



Human Trafficking



An Industry Hidden in Plain Sight

There is a reality that is dark, and it is staring us in the face. Nonetheless, we persevere in our efforts to close our eyes and look away, because that reality is scary, and it is overwhelming.

But no more. No more can we ignore the pervasive and deeply disturbing growth of the human trafficking industry. Misinformation and disinformation have conflated and thrown a shroud of confusion over the situation, brilliantly leaving the world at odds as to how to handle this modern slavery. Additionally, this confusion allows for the buying and selling of human beings to be accomplished in plain sight. The more extreme the stories, the harder it is to believe, therefore allowing for anything and everything to happen.

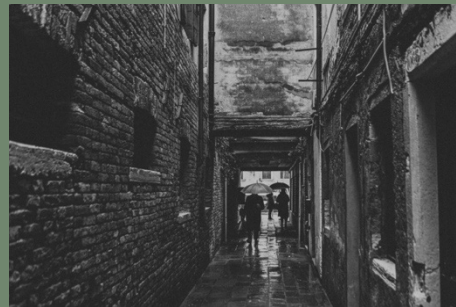
The purpose of this manual is to provide concrete data and statistics that can allow its reader to feel more informed and confident as to how we can eliminate the heinous act we call human trafficking, one family at a time.

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What is Human Trafficking?



With 50 million people calculated to be in some form of modern-day slavery, it's important we know what exactly that means. A unified concept on what "human trafficking" means internationally is imperative for a unified approach on how to stop it. We accept the definition provided by the United Nations :

“Human trafficking involves the recruitments, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of individuals. This is achieved through exploitative means such as force, coercion, fraud, or deception.”

Forms of Trafficking:

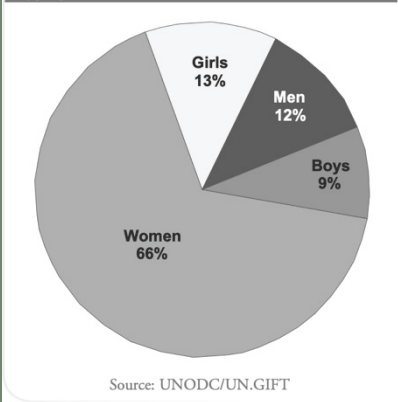
- Sexual Exploitation
- Forced Labour
- Forced Marriage
- Child Soldiers
- Organ Removal

In a report from the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2022, they cited at least 27.6 million people being in forced labour of some kind, with 6.3 million of that number being in forced commercial sexual labour, and of that number, 1.7 million were projected to be children.

On the other hand, a report released by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime revealed that 79% of human trafficking involved sexual exploitation, and around the globe, 20% of all the trafficking victims are children. They stated, “However, in some parts of Africa and the Mekong region, children are the majority (up to 100% in parts of West Africa).” Another source reports the percentage of children being trafficked is actually 27%. For this reason, we state that it is within the 20-30% range.



Profile of victims identified by State authorities in 61 countries where information was collected, aggregated for 2006



Let’s divide and conquer these different forms of trafficking to eliminate any confusion:

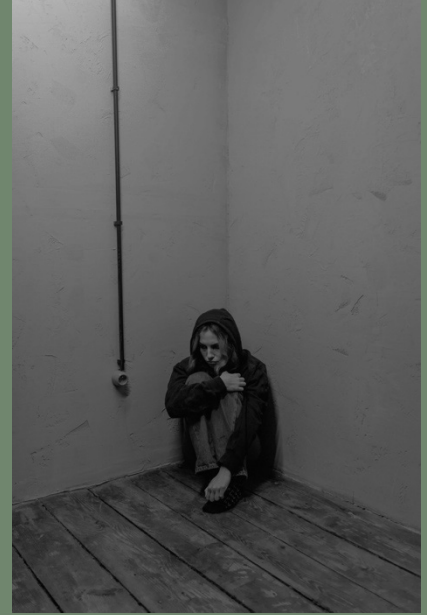
Sex Trafficking: Arguably the most deviant and darkest form of trafficking, an individual is often pimped out by his or her trafficker with the goal of performing sexual ‘tricks’ and receiving some form of payment that is then given to the trafficker. This can happen in tourist hotspots such as hotels and resorts. Additional common locations for sex trafficking are massage parlours, salons, nightclubs, and more recently, online platforms. Primary targets are women and girls, but men and boys are well represented.

Forced Labour: Holding second place as the most common form of human trafficking (18%), labour trafficking is less reported and less visible to the eyes of those who know to watch. Therefore, it is possible labour slavery could account for a higher percentage in all trafficking victims. One reason for this can be the fact that many East Asian countries and Latin American countries only recognize sexual exploitation as trafficking. The ILO gives the international legal definition, “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily.”

