

Forum:	General Assembly 3 (SOCHUM I)
Issue:	The question of the prevalence of human trafficking in the international community
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Introduction

Over 27.6 million people are currently victims of trafficking worldwide. Individuals of all genders, ages, and backgrounds can be subjected to becoming victims of human trafficking. Human trafficking is a global crime that trades and exploits people for profit. Traffickers use violence, fake promises of proper education, along with job opportunities and fraudulent employment agencies to coerce, deceive, and trick their victims. The act of trafficking humans is defined in the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol as the recruitment, harboring, transfer, or receipt of a person by means through abduction and coercion for purposes of exploitation. The majority of trafficking organizations take advantage of vulnerable or desperate individuals with aspirations of seeking a better life.

A sizable portion - one out of every three - of human trafficking victims are mere children. The Global Report on this heinous crime, released by the UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) in 2022, shows a worrying breakdown of victims. Nearly half are women at 42%, with 18% being underage girls. Males are less but still substantial - 23% are adult men and distressingly, 17% are young boys. Over the past one and a half decades, the number of children entangled in this crime has astonishingly tripled, while the trafficking of boys has outrageously increased five times. Crisis situations often fuel these numbers causing widespread societal distress and anxiety. The situation isn't limited to land. Take a look at Southeast Asian seas - illegal human trafficking of immigrant workers, like in Indonesia, underscores the deep and persistent problem.

In recent conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war, trafficking risks for the displaced populations are elevated. Victims of conflicts are mostly trafficked to countries in Africa along with the Middle East. Further reports on Trafficking in Persons examine court cases showing that female victims are subject to physical or extreme violence at the hands of trafficking at a rate three times higher than males with children being subjected almost twice as often as adults. The reports also detail how war and conflict

offer opportunities for traffickers to exploit more people. A nation's economic status also stands as a contributing factor towards an increasing risk of human trafficking. In developing nations such as Haiti, political corruption and periodic protests fuel the human trafficking industry. Without addressing political problems within the nation, trafficking organizations will continue to operate.

These recent reports show the increase of vulnerable individuals being trafficked due to the inactive role of combating the issue by the international community. The UN along with the donor community needs to support national authorities, especially in developing countries, to respond to trafficking threats, and identify and protect victims to prevent compound exploitation from crises.

Definition of Key Terms

Psychological or emotional vulnerability

The state of mind where one is able to accept emotional or mental pain in various forms. Poverty, violence, and homelessness could be causes for falling prey to human trafficking.

Smuggling

Smuggling for the purpose of human trafficking is the process of moving a person without their consent is termed illegal. Goods such as alcohol, drugs, and arms are smuggled for huge profits. Human trafficking also falls under this category.

Labor Exploitation

Humans trafficked for the purpose of doing forced labor is considered one of the forms of Labor exploitation. Misuse of workers at the workplace for the benefit of the organization and its owner. Some of the ways the workers are being exploited include discrimination, poor working conditions, and unreasonable wages.

Sex Slavery

A condition in which one human is being owned by another and is coerced into working in the sex trade, often consisting of a lot of trafficking activities, such as being manipulated into believing that they are being relocated to another form of employment. Activities of sex slavery can include prostitution, child sex rings, pornography, and sex tourism, where the most popular form is forced prostitution.

Coercion

Human trafficking involves compelling or coercing someone to do something that they are not willing to do through the use of force. It can include serious psychological manipulation and physical harm.

Organ Removal

A surgical process where an organ is removed from a person's body. The huge demand for organs in various organ transplants and the restricted availability of organs have been a prime reason for trafficking people for organ removal.

Trap House

A place, especially abandoned, where illegal drugs are bought, sold, and used. This could also be a place where illegal drugs are manufactured and packed for sale.

Trafficking Survivor

A person who has survived trafficking and has overcome or is in the process of overcoming the trauma of being trafficked. Survivors who are rescued play an important role in protecting others from falling prey to trafficking.

Victim Empowerment

The process of supporting and enabling individuals who have experienced victimization, trauma, or adversity to regain a sense of control, autonomy, and strength in their lives.

Internally Displaced Person (IDP)

Individuals or collectives of people compelled to escape or abandon their homes especially to avoid the effects of armed conflict, widespread violence, human rights violations, or natural or human-made disasters, though not crossed an internationally recognized border. Internally Displaced Persons are at a high risk of being trafficked as they have the least safety at this point. IDPs are more at risk of human trafficking as their family support structures, community bonds, and self-protection mechanisms that used to serve as a buffer to trafficking are now weakened or destroyed.

