



SEXUAL TRAFFICKING

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Sexual Trafficking – Fact Sheet

Definition:

Sexual Trafficking is a form of slavery. It happens when human beings are sold and bought for the purposes of sexual exploitation. It includes people (mostly women and girls) being recruited, transported, transferred, harboured or received. These actions are accomplished by means of force, the threat of force, or other forms of coercion. Trafficking can happen across international borders or within them. It is always involuntary because even when consent is achieved, it is through some form of fraud, deception, abduction/kidnapping or abuse of power/vulnerabilityⁱ.

Extent of the problem:

- Estimates range from a low of 700,000 to a high of 4 million people who are trafficked annually worldwideⁱⁱ.
- The sale of human beings is run by international organized crimeⁱⁱⁱ.
- Human trafficking is a \$12 billion (USD) annual business. Profits from human trafficking fuel other criminal activities^{iv}.

Who is being trafficked:

- 90% of people sexually trafficked are women and girls.
- People are trafficked internally, within their own countries, but also internationally.
- Poor women (from the Southern and Eastern hemispheres) are being shipped into rich countries to satisfy the sexual desires of (mostly) men. In this industry there are huge, noticeable power differentials, and many of these are based on race/class/economic lines.
- Members of society who are most at risk of sexual trafficking are women, the poor, youth, widows/abandoned wives, orphans/abandoned children, and those with histories of (sexual) abuse.

Why it happens:

- “Pull factor”: Demand for sex. There is a global marketplace made up of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of brothels, bars, strip clubs, massage parlours, escort services, and street corners where (mostly) men purchase people for sexual acts.
- “Push factors”: Poverty, high unemployment rates, domestic violence/childhood abuse, discrimination against women, desire for a better life and a way to help their families are factors that make women and girls more vulnerable to entry into the global sex trade.

Link with gender and poverty:

- International Human Sexual Trafficking is inextricably linked to the feminization of poverty.
- 70% of the world's poor are women^v. Most of these women live in developing countries, and tolerate terrible conditions because, economically or culturally, there do not seem to be any other options available to them^{vi}.

Link with pornography:

- Pornography is an element that adds to sexual trafficking. Many traffickers are found with filming equipment and cameras to create and sell pornography. Increasingly, pornographers are seeking younger and younger girls and boys for their films and pictures; thus, they have to go where the children are unprotected and vulnerable to capture^{vii}.

Distinction - Trafficking vs. Smuggling:

- Smuggling is when a person uses another individual or criminal organization to assist them in migrating illegally from one country to another.
- Whereas trafficking can happen within a country, smuggling requires the crossing of an international border. The transported person becomes a trafficked person only if – at any point – they are held in a slave-like situation, or they are forced/coerced to pay off a debt through specific controlled situations in which a person is exploited sexually or for labour.
- Trafficking must contain an element of actual, perceived or implied force, fraud or coercion. Smuggling implies that a person made a choice, whereas trafficking is a circumstance of force and coercion.

Distinction - Trafficking vs. Prostitution:

- Sometimes the terms prostitution and sexual trafficking are used interchangeably, but they are different.
- Trafficking requires an element of force, coercion, deception and exploitation (this is not always the case for prostitution, although the majority of women and girls in the “sex trade” work under significant duress).
- People are also trafficked sexually for many different aspects of commercial sexual exploitation; not just prostitution.
- In Victoria, Australia. Prostitution was legalized in 1994. This led to a massive increase in the sex industry, and also the levels of sex trafficking into the country^{viii}.

The Salvation Army and Trafficking

- The Salvation Army is deeply committed to fighting human trafficking however it may be manifested. We seek to exercise care in restoring the freedom and dignity of those affected
- The Salvation Army recognizes the inherent human dignity in each person, and has a long history of efforts to protect that human dignity; with a special emphasis on the most vulnerable members of our societies.
- The Salvation Army is committed to ending Sexual Trafficking and ensuring that the human rights of trafficked persons are respected.
- The Salvation Army's International Positional Statement on Human Trafficking can be accessed at www.salvationist.ca/trafficking in the resources section.

ⁱ Adapted from the *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons*, 2000. Although there are several forms of human trafficking, The Salvation Army uses the term human sexual (or sex) trafficking to focus on trafficking of people for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

ⁱⁱ Human trafficking is illegal, secretive and hidden, and therefore it is quite difficult to get statistics on the numbers of people being trafficked. Various governments and non-governmental organizations have come up with figures to try to capture the severity of the problem.

ⁱⁱⁱ Bruckert, C. and C. Parent. (2004). *Organized crime and human trafficking in Canada: Tracing perceptions and discourses*. Ottawa: Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

^{iv} Malarek, Victor (2009). *The Johns: Sex for sale and the men who buy it*. Key Porter Books. Canada, p. Xiii.

^v Generally agreed upon figure. For example: http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/women_poverty_economics/ (retrieved June 30, 2010).

^{vi} This is also, obviously, related to larger trends of globalization, with capital moving towards regions where labour is cheap, part-time/un-employment is rising, and international organizations are becoming larger players than many nation states.

^{vii} McGinnis, Elaine (2004). The Horrifying Reality of Sex Trafficking. Concerned Women for America – <http://www.beverlylahayeinstitute.org/articledisplay.asp?id=7014&department=BLI&categoryid=reports> (retrieved June 30, 2010).

^{viii} Sullivan, M. and Jeffreys, S. (2001). Legalising Prostitution is Not the Answer: the Example of Victoria, Australia. Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, Australia and USA. http://www.rapereliefshelter.bc.ca/issues/prostitution_legalizing.html (retrieved June 30, 2010)