Forced Marriage: There is some debate as to the legitimization of forced marriage as a form of trafficking. Internationally, the criteria to be considered trafficking are: an act, using prohibited means such as coercion or fraud, all for an exploitive purpose. We contend with the argument that forced marriage fulfills all three requirements. Often forced marriage happens through abuse, manipulation, threats, and/or deception by a family member or others. Also used synonymously are the terms “child marriage” and “early marriage”, as both happen before the age of eighteen and therefore before the age of consent. Usage of any form of devious means to acquire an individual’s agreement to a marriage is not agreement at all. It is very common that other forms of trafficking will overlap forced marriage, such as domestic service and sexual exploitation.

Child Soldiers: One of the rarer forms of trafficking, children are often recruited to engage in conflict. In reality, they do so much more than just that. Often, they are also utilized to serve as domestic servants, guards, messengers. The children that are girls are often additionally subjected to gender-based violence. The numbers are estimated to be at 105,000 but this number is actually believed to be much higher.

Organ Removal: Sharing a much smaller percentage of the number of victims, organ removal, or organ harvesting, makes up for its relative rareness through its ghastly and brutal nature. Through force, fraud, or deception, individuals are exploited for their organs. Most commonly this is done due to the shortage of organs for ethical transplants. Less than 10% of the global demand for necessary transplants are being met, therefore organ harvesting is a lucrative industry for those on the black market. This industry makes anywhere between \$840 million and \$1.7 billion annually. The organ most harvested are kidneys. In some countries though, such as Malawi, Chad, and Liberia, they are harvested for ritual killings.



— The Effects of Human Trafficking —

It should astound us that there are more people trapped in slavery today than there has ever been at any point in human history. This never-before-seen rate of human trafficking naturally has vast consequences on society at large as well as the individual.

The Individual: Victims face mental, emotional, and physical issues from the crime imposed on them. A few include:

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy
- Malnourishment and dental problems
- Infections and mutilations
- Injuries sustained from harsh working conditions
- Untreated diseases
- Substance abuse problems
- Chronic pain
- Humiliation, depression, hopelessness, and anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

The Society: If society's individuals are hurting, this will in turn hurt society as a whole. Ways society can be affected:

- Border control, police, prosecution, courts, legal aid, and prison costs
- Traffickers often engage in tax evasion and money-laundering
- Slows economic growth
- Disrupts transition to market economy
- Profits from human trafficking potentially fund political parties and corrupt politicians and lessen trust in democratic institutions
- Breakdown of the family unit and human rights
- Stigmatized victims often return to criminal activity and do not contribute meaningfully to society

Signs of a Potential Victim

How does someone get caught up in the trafficking industry? Here are some common ways that traffickers recruit their victims:



Employment



Love



Friendship



Transportation



Housing



Other forms of support

It is important to remember that this can happen to anyone. Traffickers do not care about your race, your age, or your gender. They do care about those who are in vulnerable situations, such as a broken or poverty-stricken home. They care about natural disasters wreaking havoc on stability within a country. They care about political conflict causing chaos. They care about young adults with a weak social safety net.

Due to the rapid development of technology, traffickers are becoming more cunning in their methods. Technology has enabled their operations to run smoother and the recruitment of victims easier than ever before by being able to remotely identify their location. Lately though, the use of [artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#) has been more common in recruitment.

A tool for combatting this would be to implement digital identification strategies. On the plus side, many have great hopes for AI to be a great tool in fighting our global trafficking problem. It's ability to identify patterns and fraud can be revolutionary in protecting the vulnerable.

Signs of a Victim

Fortunately, there are tell-tale signs that can help signal to a person that someone might be a victim of human trafficking. Here are a few:



Living with employer



Unable to speak with person alone



Employer holds ID documents



Fearful or submissive



Multiple people in small space



Answers appear to be scripted



Signs of physical abuse



Paid very little or not at all

Additional questions you can ask yourself are: Has the person been deprived of basic necessities like food and water? Do they have little to no personal possessions? Are they free to contact friends and family? Does he or she work excessive hours or unusual ones?

Also, keep in mind that if the victim is under 18 and engaged in some form of prostitution, they are automatically considered to be trafficked.

Common Myths Surrounding Trafficking

“Trafficking victims are always moved to a different location.”

False. Victims can be trafficked in a single location and not be moved once.

“Traffickers are always strangers.”

False. Most often the case is that your trafficker is someone you know. A family member, a close friend, or an intimate partner. Of trafficking cases 44% were perpetrated by family members and 39% by a romantic interest.

“Victims are held physically captive and unable to physically leave.”