Background Information

Types of human trafficking

Human trafficking is an extremely organized crime that has become a profitable business for criminals around the world. Traffickers use several schemes like threat, fraud, and deception to lure people into this activity. The following are some ways in which humans are trafficked.

Organ removal

Victims of this category are often from vulnerable groups like the poor, those in debt, the uneducated, and the unemployed. The process of trafficking persons for organ removal primarily

involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, and harboring or receipt. The rise in the number of victims in this category is mainly due to the scarcity of healthy organs. To meet this demand, illegal methods to procure organs in the black market through human traffickers are short. The victims are often not fully informed of the organ removal procedure or its recovery process and in most cases, the consent is acquired through threat or coercion.

Forced labor

Victims of this category are often from the most vulnerable and excluded groups in society, such as children, people in poverty, and unemployed people. They are under the threat of punishment and forced to provide any work or service against their will. This form of human trafficking affects over 27.6 million people worldwide, where 17.3 million people are experiencing forced labor in the private economy, almost 4 million people in state-imposed forced labor, and at least 6 million people in commercial sexual exploitation. This exploitation is most often in societies where the rule of law is weak, where corruption is common, or in industries that have little regulation, such as agriculture, construction, and mining. Although commonly associated with physical violence, there are a variety of ways in which people are forced to work, such as debt bondage, which impacts $\frac{1}{3}$ of all people who are in forced labor.

Vulnerable populations/risk factors of victims of human trafficking

Anybody may be able to become a victim of human trafficking, but most human traffickers look for those who are at their most vulnerable. Through patterns in data, we are able to discover that some people may be at a higher risk than others, some of which are listed below.

Youth

People who are minors are more vulnerable to human trafficking. Within the youth population, unhoused youth and people who have been in foster care or juvenile facilities are even more vulnerable to human trafficking. The youth population is overall vulnerable to human trafficking due to their age, dependency on adults that may be abusive or rejecting of them, and developmental capacity. As a result, they may become more emotionally vulnerable, and thus more prone to human trafficking.

Minorities

Based on sexual/gender identity and people with disabilities, people who are minorities are more likely to be human trafficked because of discrimination. A 2008-2010 review of sex trafficking cases in the US found that 40% were Black, 63% of labor trafficking were Hispanic, and 17% of labor trafficking were Asian.

Victims of unexpected disasters

Unexpected disasters, such as public health crises, war, lack of health and education, and extreme weather events, can leave the victims vulnerable, where phone, mail, or internet communications are disrupted, and contacts are not as able to communicate, meaning that the family support structures and community bonds are weakened and maybe even destroyed, leaving certain individuals isolated or separated from their safe groups, vulnerable to human traffickers.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

INTERPOL

INTERPOL is crucial in the fight against international crime. The international service platform empowers nations to combat criminal activities such as the prevalent issue of human trafficking. The organization focuses on reducing the trafficking of people through promoting unity among different law enforcement bodies. They boost the abilities of their members to address crime by providing training, sharing information, and managing operations. In March 2022, INTERPOL performed Operation Storm Makers which targeted human trafficking and migrant smuggling, sparking a worldwide police alert about high trafficking levels in Southeast Asia. In summary, INTERPOL's work contributes massively to addressing person trafficking globally.

Libya

Migrants in Libya are known to be more vulnerable to being exploited by state and non-state actors in which employers refuse to pay laborers' wages. As of the past three years, over 600,000 migrants along with 40,000 refugees and asylum seekers have traveled to Libya. These migrants become susceptible to sex and labor trafficking across the Mediterranean Sea. Along with the high number of immigrants entering Libya, the IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) in Libya has also been escalating due to the deterioration of security conditions within the nation. The severity of Libya's trafficking issues is subsequently the cause of porous borders and an absence of a stable legal framework.

Cambodia

Tier 3 nations, falling short of basic safeguards against trafficking, feature prominently in global human trafficking data. Cambodia, consistently categorized as a tier 3 nation in numerous human trafficking assessments, fails to meet the fundamental criteria for combating trafficking and shows minimal commitment to reform. While the government has taken certain measures to tackle trafficking, such as prosecuting perpetrators, securing convictions, and conducting investigations, pervasive corruption within the ranks of officials perpetuates the issue. The majority of trafficking incidents identified in

Cambodia pertain to the sexual exploitation of minors who have been abducted and coerced outside the country. Despite its tier 3 status in global trafficking rankings, Cambodia has only managed to uncover a meager 200 cases, underscoring the government's instability in addressing this crucial matter.

