TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS REPORT

JUNE 2019

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Dear Reader:

Human trafficking is one of the most heinous crimes on Earth. Right now traffickers are robbing a staggering 24.9 million people of their freedom and basic human dignity—that's roughly three times the population of New York City. We must band together and build momentum to defeat human trafficking. We must hold the perpetrators of this heinous crime accountable. We must achieve justice for survivors as they rebuild their lives. We must reinvigorate our shared commitment to extinguish human trafficking wherever it exists. There is no time to waste.

Achieving these objectives requires sound information and tried-and-true approaches. Through the annual Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report), we assess comprehensively what governments around the world are doing to combat this crime. The TIP Report is an invaluable tool to arm ourselves with the latest information and guide our action at home and abroad. It helps us go beyond preconceived notions of what we think human trafficking is and better understand the complexities of this crime.

Each one of us can be a champion for freedom and use our specific strengths to help eradicate human trafficking. Individuals can learn the common indicators for human trafficking and call in suspicious activities to the local or national hotline. Businesses can take meaningful steps to eliminate forced labor from their supply chains. First responders can enhance training and put in place screening to help identify trafficking victims. Government leaders can prioritize investigating and prosecuting labor and sex trafficking cases wherever they occur.

Alongside us in the battle are those who sadly know first-hand how depraved this assault on human dignity really is. We salute the brave survivors who have already become instrumental partners in the global fight to combat human trafficking. We encourage other governments to seek survivor input and apply trauma-informed approaches to hold traffickers accountable and care for survivors. And we honor the courageous TIP Report Heroes who have dedicated themselves to this most urgent cause of defending freedom.

The Department of State joins the Trump Administration, community leaders, global allies, and the survivors in our shared fight to end human trafficking. We must be resolute—we cannot leave anyone behind. Rather, we must harness innovation and ingenuity to prevent trafficking, identify and empower those who have survived it, and send the strongest message possible to traffickers that we will not tolerate their despicable and criminal acts.

Sincerely,

Mike Pompeo

"We take these stories to heart. We use them as fuel to motivate us to action as we work together to end human trafficking once and for all."

– U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo

A child herder watches over a herd of cattle. In some areas of Africa, traffickers force children to work in agricultural sectors, including herding.

MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE

Dear Reader:

This is an important time for us to be engaged in the work of stopping traffickers, protecting victims, and tackling the systems that allow the crime to thrive. Traffickers continue to operate with impunity and only a small fraction of victims receive trauma-informed, victim-centered support services. Yet, by working together, governments, civil society organizations, survivor advocates, and faith communities can reverse this troubling pattern.

This year, the TIP Report introduction highlights human trafficking that takes place exclusively within the borders of one country, absent any transnational elements. Although acknowledging human trafficking in this form is not new or novel, it remains important. The ILO reports that, globally, traffickers exploit 77 percent of victims in their countries of residence. Far too often, individuals, organizations, and governments erroneously use definitions of trafficking in persons that require the movement of victims. Both the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and the United Nations' Palermo Protocol focus on compelling a person to work or engage in a commercial sex act; they do not require movement from one place to another. The Palermo Protocol requires each state party to establish in its domestic law the crime of human trafficking both within and between countries.

As we in the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons worked to prepare the 187 country narratives for this year's TIP Report, it became apparent that in many countries, governments are reluctant to address human trafficking when it happens at home. In effect, they are turning a blind eye to those traffickers who exploit their own citizens, neglecting to apply their own domestic laws regarding human trafficking, and sometimes even allowing harmful cultural norms and practices to thrive.

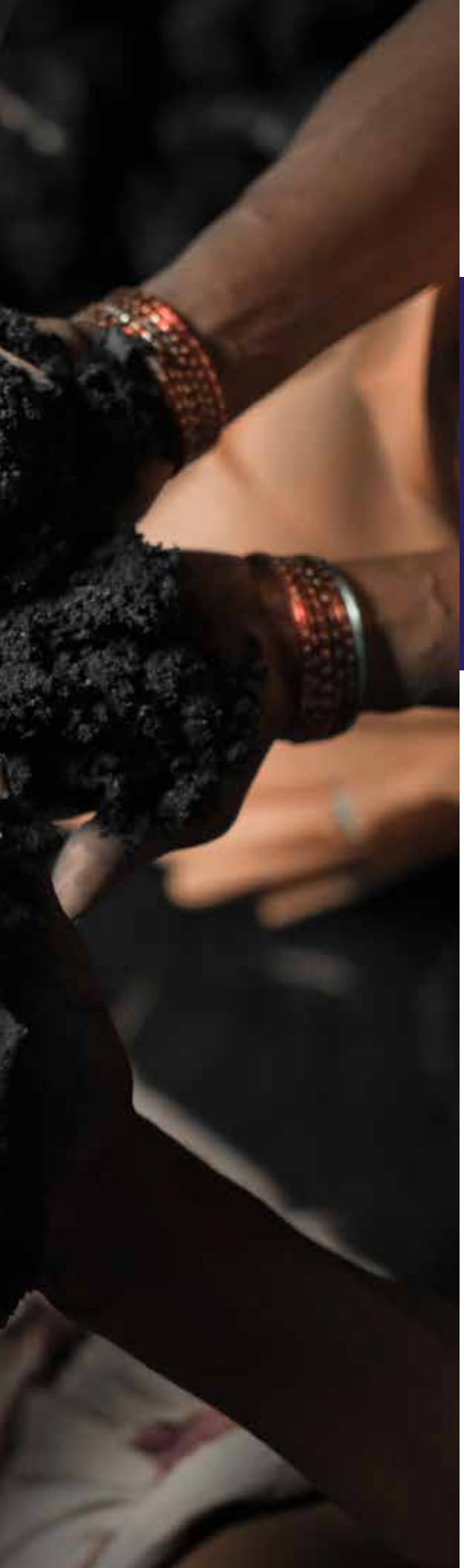
This year, the TIP Report serves as a call to action for governments around the world to embrace the full meaning of the Palermo Protocol and implement their domestic laws in a manner that protects all victims and punishes all traffickers.