False. Traffickers employ mental and emotional manipulation to convince their victims to stay “of their own free will”. Other times, a trafficker will withhold important documentation or create a situation where the victim is economically dependent.

“Traffickers are always men.”

False. Women can share just as much of the blame, and account for more than a third of traffickers in several countries. Often, the victims go on to become the perpetrator.

“Human trafficking only affects the poor communities.”

False. Trafficking can occur in any neighborhood that has massage parlours, salons, or motels.

“Victims should and will ask for help if they need it.”

False. Victims are very commonly groomed to believe that their situation is normal. Sometimes they genuinely believe that their captor “loves” them. Other times, they are too ashamed to reach out for help.



Does Sex Work Encourage Sex Trafficking?



The case to protect sex workers by decriminalizing or legalizing prostitution is compelling and has all the intent for compassion. Proponents for such a movement cite reasons such as: sex work is empowering, governments should not be allowed to tell consenting adults who they can have sex with and on what terms, sex workers should be protected from police harassment, they should be protected from physical and sexual abuse from their clients, and sex workers should feel comfortable and safe going to the hospital for healthcare.

Essentially, sex workers are made easy targets by the criminalization of their chosen profession and therefore that target should, by the claim of human rights, be taken off their backs.

But does sex work encourage sex trafficking?

The short answer is: Yes.

In a study performed by three scholars from around the world, it was found that legalized prostitution increases human trafficking. Their study was composed of empirical analysis for a cross-section of up to 150 countries. They found that larger and more democratic countries were more likely to increase trafficking by 13.4% if they attempted to legalize prostitution.

The U.S. State Department concurred with those findings when in 2004 they said the legalization of prostitution creates a safe haven for traffickers. It was their understanding that “Legalization simply makes it easier for them to blend in with a purportedly regulated sex sector and makes it more difficult for prosecutors to identify and punish those who are trafficking people.”

Moving to the micro lens in viewing this situation, we can easily determine the backgrounds of ‘sex workers’. A study conducted in San Francisco found of the 200 prostitutes interviewed, 70% entered the field because they were sexually assaulted as minors. When asked about how they felt about themselves and sex, only 1-2% answered positively.

A different study that incorporated the experiences of detained women for engaging in illegal prostitution, found that there were two distinct ways in which a woman entered into the profession. The first was running away as a minor and the second was sexual victimization as a child.

It is quite evident that entering into the sex work industry is not the empowering move proponents for sex workers would lead us to believe, and the majority of prostitutes are what they are because they have nowhere else to turn. Trying to make them believe that their “rock bottom” is a liberating profession is actually oppressive and abusive.

In a study written in 2010, the author found that one major component for encouraging the sex trafficking trade was—and still is—the culture in which it is found. She articulated:

“It is a bit more difficult to define just what a thriving sex trade industry looks like, but some of the most recent research on sex trafficking in four countries with major commercial sex markets—Jamaica, the Netherlands, the United States, and Japan—suggests that each of these countries maintains a “culture of tolerance” that supports flourishing sex trafficking markets...This culture of tolerance, fueled by the glamorization of pimping, is embodied in multiple venues of daily life, including clothing, songs, television, video games, and other forms of entertainment.”

Countries which have legalized prostitutions:

Argentina	Germany	Kazakhstan
Belgium	Greece	Kenya
Bolivia	Guatemala	Kyrgyzstan
Brazil	Guinea Bissau	Latvia
Cape Verde	Honduras	Lebanon
Central African Republic	Hong Kong	Madagascar
Chile	Hungary	Malawi
Colombia	Italy	Monaco
Costa Rica	Ivory Coast	Mozambique
Cyprus	Timor Leste	Netherlands
Czech Republic	Togo	Nicaragua
Denmark	Trinidad	Portugal
Dominican Republic	Tobago	Panama
DR Congo	Turkey	Peru
Equador	Uruguay	Poland
Eritrea	Venezuela	Senegal
Ethiopia	Zambia	Sierre Leone
Estonia	Bangladesh	
	Switzerland	



How You Can Protect Your Family



Many think, “Since victims are human trafficked by their own family almost half the time, doesn’t that mean family is the problem?” No. That means *broken* families are the problem.

Healthy, strong families are in many cases the solution to the problem. Traffickers target vulnerable people with little to no social ties. When a person has a secure homebase they can turn to when scared or unsure, the trafficker loses his main advantage: aloneness. Family ties are the strongest bonds a person can make, and strengthening those bonds is the best thing you can do to protect your family. Here are some ideas on how to protect your family from trafficking:

- **Have dinner with your family.** This sounds strange at first, but really it makes sense once you think about it. Dinner can be an opportunity to build a relationship with your family members, learn how their day went and what happened. It’s a great opportunity to spot any signs of unease or strange behavior.
- **Talk to your children about what healthy relationships should look like.** Traffickers are very adept at ‘grooming’ children. This means *they* build relationships with your child, *they* are sharing secrets with your child, *they* are gaining access to your child. To combat this, have conversations with your child about boundaries,

expectations of how they should be treated, communication, and to not trust strangers online or in person.