Eritrea

Since the onset of the Eritrea-Ethiopia border dispute in 1998, individuals have faced demobilization, enforced exclusion from the country, and compelled labor on remote lands in Eritrea. Threats of torture, incarceration, and reprisals against their families loomed over these individuals. According to accounts, government officials coerced members of the National Service into toiling in mines under the control of the armed forces. Exploitative practices by human traffickers victimize both locals and foreigners in Eritrea. Furthermore, the Eritrean government routinely inflicts harsh penalties on conscripts without recourse, mandates indefinite service, and impedes Eritreans from seeking employment abroad by sealing off their borders.

Haiti

As a nation, Haiti relies heavily on tourism with their biggest form of human trafficking being slavery and prostitution specifically of young girls as young as 12. The main targeted customers for these prostitution services are foreign tourists from Europe seeking pleasure. In addition to prostitution, the ongoing political corruption, periodic protests, and disputes over elections in Haiti make it challenging to adopt new laws in regard to preventing human trafficking. This issue of human trafficking in Haiti is prevalent; however, without addressing the political problems both domestically and internationally, trafficking organizations of individuals will continue to run in Haiti.

China

China has a longstanding record of involvement in the trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of minors. Networks operating in Spain and France have been found to engage in the exploitation of individuals, yielding an estimated sum of \$72,000 per victim. Reports have emerged of forced labor across various sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, and construction within China. The government has implemented legal measures and public awareness initiatives to combat human trafficking. Efforts to support victims and enforce legislation are on the rise, yet the vast geographical and demographic diversity of the nation continues to pose persistent challenges in addressing this complex problem.

UAE (United Arab Emirates)

The UAE's population is nearly 90% composed of foreign workers. As reported in recent years, the UAE has also become a primary destination for Ugandans seeking employment as security guards and domestic workers. Similarly, Pakistani families fell into the trap of empty job promises, medical benefits, and accommodations when entering the UAE. The Kafala sponsorship system in the UAE further restricts the ability of domestic and expatriate workers to leave a position without prior notice. Many of these migrant workers are living in conditions of forced labor such as passport retention and failure to pay wages which raises issues of border security in the UAE.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh is one of the growing organ bazaars for local and international patients who buy from the poor. Brokers working as middlemen are the main traffickers in Bangladesh. They coerce poor citizens into believing organ donation is a Noble act. With a little over 18% of Bangladesh's population being vulnerable to multidimensional poverty, many turn towards organ donations, selling of organs and ova eggs, and forced prostitution to receive minimum wages. Although members from the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM) have taken action to address this poverty in Bangladesh, the country is still far from establishing a secure economy where trafficking and organ donation will no longer be the solutions to this issue.

Iran

Iran, a tier 3 country on the trafficking of persons confronts this issue with no graveness. Officials in Iran continue to perpetrate and condone trafficking crimes with impunity both within the borders and overseas and do not report law enforcement efforts to address these crimes. The government of Iran further coerces children and adults to fight for Iranian-led militias operating in Syria along with other regions that recruit child soldiers. Not only does the government exploit children for military purposes but also continues to deceptively recruit Afghan men to fight in militias operating in Syria with promises of

residency in Iran; however, the Afghans were all being deported back to Afghanistan after their work was complete.

Sri Lanka

Traffickers in Sri Lanka prey on individuals from diverse backgrounds and age groups, with a particular focus on targeting LGBTQ+ people. The exploitation of victims has seen a disturbing shift towards the utilization of social media for deceptive recruitment by traffickers. Moreover, the socioeconomic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the surge in cyber sex crimes, magnifying the vulnerability of low-income individuals to sex trafficking. The global community witnesses a significant influx of migrant workers falling prey to trafficking, often burdened by overwhelming debts. Notably, workers in Gulf countries frequently endure the confiscation of crucial identification documents such as passports and work permits by their employers, effectively confining them. This coercive practice stands as a glaring indicator of human trafficking.

Indonesia

In 2022, numerous organizations like the BP2MI hotline received almost 2,000 grievances from Indonesian overseas employees. Of these complaints, 60 situations were considered to be human trafficking cases, and over 1,200 demonstrated signs of trafficking. The Indonesian administration has implemented measures to decrease exploitation. They have centered their efforts on avoiding trafficking in the Mediterranean Sea by educating government representatives and pivotal stakeholders. However, public prosecutors frequently employ the 2017 migrant laborer legislation to indict trafficking offenses, as it necessitates less proof to be presented in Indonesian courts. This law has helped authorities to more easily investigate and prosecute trafficking networks that take advantage of vulnerable workers.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1999	The United Nations allowed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) to avoid human trafficking, especially against women and children.
2000	The United Nations made its first global report "Global Report on Trafficking in Persons" about human trafficking; this report increased awareness and coordinated efforts to inform people about human trafficking.
2010	The United Nations began a global plan "United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons" of action to combat trafficking, urging other countries to help out in addressing human trafficking.