I am honored to serve as the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Promoting justice and human rights around the world is essential because freedom and individual human dignity are core to American values and the foundation of international law. These are the very principles that traffickers work against when they commit these crimes. I am confident that we can make significant strides to hold accountable domestic, and transnational, traffickers and effectively implement laws so that all may enjoy freedom.

Sincerely,

A Bangladeshi survivor of sex trafficking stands in front of a window in a shelter. Governments and NGOs often work together to provide specialized, trauma-informed care for trafficking victims.

Victims of human trafficking show the state of their hands after being compelled to work mining coal to pay off their debt. Sometimes mine owners force whole families to work their entire lives to repay a debt or obligation.



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A Malian victim of forced child labor shovels cotton onto a conveyer belt. In agricultural sectors where automation is uncommon, children and adults are especially vulnerable to exploitation.

THE NATIONAL NATURE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING: STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT RESPONSES AND DISPELLING MISPERCEPTIONS

Each instance of human trafficking takes a common toll; each crime is an affront to the basic ideals of human dignity, inflicting grievous harm on individuals, as well as on their families and communities. Yet, if it were possible to hold human trafficking up to a light like a prism, each facet would reflect a different version of the crime, distinct in context but the same in essence. Together they would show the vast and varied array of methods traffickers use to compel adults and children of all genders, education levels, nationalities, and immigration statuses into service in both licit and illicit sectors. Traffickers may be family members, recruiters, employers, or strangers who exploit vulnerability and circumstance to coerce victims to engage in commercial sex or deceive them into forced labor. They commit these crimes through schemes that take victims hundreds of miles away from their homes or in the same neighborhoods where they were born.

This multifaceted crime can challenge policy makers. The foundational elements of human trafficking are difficult to grasp and the real world instances of this exploitation are even harder to identify. Importantly, how governments address human trafficking depends heavily on the way authorities perceive the crime. When officials view trafficking as a crime and have a precise understanding of its core elements, they are better equipped to identify and combat it, regardless of the particular scheme the trafficker uses.

Over the last two decades, the international community has benefited from an improved understanding of and response to human trafficking. Working together, governments, NGOs, international organizations, academics, communities, and survivors of human trafficking have built a more complete picture of human trafficking—a picture that rejects a narrow understanding of traffickers and victims, in favor of one that encompasses the full range of ways traffickers exploit their victims.

Despite major progress, a number of countries still struggle with gaps in their domestic legal responses, often because they do not recognize and address human trafficking using the wider view described above. In practice, this may mean that governments overlook certain forms of human trafficking when the conditions do not meet their narrower presumptions. For example, authorities may not consider men and boys as victims of sex trafficking due to a common misperception that sex traffickers only exploit women

and girls. This may also result in governments arresting and prosecuting trafficking victims for the unlawful acts their traffickers compelled them to engage in, instead of offering them the support of protective services. Where this happens, anti-trafficking interventions are inadequate and the potential for productive criminal justice, protection, and prevention efforts is threatened.

This year the TIP Report introduction takes a deeper dive into one such gap, common in many countries around the world, whereby governments concentrate on transnational human trafficking cases at the expense of cases taking place within their borders. This spotlight is not intended to suggest that transnational human trafficking is not also important, or that the many other forms of trafficking that may go unaddressed due to similar oversight are of lesser consequence, but rather to call on governments to ensure they are addressing all forms of human trafficking and finding a balanced approach. In that vein and in the interest of de-emphasizing movement, this year's report no longer refers to countries by the nomenclature "source, transit, and destination country."

THE NATIONAL NATURE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Prevalence of human trafficking is difficult to measure; however, a number of international organizations have estimated that traffickers exploit a majority of human trafficking victims without moving them from one country to another. For example, the ILO estimated that traffickers exploit 77 percent of all victims in the victims' countries of residence. Likewise, UNODC reported in 2018 that, for the first time ever, a majority of victims had been identified in their countries of citizenship, stating: "While transnational trafficking networks are still prevalent and must be responded to through international cooperation, national justice measures, strategies and priorities should acknowledge the increasingly national nature of the trafficking problem." The same UNODC report also found that the clear majority of traffickers were citizens of the countries where they were convicted.

It should be noted that these numbers are not uniform across regions or even types of human trafficking. For example, UNODC found that the number of victims identified domestically was high compared to foreign victims in most areas of the world, except for Western and Central Europe, the Middle East, and some countries in East Asia. In addition, the ILO found that victims of sex trafficking more likely faced transnational human trafficking while victims of forced labor typically experienced exploitation in their country of residence.

Frequently, human trafficking within a country is found in sectors that are common nearly everywhere, such as the commercial sex industry and others like farming, construction, manufacturing, and mining. The latter are also often referred to as "dirty, dangerous, and difficult" and rely on low-skilled and vulnerable local labor forces. At the same time, instances of human trafficking within a country may be more characteristic of that specific country or region, such as child domestic work or exploitative sham marriages. Indeed, examples vary greatly:

- Traffickers in **Brazil**, under the guise of religious mandates, exploit Brazilian victims in forced labor, including on farms and in factories and restaurants, after the victims join certain churches or religious cults.
- In **Cambodia**, a lack of jobs leads some women and girls to leave their homes in rural areas to try to find work in tourist destination cities. In many cases, traffickers exploit them in sex trafficking, including in massage parlors, karaoke bars, and beer gardens.
- In **Ethiopia**, traffickers often deceive parents of children living in rural areas into sending their children to major cities to work as domestic workers. The traffickers promise families that the children will go to

The United States considers "trafficking in persons," "human trafficking," and "modern slavery" to be interchangeable umbrella terms that refer to both sex and labor trafficking. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended, and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime describe this compelled service using a number of different terms, including involuntary servitude, slavery or practices similar to slavery, debt bondage, and forced labor.

