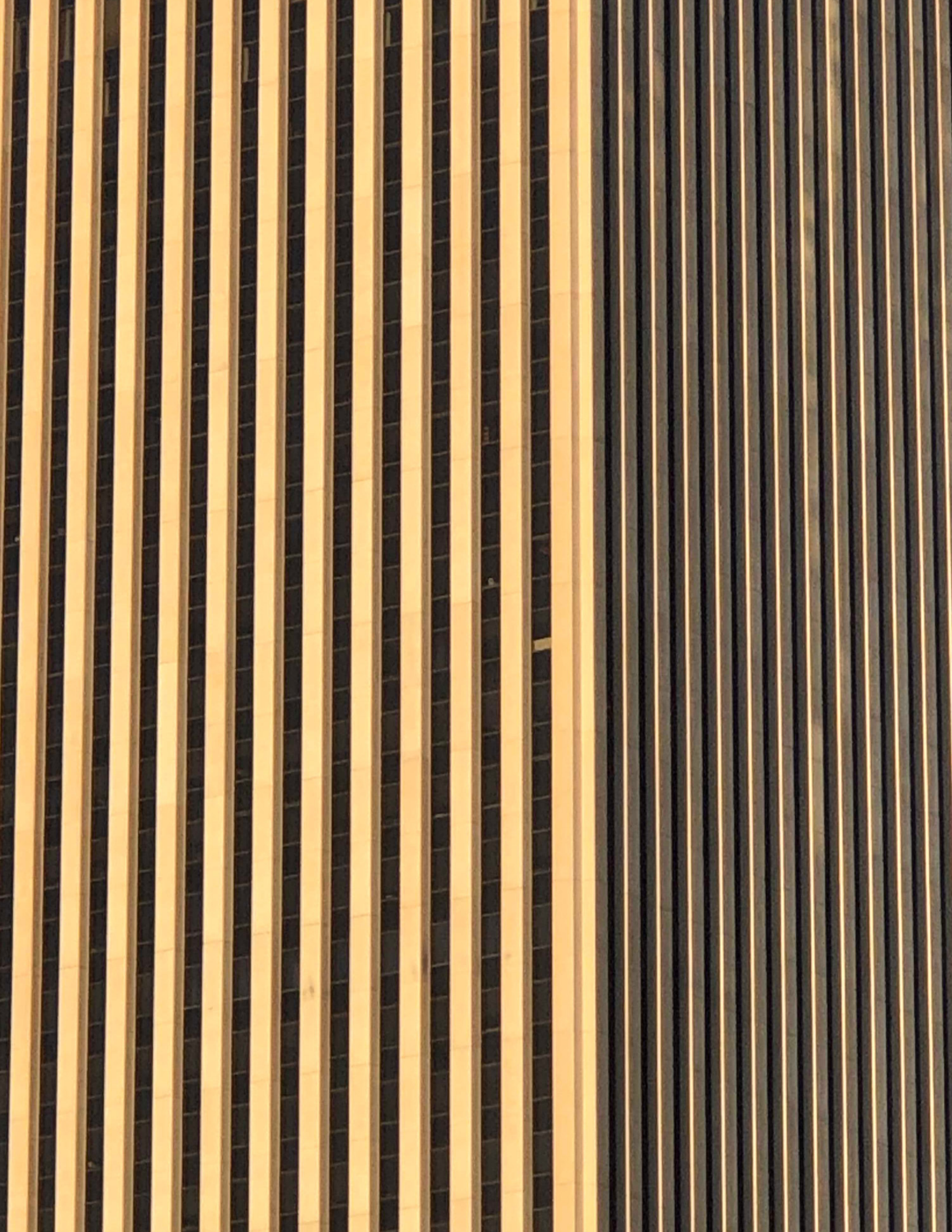
direct response to Uber's call to action, using the recommended instructions. This finding has implications for the private sector, specifically companies that are able to tap the potential of Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives to play their part in preventing human trafficking.