2013	The United Nations included specific targets related to human trafficking in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as Goal 8 and Goal 16.
2015	The International Labour Organisation (ILO) ratified a new protocol to address forced labor and modern slavery to combat human trafficking.
2019	The United States enacted the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) to provide support for survivors.
2021	The European Union launched the Anti-Trafficking Strategy to protect human trafficking and support victims.
2022	The United Nations held a meeting on human trafficking to discuss challenges, progress, and future strategies for human trafficking.
2023	The United Nations Human Rights Council established a rapporteur on human trafficking.

Relevant UN Resolutions and Treaties

- Adopted by the Security Council at its 9429th meeting, 29 September 2023 (**S/RES/2698**): **This UN resolution addresses all of the actions of human trafficking.**
- Effective implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 25 September 2015 (**10/3**): **This UN resolution prevents, suppresses, and punishes Human Trafficking.**
- Trafficking in women and girls, 2 February 2017 (**A/RES/71/167**): **This UN resolution addresses information about human trafficking, especially women, and children.**
- Adopted by the Security Council at its 8111th meeting, 21 November 2017 (**S/RES/2388**): **This UN resolution addresses the forms of transnational organized crimes which includes trafficking in persons**
- Strengthening and promoting effective measures and international cooperation on organ donation and transplantation to prevent and combat trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal and trafficking in human organs, 4 August 2017 (**A/71/L.80**): **This UN resolution addresses actions to prevent human trafficking**
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, 18th December 1990 (**A/RES/45/158**): **This UN resolution ensures the rights of migrant workers are provided on ethical grounds**

Possible Solutions

Strict Legal Frameworks and Prosecution. Strict legal frameworks can involve the creation or enhancement of laws that explicitly prohibit all aspects of human trafficking, while also entailing providing law enforcement agencies with tools, training, and resources to effectively investigate and prosecute cases. They act as a deterrent by clearly defining human trafficking as a criminal offense, and by having prosecution efforts that ensure traffickers face the consequences for their actions, they provide justice for their victims. Some notable examples may include the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 (USA), the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, and the 2015 Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ASEAN). Although acting as a deterrent against human trafficking, it will be difficult to achieve consistency in legal penalties and definitions due to varying legal systems. There may also be insufficient resources for judicial processes and law enforcement, further limiting the effectiveness of the implementation of strict legal frameworks. Moreover, traffickers may make it difficult for witnesses and victims to testify by employing intimidation tactics.

Re-evaluate and strengthen Border Security regulations. Border Security protects borders from the transmission of illegal contraband, weapons, drugs, and people. Securing borders is essential to national sovereignty and homeland security. Without well-fortified Border Securities, nations become prone to corruption and illegal activities. Many developing nations tackle the issue of economic recession which leads citizens to consider alternatives of earning profits through illegal activities such as human trafficking. The rise of inflation and unemployment rates after the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a drastic escalation in the trafficking of persons scale. Although root causes of human trafficking will always be present, controlling trafficking within nations along with limiting outside traffickers from entering will reduce the chances of individuals being exploited and trafficked. Through looking back and re-evaluating Border Security regulations along with strengthening Border Security forces, traffickers will no longer be capable of smuggling their victims across borders.

Create awareness about the possible ways humans, especially children and women can be trafficked. Creating awareness about this issue involves distributing information to communities, schools, and vulnerable groups about how the traffickers may use different tactics to manipulate victims of human trafficking. Educational programs through schools, online platforms, and community centers can be created, taking this issue to an even wider audience. The overall campaign should highlight signs of potential trafficking, provide resources to support, and encourage further reporting on this issue. However, these widespread awareness campaigns will require financial resources, trained personnel, and logistic support, further straining what might already be limited budgets. In addition, these programs may not have the widespread reach that one may hope, as rural or isolated communities may not have complete access to these awareness programs, and we therefore need different strategies to be able to reach those populations.

Questions for Further Research

What roles do cultural norms play in fueling human trafficking in the international community?

How can law enforcement along with legal systems be strengthened to protect victims of trafficking?

In what ways do governmental corruption and poverty affect the rates of human trafficking?

Are there nations that need more support than others in addressing the issue? How will they be assisted differently?

Which international organizations should be prioritized in regards to trafficking?

What are the root causes of human trafficking and how will these causes be alleviated?

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