"This is an urgent humanitarian issue. My Administration is committed to leveraging every resource we have to confront this threat, to support the victims and survivors, and to hold traffickers accountable for their heinous crimes."

– President Donald J. Trump

Under the Palermo Protocol, "trafficking in persons" is defined as:

"The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring 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 of 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."

"If we want to succeed in confronting human trafficking in all its manifestations, we must better understand its scope and structure."

– Yuri Fedotov
Executive Director, UNODC

school and receive wages for their work, thereby enabling them to send money home.

- In **India**, the government officially abolished bonded labor in 1976, but the system of forced labor still exists. For example, under one scheme prevalent in granite quarries in India, quarry owners offer wage advances or loans with exorbitant interest rates, trapping workers in debt bondage—in some cases for their entire lives.
- In the **United Kingdom (UK)**, gangs force British children to carry drugs. According to the UK National Crime Agency data in 2017, the largest group of potential victims referred to the National Referral Mechanism was UK nationals.
- In the **United States**, traffickers prey upon children in the foster care system. Recent reports have consistently indicated that a large number of victims of child sex trafficking were at one time in the foster care system.
- In **Yemen**, the ongoing conflict has led to many human rights violations, with many parties using child soldiers. According to a UN report, there have been 842 verified cases of the recruitment and use of boys as young as 11 years old.

Given the recent global estimates related to the national nature of human trafficking and the various forms it can take, all governments must acknowledge and take targeted steps to address human trafficking that takes place within one country without any movement across an international border.

There may be complicated reasons why a government would fail to address this form of human trafficking. It is easier to look outward and call on other governments to act; it takes much more resolution and political will for governments to look inward and stop traffickers, including their own citizens, from exploiting victims who have not crossed an international border. Governments should also examine the varying political and economic systems that make it easier for traffickers to commit the crime. What is clear is that governments have an obligation to address all forms of human trafficking, those both with and without a transnational element. When governments overlook this reality and ignore human trafficking at home, they risk being blinded to—and neglecting—an often significant crime within their own borders.

THE PALERMO PROTOCOL AND TRANSNATIONALITY

In 2000, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (the Palermo Protocol), supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), marked an important transition into the modern movement against human trafficking. Over the years, the Palermo Protocol has been the source of much clarification—but also some confusion—about human trafficking, particularly regarding the issue of transnationality.

It was the first international instrument to define "trafficking in persons" and provide insight into the many different ways traffickers commit this crime. The Palermo Protocol uses "trafficking in persons" as an umbrella term that covers a wide variety of offenses, such as maintaining someone in forced labor or recruiting someone for compelled commercial sexual exploitation. It also provided a much-needed foundation on which governments could build policies that criminalize human trafficking and stop traffickers, protect victims and prevent victimization, and promote cooperation among countries.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING **DEFINED**

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (TVPA), defines "severe forms of trafficking in persons" as:

- **sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or**
- **the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.**

A victim need not be physically transported from one location to another for the crime to fall within this definition.

Chinese men walk around the perimeter of a government detention center in China where the government forces many Muslim ethnic minority groups to work and undergo indoctrination.

Thus, three elements are needed to establish the crime of human trafficking under Palermo—the trafficker's **action**, the **means** of force, fraud or coercion, and the **purpose** of exploitation. As of March 31, 2019, 173 parties ratified the Palermo Protocol and 168 countries have passed domestic legislation criminalizing human trafficking according to this framework. In addition, a number of best practices in protection for victims have emerged including the importance of a victim-centered and trauma-informed approach in both law enforcement and service provision.

According to the UNODC's 2018 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, there has been an upward trend in the last decade in the number of victims identified and traffickers convicted globally. These data are not uniform across regions and types of human trafficking, yet the report suggests an overall positive correlation between the implementation of anti-trafficking strategies and increased identification of victims and conviction of traffickers. Similarly, the TIP Report's data on prosecutions, convictions, and victim identification are significantly higher now than they were ten years ago, when the TIP Report first began to note an upward global trend. It is clear that government efforts stemming from the adoption of the Palermo Protocol are working.

Many governments deserve credit for their serious efforts to address modern slavery. Yet, much work remains. Persistent gaps in governments' understanding of the issue continue to impede global progress, as do stubborn misperceptions about human trafficking and inconsistencies in the implementation of domestic legislation.

One common misperception generates ongoing confusion—that human trafficking requires movement across borders and cannot occur solely within a country's borders. A possible explanation for this confusion may stem from the use of the word "trafficking" in the term "trafficking in persons," which connotes movement, and the fact that the Palermo Protocol and its parent convention the UNTOC are intended to foster international cooperation in combating organized crime networks, which typically operate transnationally. The Palermo Protocol also calls on parties to meet its objectives through interstate cooperation. This context could imply that human trafficking is exclusively transnational, requires movement, and necessarily is tied to organized crime. Yet the UNTOC itself and a number of UNODC publications interpreting the Palermo Protocol make it clear that, when drafting domestic legislation, governments should consider human trafficking independently of both transnationality and the involvement of an organized criminal group. Each state party must establish in its domestic law the crime of human trafficking both within and between countries.