*“Uber also cares about the well-being of our society” (Participant, Focus Group 1, March 9, 2021).*

*“I am thankful for this alliance and that I can receive more information about human trafficking so we can detect these situations and, above all, report them” (Participant, Focus Group 1, March 9, 2021)*

### **Best Practices:**

- Evidence confirms the importance for hotlines to be anonymous and operated independently from the government, to reinforce the perception of safety during the process of reporting among Drivers and Couriers, and the general population.
- Companies in key sectors, such as technology, transportation, hospitality, and finance, amongst others, are encouraged to evaluate their role in preventing human trafficking and seize opportunities to form Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives in collaboration with NGOs and the local authorities.
- When communicating with target audiences, in order to reduce concerns regarding safety, offer practical instructions and information: explain the process of reporting and the extent of involvement of local authorities; dedicate time to present the hotline and partners to the initiative, focusing on the input from NGOs and international organizations.
- Companies addressing security and social issues, such as human trafficking, increase the safety perception of their community by being appreciated as a socially responsible enterprise. Implementing policies, allocating resources and communicating on social and safety issues is welcomed by people and enables sustainable efforts from the private sector towards lasting change.





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# ANNEXES

## ANNEX A. TREATMENT CONTENT AND MESSAGES

- **Call To Action (CTA) Notification** - A Carbon Card (an in-app push notification) containing the CTA and click-through link to the content via one of the treatments, was sent within the Uber app. Main CTA used were:
  - Learn the signals of human trafficking and make an anonymous, safe report
  - You can help report human trafficking in your city
  - Learn what another Driver thinks about reporting human trafficking
- **4 Main Indicators of Human Trafficking:**
  - **Is there a relationship of control?** The person is not free to move or speak. They show distrust, avoid eye contact, and their responses seem rehearsed. Someone appears to be watching or monitoring their movements. There may be signs of physical or mental abuse.
  - **Is there an exploitative relationship?** The person has a fee or debt to pay off. Has no control over money and someone withholds all or parts of income.
  - **Are there many people living together or with an employer?** Do people with similar characteristics appear to live or travel together? Living conditions seem inadequate or small or the residence has abnormal security measures.
  - **Is there a minor involved?** Pay special attention to anyone under the age of 18 who is within an hour and in a location that seems unsuitable for a minor.
- **Key Messages Conveyed to Participants:**
  - Victims of human trafficking are closer than we think. They are in our cities, on busy streets, and they are constantly being moved. Even so, only 1 percent of the victims are identified. Most of the victims are women, and 1 in 3 victims is under the age of 18.
  - Featured only in the infographic and audio advertisement, a "testimony" from a driver: "For me it was very important to know about this issue, because I had a situation in which I think something strange was happening but because I did not have the proper information, I could not do more for the girl. Situations that previously went unnoticed come to mind. Now I know that I can make a safe and anonymous report". - ***Driver partner of the Uber App.***
    - Together, we have eyes everywhere. Your report can make a difference.
    - If you see something that seems strange to you, report anonymously and safely to the National Hotline Against Human Trafficking ran by the Citizen Council 800-55-33-000. You can find the number and more information in your Uber App under » ***Help » Let's Report Human Trafficking.***

## ANNEX B. SURVEY<sup>30</sup>

Figure 17: Image of the original survey.



30 For the original spanish version of the survey, please contact Sintrata's team at [amina@sintrata.org](mailto:amina@sintrata.org).

Figure 18: Survey design.

1. Have you ever heard about human trafficking?
  - Yes
  - No
2. **Only appears if question 1 is answered affirmatively:** I have heard about human trafficking through:
  - News
  - Information from Uber
  - Family/friends
  - At work
  - Other
3. If you suspect of a human trafficking situation, would you report it?:
  - Yes
  - No
4. **Only appears if question 1 is answered negatively:** Why would you not report? Select all statements which apply:
  - I do not feel capable of recognizing a human trafficking situation
  - I do not know how to report this kind of situation
  - I am not willing to report
  - Other
5. What would need to be more inclined to report a human trafficking situation? Select all statements which apply:
  - To understand more about human trafficking
  - To be certain it is a real human trafficking situation

