

# Human Trafficking: Quick Facts



## The Numbers

- Estimates of human trafficking worldwide range from 20.9 to 27 million people.
- Of the 27 millions enslaved, 42,291 were identified in 2011.
- In 2011, the number of victims identified globally increased from 33,113 to 42,291. The most ever identified in a given year is 49,105 in 2009.
- The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that of all trafficked persons 68% are held in forced labor exploitation, 22% in forced sexual exploitation and 10% in state-imposed forced labor.
- In 2011, the number of criminal convictions of traffickers globally increased slightly from 3,619 to 3,969.
- More people are trafficked for labor than commercial sex yet of the 3,969 global criminal convictions of traffickers, 3,691 were sex traffickers and just 278 were labor traffickers.
- The ILO estimates that women and girls comprise 55% of all those in forced labor and 98% of all those in sex trafficking, whereas men and boys comprise 45% of those in forced labor and 2% of those in sex trafficking.
- According to the ILO, 74% are adults and 26% are children, defined as under the age of 18.
- Globally, 56% of trafficked persons are enslaved in a country other than their own; 29% are enslaved in the area where they normally reside; and 15% are enslaved elsewhere within their own country.
- 128 countries criminalize all forms of human trafficking.

## The Basics

- Trafficking is modern slavery; it is service or labor compelled through force, fraud, or coercion.
- Trafficking occurs in every country.
- Trafficking does not mean or require movement. Some people may be transported from other regions, countries or across town, but the transportation is not the crime of human trafficking.
- Smuggling and human trafficking are not synonymous. Trafficking is about compelled service and is a violation of an individual's rights. Smuggling is about illegally crossing a border and may be a violation of a country's immigration law. Just as movement and transportation is not required for human trafficking, smuggling is not required either.
- Men, women and children are held in forced labor, also referred to as labor trafficking.
- Poor working conditions and low wages alone do not constitute human trafficking, though they may be indicators of human trafficking. When a person uses force, fraud, or physical or psychological coercion, to compel services or labor from another, it rises to the level human trafficking
- Men, women, boys and girls are subjected to sex trafficking.
- Men, women, boys and girls held in forced labor can be subjected to sexual violence.
- Some victims are kidnapped and abducted, but the vast majority are looking for work and are then forced, defrauded, coerced and unable to leave.
- Confirmed trafficking cases have occurred in agriculture, mining, fishing, garment factories, child care, cleaning services, hospitality, housekeeping, elder care, manufacturing, construction, street prostitution, escort services, and brothels.
- In specific countries, goods that are known to be produced using forced labor include: cotton, bricks, garments, sugarcane, carpets, cattle, coal, gold, rice, chestnuts, cocoa, diamonds, embroidered textiles, shrimp, stones, textiles, timber, tobacco, artificial flowers, beans, cement, charcoal, Christmas decorations, coca, coffee, corn, cottonseed, electronics, fireworks, footwear, granite, gravel, iron, jade, nails, palm oil, palm thatch, peanuts, castor beans, pornography, rubber, rubies, sesame, sunflowers, teak, tilapia, toys and wheat.

## The Methods of Control

- Traffickers use dehumanizing tactics to compel service such as physical force, but often more subtle devices like psychological coercion, threats and outright fraud.
- Physical force can include physical and sexual violence as well as forced drug use, barbed wire, locked doors and other methods of confinement.
- Psychological coercion has proven to be just as powerful if not powerful than physical force, creating invisible barriers to a trafficked person's escape. This includes confiscation of immigration and identification documents coupled with threats of jail and deportation, threats of harm to trafficked persons and their family members, and threats to tell family members and community that the sex trafficked person is in prostitution, which would bring shame. Traffickers play mind games by suggesting that the compelled service violates criminal and immigration laws, making trafficked persons' think they are criminals and fear law enforcement, effectively blocking law enforcement as a resource.
- An individual is more easily compelled to work when savings are depleted, houses are mortgaged and personal debts incurred to pay for recruitment fees; whole families are dependent upon one worker; and excessive fees and costs lead to mounting debt. Economic coercion, primarily through debt bondage, can prevent trafficked persons from seeking alternative employment.
- Fraud and deception are other frequently used control tactics, including misrepresentations of the type of work, pay, working conditions, immigration requirements, and total fees and debt. Thinking the job is legitimate, trafficked persons may not realize that their identification documents are false, they will be smuggled across multiple borders, that the job they were promised does not exist, and they may need to perform criminal acts. Traffickers can then hold their illegal immigration status and performance of criminal acts against them to ensure they will not seek help from law enforcement.
- Inhumane treatment, coupled with other factors, can break an individual's spirit, which reinforces the traffickers' power over them. Trafficked persons may endure lack of health care, malnutrition, insults and ridicule, hazardous working conditions, inadequate clothing, unsafe living conditions, and long hours.

## The Traffickers

- Traffickers may be contractors and subcontractors in the corporate supply chain, whether at construction sites, at a farm or mine where the raw

materials originate or in a factory that manufactures, assembles and packages the goods and products. They may even be contractors providing services to businesses, such as janitorial and moving.

- Traffickers' operations may be as large and sophisticated as a transnational organized crime syndicate or as small as business down the street or the couple next door.
- Traffickers may be members of a trafficked person's family, have a close personal relationship or come from the same community. The trafficked person is more willing to trust these individuals, not see the deception and continue to disbelieve their friend or family member would use them to make a profit or harm them.
- They can be brokers or other intermediaries to assist in the recruitment and transportation, when needed. This includes both regulated and unregulated labor recruitment agencies.

## The Types of Modern Slavery

- Forced labor, also referred to as labor trafficking, often involves the use of a scheme, plan, or pattern or creating a climate of fear to make people believe there would be serious consequences if they attempted to leave. Traffickers don't need to use locks or chains because keeping victims isolated, threatened, demeaned, and dependent effectively imprisons victims without physical restraints.
- Domestic servitude is the forced labor of domestic workers, performing duties such as cleaning the home, cooking, and caring for children.
- Sex trafficking is the force, fraud or coercion of an individual into commercial sex. It manifests in street prostitution, brothels, so-called massage parlors and escort services.
- Debt bondage, debt servitude or bonded labor refers to a person being held in forced labor by a real or alleged debt. In parts of Africa and Southeast Asia, people are enslaved according to ancestral debts. In other cases, traffickers use debt as a coercive scheme to trap their victims – they create the initial debt through inflated recruitment and transportation fees; they add to it by charging unreasonable amounts for room and board and every other need; and they supposedly apply wages directly to this seemingly never-ending debt that must be paid before the worker can be released.
- Child soldiers are often recruited and forced to literally be a soldier for the cause or for the government. Other times, children are forced to work to support armed groups by cooking, carrying supplies and scouting. Still others are forced into sex or marriage.