> *It is important for drafters of legislation to note that the provisions relating to the involvement of transnationality and organized crime do not always apply… The Trafficking in Persons Protocol also applies to protection of victims regardless of transnationality or involvement of an organized group.*
>
> –The Legislative Guide for Implementation of the Palermo Protocol

Another related misunderstanding about human trafficking is that a trafficker must move or transport a victim. Even though the term "trafficking in persons" connotes movement, no language in the definition requires movement to constitute a trafficking crime. Indeed, the Palermo Protocol's definition specifically refers to **actions** by traffickers that do not entail or require any movement, such as recruitment, which quite often takes place locally. Harboring, in particular, has been frequently interpreted to mean the maintenance of an individual in compelled service, including by a United Nations and Council of Europe publication that defined harboring as "accommodating or housing persons," including at their place of exploitation. In such cases, the three elements clearly are met—by the **actions** of housing or keeping an individual by coercive **means** for the **purpose** of exploitation—without the trafficker ever moving the person.

As reflected in their laws, most governments recognize this view of human trafficking. This is a major success that, in just two decades, 168 governments have implemented domestic legislation criminalizing all forms of human trafficking whether the crime happens transnationally or nationally. That said, even upon the adoption of the Protocol, supporters emphasized that the true challenge would lie in the implementation of the laws in each country.

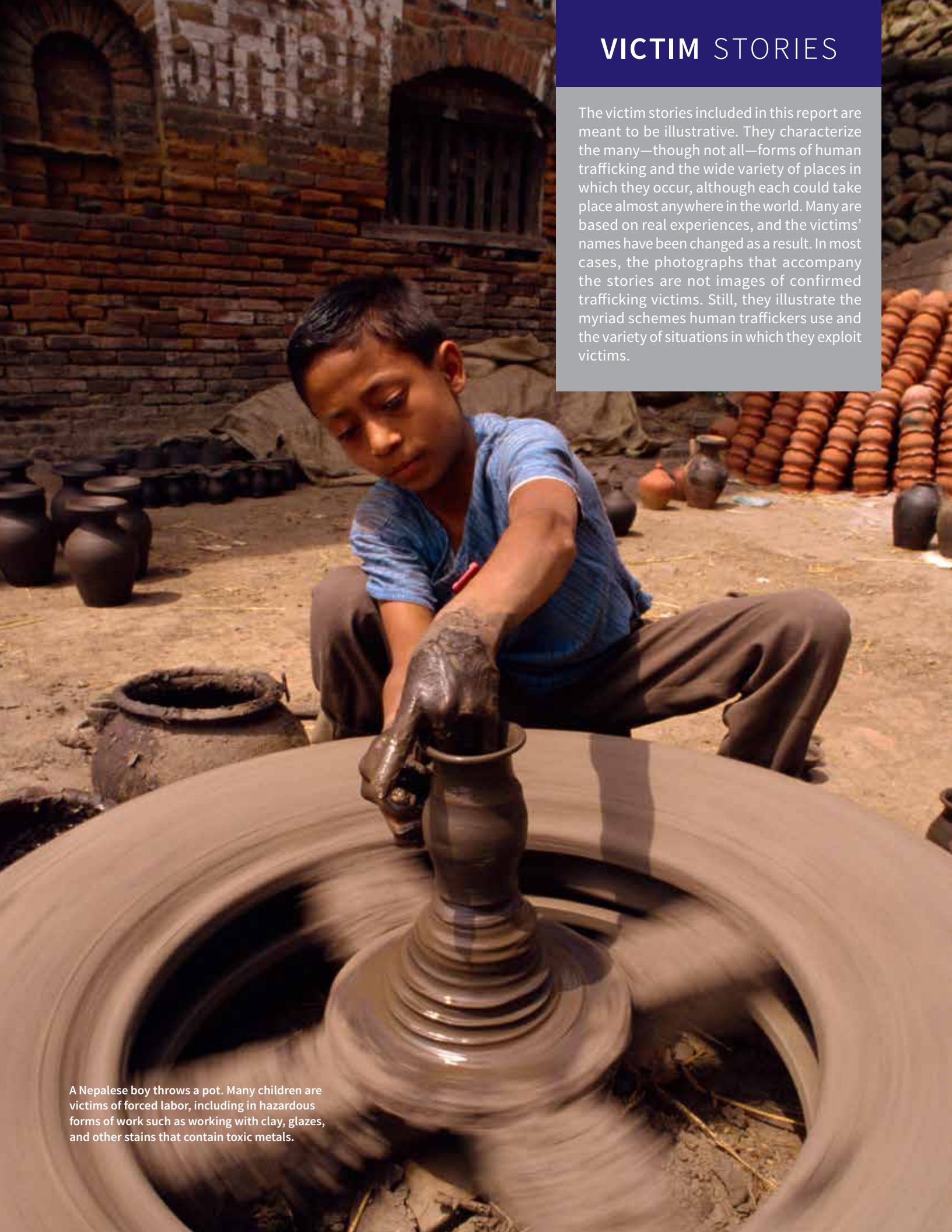
FUNDAMENTALS OF IMPLEMENTING THE PALERMO PROTOCOL

In creating and implementing legislation, governments have the power to shape reality. Legislation that protects all victims and criminalizes all forms of human trafficking, including those that take place exclusively within a country's borders, gives governments the platform and opportunity to embrace fully their responsibilities under the Palermo Protocol.

As noted above, the majority of governments around the world already have in place comprehensive laws to address trafficking in persons. Yet, law alone can do little to end human trafficking. Translating legislation into meaningful action demands dedication, focus, and resources and requires that those implementing it truly understand both the underlying letter and the spirit of the law.