- To have more trust in the authorities of my country
  - To know what will happen when I make my report
  - To be able to make it quickly and from a safe place
  - To know that my report is anonymous
  - To know that I would not have to have contact with the authorities
  - Other
6. I feel safe to make a report if I suspect that a situation may involve human trafficking:  
Disagree                      Somewhat disagree                      Somewhat agree                      Agree
7. As citizens, reporting could contribute to more victims of human trafficking and exploitation being identified  
Disagree                      Somewhat disagree                      Somewhat agree                      Agree
8. If I suspect of a human trafficking situation, I know where to report:  
• Yes  
• No
9. To report a case of human trafficking the best would be to. Select all true statements:  
• Approach the victim and investigate the situation further  
• Pay attention and observe without intervening or alerting anyone  
• Report to the National Hotline Against Human Trafficking  
• Intervene  
• Check the HELP section on Uber's application  
• Report even when I am not 100% positive that it is a case of human trafficking situation
10. Do you know the National Hotline Against Human Trafficking ran by the Citizen Council?  
• Yes  
• No

## ANNEX C. DETAILS OF THE SAMPLE UTILIZED TO MEASURE THE RESULTS

Group	Format / Medium	Sample Size	%
Control	Placebo information	573	23%
Treatment 1	Animated video information	449	18%
Treatment 2	Text communication similar to past communications received in 2018 and 2019	454	18%
Treatment 3	Infographic information	508	20%
Treatment 4	Podcast information	535	21%
Total treated	Any	1946	77%
Total		2519	100%

**Table I:** Participants per treatment accounted for in the analysis. The results were based on a sample of 2,519 participants.

ANNEX D. COMPARABILITY OF THE GROUPS FOR THE RCT EXPERIMENT

Figure 19 a, b and c: Graphical representations of socio-demographic characteristics attesting to the comparability of the groups.

Figure 19 a:

Gender composition of groups

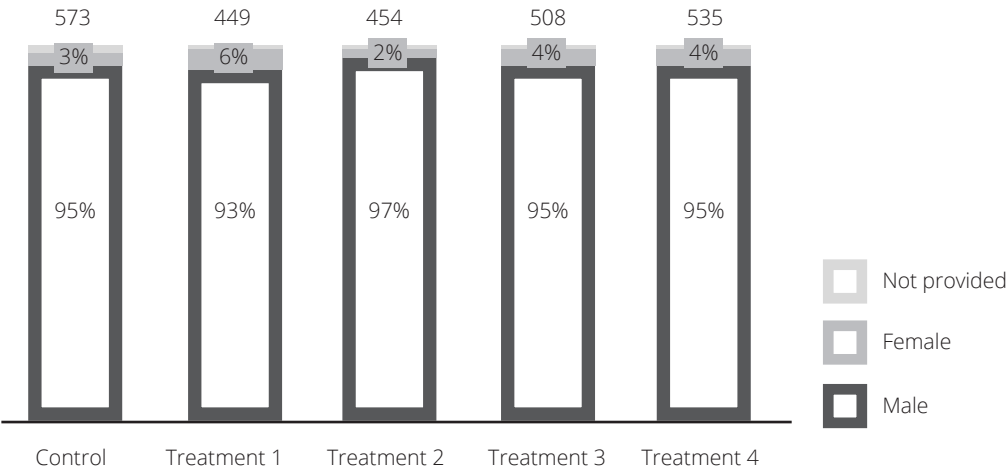
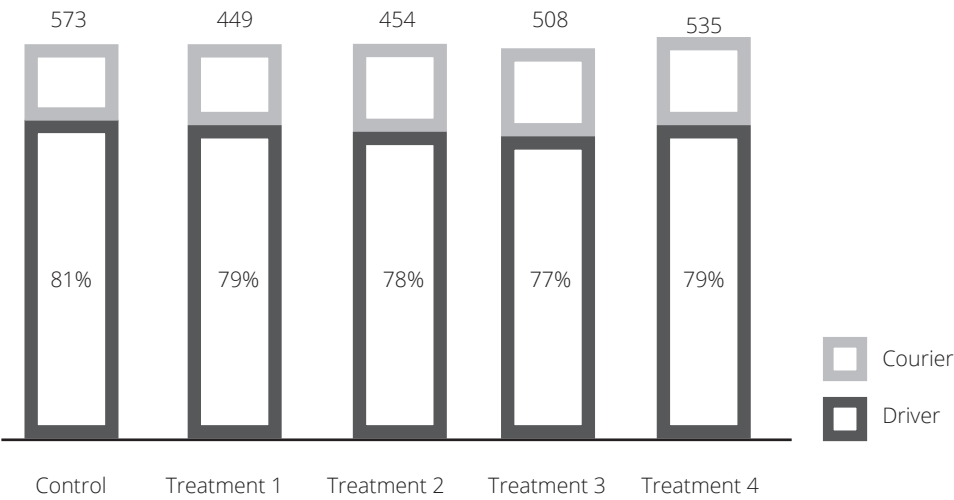