- **Be aware of your family members online activities.** There are so many apps that trafficker's station themselves on because they know it's a hot spot for vulnerable and naïve children. Explain to your children what information is appropriate to share and what is not. Who they should be chatting with and who they should be avoiding. Tell your children why it is important they turn off their location while on social media. Do not post photos of your children in swimwear or revealing clothing.
- **Set strict privacy settings.** On your own phone, your spouse's phone, and your children's phones. Privacy should be your number one priority when it comes to technology.
- **Educate yourself and your children about human trafficking.** Learn the warning signs of victims and teach your children about the dangers he or she will face as they enter the world. Continuously learn more about human trafficking trends and statistics.
- The United Nations wrote, "Human trafficking can't be prevented unless everyone is getting adequate access to education, healthcare, and a decent job that supports a family."



UN Language That Prohibits Trafficking

For your own personal use, this next section will provide some of the important language from the United Nations that prohibits and condemns the trafficking of persons.

“(m)Address the acute problems of children, inter alia, by supporting efforts in the context of the United Nations system aimed at adopting efficient international measures for the prevention and **eradication of female infanticide, harmful child labour, the sale of children and their organs, child prostitution, child pornography and other forms of sexual abuse** and consider contributing to the drafting of an optional protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child;

Strengthen the implementation of all relevant human rights instruments in order to combat and eliminate, including through international cooperation, organized and other forms of **trafficking in women and children, including trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, pornography, prostitution and sex tourism**, and provide legal and social services to the victims; this should include provisions for international cooperation to prosecute and punish those responsible for organized exploitation of women and children.”

-Fourth World Conference on Women(1995), 230 (m-n)

“States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

- (a) **The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;**
- (b) **The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;**
- (c) **The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.”**

-Convention on the Rights of the Child(1989), Article 34

“Every day, **more and more children around the world are subjected to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.** Concerted action is needed at the local, national, regional and international levels to bring an end to the phenomena.”

-The Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action

“Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, **including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.**”

-2030 Agenda (2015), target 5.2

“Take immediate and effective measures to **eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers,** and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms”

-2030 Agenda (2015), target 8.7

“We welcome the entry into force of the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the **involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography** and urge State Parties to fully implement them.”

-Children Summit +10 (2002): 30

“Take necessary action, at all levels, as appropriate, to criminalize and penalize effectively, in conformity with all relevant and applicable international instruments, **all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, including within the family or for commercial purposes, child prostitution, paedophilia, child pornography, child sex tourism, trafficking...**”

-Children Summit +10 (2002): 44-45

“All actors in the Information Society should take appropriate actions and preventative measures, as determined by law, against abusive uses of ICTs, such as illegal and other acts motivated by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, hatred, violence, **all forms of child abuse, including paedophilia and child pornography, and trafficking in, and exploitation of, human beings.**”

-Information Summit (2003): 59

“Countries should take full measures to **eliminate all forms of exploitation, abuse, harassment and violence against women, adolescents and children.** This implies both preventative actions and rehabilitation of victims...”

-ICPD (1994): 4.9



Pathway of

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is the unlawful act of transporting or coercing people in order to benefit from their work, typically in the form of forced labor or sexual exploitation.

Human Trafficking is Modern Day Slavery

50 Million
People are impacted by human trafficking each year.²

There are more people trapped in slavery today than any other point in history.



Traffickers recruit victims through promises of:³

- Employment
- Transportation
- Love
- Housing
- Friendship
- Other forms of support



Children account for **27%** of all human trafficking victims worldwide, and two out of every three child victims are girls.⁴



Approximately **650 million** girls and women alive today were married before their 18th birthday.⁵



An estimated **27.6 million** men, women, and children are in forced labour.⁶



What can you do to protect your family?

1. <https://lcdes.org/training/human-trafficking-awareness-for-law-enforcement/>
 2. <https://www.un.org/en/delegate/50-million-people-modern-slavery-un-report>
 3. <https://humantrafficking.la.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Technology-Facilitated-Human-Trafficking-Infographic.pdf>
 4. <https://www.savethechildren.org/us/charity-stories/child-trafficking-awareness>
 5. <file:///C:/Users/k2982/Downloads/Child-Marriage-Data-Brief.pdf>
 6. <https://www.ilo.org/topics-and-sectors/forced-labour-modern-slavery-and-trafficking-persons>





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