VICTIM STORIES

The victim stories included in this report are meant to be illustrative. They characterize the many—though not all—forms of human trafficking and the wide variety of places in which they occur, although each could take place almost anywhere in the world. Many are based on real experiences, and the victims' names have been changed as a result. In most cases, the photographs that accompany the stories are not images of confirmed trafficking victims. Still, they illustrate the myriad schemes human traffickers use and the variety of situations in which they exploit victims.



A Nepalese boy throws a pot. Many children are victims of forced labor, including in hazardous forms of work such as working with clay, glazes, and other stains that contain toxic metals.

"Governments and businesses would dramatically improve their ability to identify and suppress human trafficking if they focused on the subtler 'invisible' abuses of power, discrimination, debt bondage, and financial coercion that actually keep workers enslaved, rather than on 'traditional' notions of slavery such as physical abuse."

– Lisa Rende Taylor
Founder and Executive Director of Issara Institute

A man harvests cotton in a field in Uzbekistan—one of the world's largest cotton exporters where the government relies on the forced labor of hundreds of thousands to harvest the cotton and meet yearly quotas.

Governments can and should adopt and implement the promising practices below. Their value lies in their power not only to help governments better address human trafficking within their borders, but also to help combat all manner of misconceptions, biases, and misunderstandings about what constitutes human trafficking.

Institutionalizing a clear understanding of human trafficking

A clear understanding of the underlying exploitative nature of human trafficking and the unique ways it affects a country is a critical foundation on which governments can build a truly comprehensive strategy.

As noted above, the Palermo Protocol defines human trafficking by its three elements—a trafficker's **action** taken through the **means** of force, fraud, or coercion for the **purpose** of exploitation. Understanding it as such leaves little room for interpretation based on the incidental attributes of the victim or the trafficker, such as gender, age, nationality, legal status, or occupation, or on other circumstances surrounding the crime, such as movement or connection to organized crime.

Messaging from the highest levels of government should be clear and consistent and preclude overly restrictive interpretations of human trafficking or perceptions of its victims. Governments should make every effort to ensure that those addressing human trafficking, both in policy and practice, frame the issue correctly to avoid limiting the applicability of anti-trafficking laws and protection efforts.

For example, governments should prosecute human trafficking crimes as such and not under other criminal provisions—or, worse, civil laws—that may come with weaker or no criminal penalties. Characterizing an offense as less severe, such as penalizing human traffickers for labor violations under employment law instead of charging them for labor trafficking, may mean that traffickers are given penalties substantially lower than those prescribed under anti-trafficking law, limiting their potential deterrent effects.

In addition, governments should encourage or mandate comprehensive training for victim identification, especially for those most likely to come into contact with trafficking victims. This includes law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judicial officials, healthcare providers, educators, child welfare officials, labor inspectorates, and many others. Training should be designed to help such stakeholders identify all forms of human trafficking. Without such an education, those best positioned to spot the signs of human trafficking may not be able to identify victims when they encounter them or know the appropriate way to respond.

Institutionalizing a clear understanding of human trafficking may also require governments to invest in research and data collection. Over the years, data collection by national governments has improved substantially, but gaps still exist and evidence suggests that anti-trafficking efforts lag where less is known about trafficking. An evidence-driven and unbiased understanding of human trafficking in a country is imperative to the creation of a well-balanced and tailored anti-trafficking response.

For example, in the **Netherlands** in 2017, the Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings worked with UNODC to develop the "first reliable estimate of actual number of victims in the Netherlands." Using multiple systems estimation, a methodology that helped to find hidden populations of trafficking victims, the Netherlands found the estimated number of trafficking victims is four to five times higher than the average number of those identified. It also found that the most common form of human trafficking in the Netherlands (46%) is sex trafficking of Dutch nationals in the Netherlands, while the least visible victims in the Netherlands are Dutch girls. The National Rapporteur further acknowledged the findings exposed "gaps and blind spots" in the Dutch approach to combating human trafficking and the need to pursue evidence-driven policies.

Developing a robust anti-trafficking coordination process

Due to its complexity, combating human trafficking requires a multidisciplinary effort. For governments this means incorporating the expertise of stakeholders from a range of agencies or ministries that may have a nexus to human trafficking. To facilitate an approach that addresses human trafficking regardless of where or how it takes place, governments can take steps to ensure that all appropriate authorities understand human trafficking, the various ways they may come into contact with victims or perpetrators, and the appropriate response when they do.

Cambodia funds an interagency committee, the National Committee for Counter Trafficking, to coordinate anti-trafficking activities and implement its national action plan. Subsidiary provincial anti-trafficking committees coordinate efforts at the local level to mirror the activities of the national action plan with modest central government funds and assistance from NGOs. With the help of international donors, six out of nine of these committees created their own provincial-level action plans. A working group monitors the efforts of both the interagency committee and its provincial subsidiary committees.

Establishing ongoing coordination can also help to ensure that the appropriate agencies or ministries have the authority to investigate cases of human trafficking.

For example, **Serbia** is consolidating jurisdiction to investigate human trafficking under the Criminal Police Directorate—Serbia's domestic law enforcement agency. Previously, the Border Police and Foreigners Office Police split this responsibility, which complicated investigations and implied that a human trafficking crime needed a transnational element.

In addition, intra-governmental partnerships can be incredibly effective for information-sharing and helping governments to expand the number and types of trafficking schemes found in their country. For example, when considering trafficking crimes in-country, labor ministries must collaborate

ASIA
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

When she was 14 years old, Lin went to Dubai with her uncle after he convinced Lin's parents to let her work in a massage parlor. He promised he would take care of her. Instead, Lin's uncle forged her passport and birth certificate to make her appear older. When she arrived in Dubai, her uncle and his partner forced her to engage in commercial sex. When she would try to refuse, her traffickers beat her until she complied. Finally, the Dubai police received a tip that a brothel was being run out of an apartment. The police raided the apartment and arrested Lin's uncle and took Lin to a local shelter for protection and support services.