Figure 19 b:

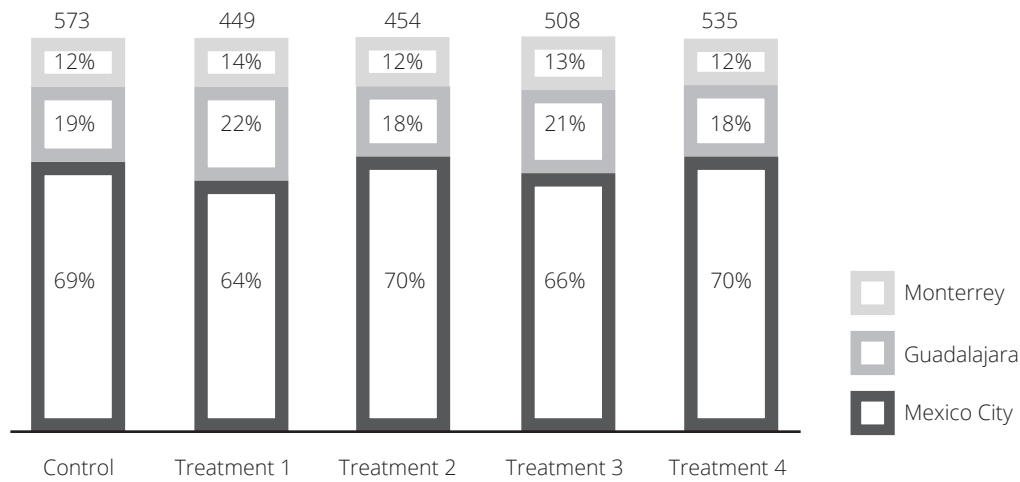
Driver / courier proportions across groups





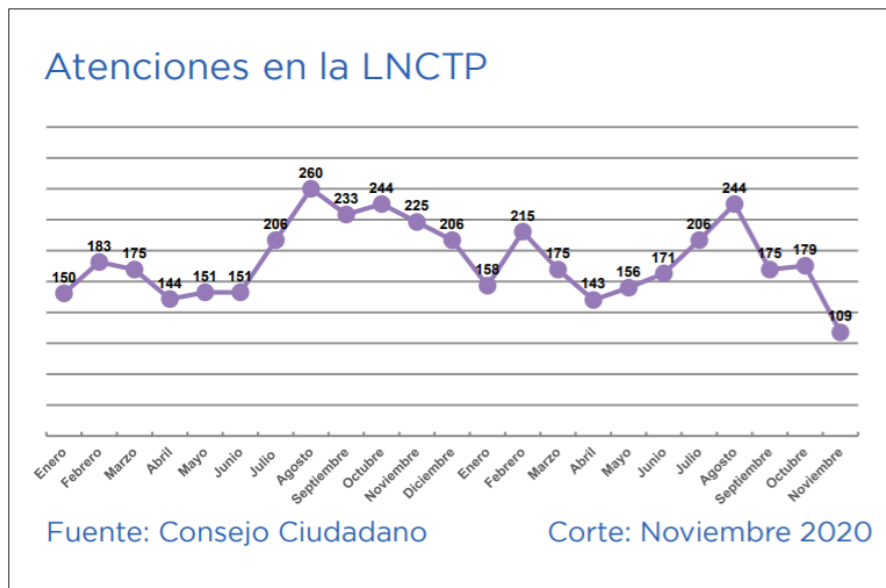
**Figure 19 c:**

Mix of cities across groups



## ANNEX E. NUMBER OF REPORTS RECEIVED BY THE HOTLINE BETWEEN JANUARY 2019 AND NOVEMBER 2020

**Figure 20:** Reports received by the National Hotline Against Human Trafficking administrated by the Citizen Council. As illustrated by the graphic we can see that there is an increase in the reports made to the Hotline during the months of July and August.



## TECHNOLOGY AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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*A Multi-Stakeholder Initiative led by Sintrata and Uber*

Mexico, 2021

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**Uber**