A Nigerian child sex trafficking victim stands in the doorway of a shelter in Italy. Nigerians migrating to Italy through irregular channels are vulnerable to traffickers and criminal syndicates during their journey and once they have arrived in Europe.

In some cases, farmers or labor recruitment agencies in the United States use unscrupulous recruitment tactics, such as charging workers prohibited recruitment fees, which heighten workers' vulnerability to exploitation, including human trafficking.

and learn from law enforcement to be fully engaged in inspecting local economies and knowing how to alert the appropriate authorities when they identify instances of human trafficking.

In an effort to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children in **Japan**, the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly passed an ordinance in July 2017 prohibiting girls younger than 18 from working in compensated dating—or "JK"—services and requiring such businesses to register their employee rosters with the city. Authorities identified 114 of these operations nationwide in 2017, and closed 14 for violating the terms of the ordinance. Courts then initiated prosecution under the Labor Standards Act against the owner of one such establishment for child sex trafficking.

In **Greece**, the Anti-Trafficking Unit of the Hellenic Police Unit maintains several teams of officers across Greece that investigate human trafficking and other crimes and also conduct joint inspections with labor inspectors and social workers.

Confronting harmful cultural norms and local practices

Cultural norms and practices play an important role in defining a country or society, but human traffickers have also used them to support, hide, or attempt to justify human trafficking. The Palermo Protocol specifically notes that exceptions cannot be made to the criminalization requirement based on cultural variations. It is important that governments examine how traffickers may exploit cultural practices to conduct criminal activity. In some cases, traffickers may take advantage of religious beliefs to coerce victims into servitude and it is important that governments seek help from and offer support to cultural and religious leaders taking strides to protect their communities from human traffickers.

For example, in **Nigeria**, traffickers use fraud to recruit women and girls for jobs in Europe and force them into commercial sex when they get there. Many traffickers force victims to take a *juju* oath to ensure compliance and threaten death resulting from the juju curse if they break their oath, disobey their traffickers, and try to leave their exploitative situations. In early 2018, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and the governor of Edo State partnered with the Oba of Benin, the traditional religious leader of the Benin kingdom in Nigeria, to publicize a ceremony where the Oba performed a ritual dissolving all previous *juju* curses performed by traffickers.

In other cases, deeply ingrained practices may make it difficult for governments to see and address human trafficking in their own backyards. For example, many countries in South Asia face the practice of debt bondage, a form of human trafficking in which traffickers use debt to force an individual into forced labor.

A transgender woman, a victim of sex trafficking, sits in her cubicle in a red light district. Members of the LGBTI community face stigma around the world and are vulnerable to human trafficking.

PHILIPPINES
AUSTRALIA

Angelo had been boxing in the Philippines since he was 15 years old and decided to pursue a professional career after he finished high school. He met a man who promised he could make more than $150 per round in Australia. Even though he could not speak much English, Angelo flew to Sydney with four other boxers; however, once they arrived, the trafficker forced the boxers to hand over their passports. The trafficker then forced the boxers to sleep in his garage and to box during the day and clean up after the trafficker's family in the evening. Angelo was rarely paid and, when he was, travel and living expenses were deducted so he ended up with very little. He could not send any money home to care for his two-year-old son. Finally, Angelo and the other boxers were able to find a way to contact the police.

Pakistan's largest human trafficking problem is bonded labor—in which employers use an initial debt to force people to work and trap them and often their family members, sometimes for generations. Although Pakistani laws criminalize this form of forced labor, enforcement of these laws remains inadequate and many landowners continue to exploit bonded laborers with impunity.

In addition, officials across government should work to challenge stereotypes of a typical victim of human trafficking. For example, in many cases, traffickers force their victims to commit crimes. Forced criminality takes the form of begging, prostitution, cannabis cultivation, and theft, among others. An untrained law enforcement officer or benefits adjudicator may not realize an individual is a victim of human trafficking before making an arrest or a decision on available benefits. These assumptions can also make victims more reluctant to seek help. Proactive efforts to recognize and mitigate these assumptions are therefore critical.

For example, in **Finland** the non-discrimination ombudsman is the national rapporteur on human trafficking. She began a new research project assessing trafficking cases in Finland to evaluate how victims access the assistance system. The findings of this type of study could serve as an important barometer for how national assumptions and blind spots among law enforcement, service providers, and society shape a country's response to human trafficking.

"There was nothing to be ashamed of. I realized that I was not alone and it was the trafficker who was guilty."

– Nasima Gain
Survivor of Human Trafficking and Advocate

"I asked the girls to dream and imagine how they'd want to see themselves in the future. Most of them said they dreamed [of] having a family—a husband and kids, living in a warm and loving environment. That's when I realized that they need family as a priority too."

– Catherine Raja
Freedom Firm

An indigenous woman in the Amazon carries a vessel to protest sex trafficking and commemorate International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Many women and girls are victims of sex trafficking around the world.

Empowering communities to recognize and address human trafficking

When the public views trafficking crimes as common local or cultural practices that do not warrant criminal investigation or prosecution, it is critically important for governments to raise awareness and foster initiatives for communities to help address it.

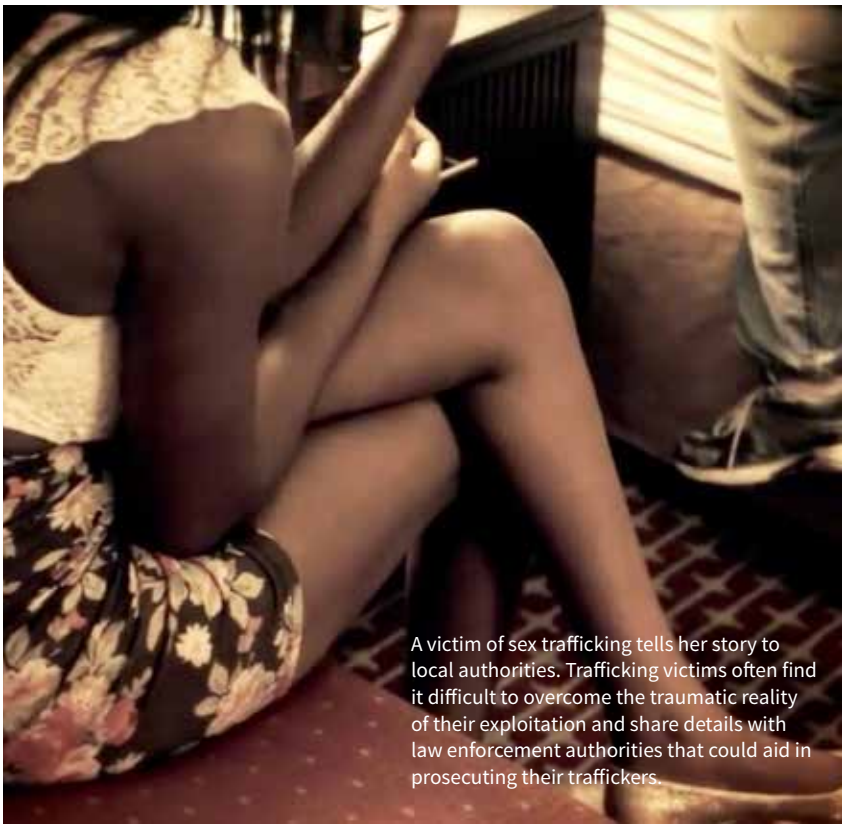
The 2018 TIP Report covered the issue of supporting community efforts to find local solutions. It is worth noting again the value in reinforcing and empowering communities as full partners in the fight against human trafficking. Public perceptions about human trafficking have a major impact on the way governments address it. If well informed about the various forms of human trafficking, the public can be the eyes and ears of their communities and can put pressure on law enforcement to make it a priority.

For example, in **Ghana**, where forced child labor is prevalent in the fishing industry on Lake Volta, NGOs have worked to change community perceptions so that many now view the use of children in fishing as an illegal activity. Many communities have formed local watchdog groups that know how to identify human trafficking, go door-to-door raising awareness about its harmful effects, and report cases to authorities. Community members are also essential in providing follow-on support and reintegration services.

In addition, governments can design public awareness campaigns to target a particular issue and motivate communities to get involved. In design, these types of campaigns should have clear objectives that promote sound anti-trafficking policies.

For example, in **Benin**, some traffickers subject children to forced labor in street and market vending. Recently, the Beninese government led a public awareness campaign focused on potential exploitation in Benin's large open-air markers in Cotonou, Porto-Novo, and Parakou. This community-oriented campaign also incorporated an inspection program conducted at the markets and along roads connecting major cities, which resulted in the identification of more than 800 potential child trafficking victims.

In addition, governments can design community-based approaches to enhance their law enforcement efforts. For example, across **Moldova**, teams of local officials and NGOs coordinate victim identification and assistance efforts resulting in an increased number of shelter referrals.



A victim of sex trafficking tells her story to local authorities. Trafficking victims often find it difficult to overcome the traumatic reality of their exploitation and share details with law enforcement authorities that could aid in prosecuting their traffickers.

HONDURAS
UNITED STATES

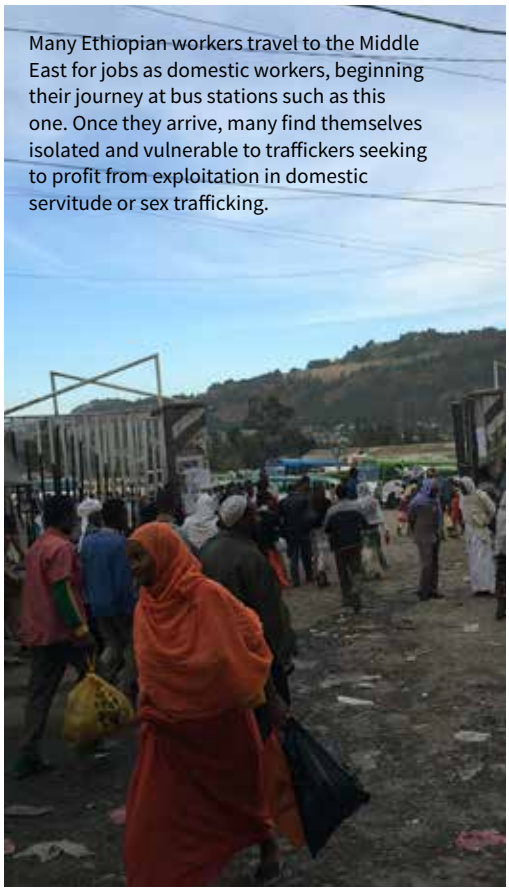
At 14, Miguel had already worked for years trying to support his family in Honduras. One night, after leaving his job at a local restaurant, two men abducted him, drugged him, and took him to the United States. Once there, they sold him to traffickers who plied him with more drugs and forced him into child sex trafficking where he endured daily sexual assault and threats of harm to his family back in Honduras. Federal law enforcement authorities eventually found Miguel during an operation; however, Miguel experienced further traumatization, bullying, and discrimination after he entered the state foster care system. Today, Miguel is a licensed behavioral psychologist in the United States.

CONCLUSION

Since the adoption of the Palermo Protocol, a growing number of stakeholders, including a majority of the world's governments, have enacted comprehensive laws to hold human traffickers criminally accountable and provide care to survivors. Over time, it has become clear that stopping traffickers and ensuring protections for all victims, including victims of internal trafficking in persons, requires governments to truly comprehend what constitutes human trafficking and to proactively use those laws.

At times, governments may need to go even further. In particular, addressing human trafficking at home also takes political courage—in inspecting local sectors and industries, investigating official power structures that may condone or facilitate such activities, and ending impunity for crimes that have long been seen as accepted local and cultural practices. Governments may find it easier to blame sex trafficking on those who come to their countries to engage in foreign sex tourism than to address local demand; or to blame foreign government and power structures for failing to protect their nationals working abroad from labor trafficking, than to address the exploitative activities of labor recruiters in their jurisdiction.

Acknowledging human trafficking within the borders of a country is not easy. Governments should be willing to admit its existence and rise to their responsibility to address it. In doing so, governments not only protect those within their borders, but also contribute to the greater global fight against human trafficking.



Many Ethiopian workers travel to the Middle East for jobs as domestic workers, beginning their journey at bus stations such as this one. Once they arrive, many find themselves isolated and vulnerable to traffickers seeking to profit from exploitation in domestic servitude or sex trafficking.

Children work in a glass production. When plant owners or managers compel children to work in such dirty and dangerous industries, they often face severe health consequences that last their entire lives.

VENEZUELA
SPAIN

Wanting to flee the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, Melinda accepted a man's offer to pay for her to travel to Spain so she could pursue a better life. When they arrived in Spain, the man forced Melinda into sex trafficking to pay back her debt. Threatened by potential harm to her family back home and worried that her daughter and mother in Venezuela would have no money for food if she tried to leave, Melinda stayed. Melinda was finally identified as a victim of sex trafficking in a police raid on a brothel.

CHALLENGES AND ADVANCES IN DATA COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT IN COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The availability of reliable, high-quality data is critical for designing the most effective strategies and interventions in the global fight against human trafficking. Primary data is extremely difficult to gather, however, and much of the limited data that is collected remains inaccessible. While some governments and a few large, well-funded organizations manage sophisticated databases, the cost of building and maintaining such systems can be prohibitive. Instead, most organizations maintain case files that rely on basic databases, spreadsheets, and paper files, thus the form, quality, and type of data stored can vary widely. The lack of effective data collection and management results in:

1. **Poor data management practices and systems.** Organizations without the funding or capacity to develop well-designed, modern practices and systems cannot easily search and analyze their own data.
2. **Weak privacy protections.** The privacy of individual trafficking survivors may be compromised by inadequate data management practices and systems susceptible to intrusion or corruption.
3. **"Siloed" data.** Most data are accessible only to the collecting organization and, in some cases their funders, and not to other researchers, academics, practitioners, and policy-makers unless those organizations have developed effective strategies to share data while also ensuring privacy protections.
4. **Lack of standardization.** Data sets are often not standardized within or across organizations and may be incomplete and incompatible.

CHALLENGES TO BUILDING CENTRALIZED DATASETS

Gathering and centralizing reliable, high-quality data that can be shared appropriately with the anti-trafficking community and within and between governments presents several particular challenges.

Collection. Collecting data on human trafficking requires special care and attention. Data must be gathered sensitively and responsibly by experts trained in trauma-informed interviews, when it is collected directly from survivors. Collectors must also employ sound methodologies to ensure data integrity and confidentiality.

Standardization. Data standardization requires many different governments, agencies, and organizations—each with its own legacy record-keeping system and mandates—to agree upon data standards and a common data architecture.

Aggregation. Having several different datasets that are standardized and compatible means they can technically be combined into larger or cross-sectional datasets, but political, bureaucratic, and legal obstacles may nevertheless prevent their data aggregation. Real data sharing agreements must be reached to overcome these institutional barriers so that related and standardized datasets can be brought together into larger, more useful databases for analysis.

Data Integrity and Anonymity. Protecting the integrity of the data and the identity and privacy of survivors is of paramount importance once data has been collected, standardized, and aggregated. Special care must be taken to prevent database compromise or inadvertent releases of information that can identify vulnerable individuals. Mitigating these risks requires professional and often costly security measures.

BENCHMARK DATA MANAGEMENT AND COLLECTION INITIATIVES

Several anti-trafficking entities have found ways to overcome these challenges and are making great strides in creating centralized databases and anonymized datasets. Collectively, they are driving community efforts to consolidate, harmonize, and share human trafficking-related data, and paving the way for more data-driven decision making, improved policies and programs, and better research and analysis. Below are some highlights:

Chinese men, sometimes with the complicity of other family members, incur large debts to pay brokers to lure rural Cambodian women to China with false promises of marriage into wealthy families or high-paying employment. When the women arrive in China, these men often subject them to forced labor or sex trafficking to repay those debts.

- **IOM Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC).** Launched in November 2017, the CTDC is the first global data hub on human trafficking. The CTDC brings together organizations from around the world, including IOM, Polaris, and Liberty Shared, to make harmonized human trafficking data publicly available in a central, accessible online platform. As of January 25, 2019, the CTDC database included 91,416 survivor cases from 172 countries in datasets downloadable from the CTDC website, which receives about 4,000 visitors per month. IOM is continuing to advance several research projects based on the database.
- **Victim Case Management System (VCMS).** Liberty Shared works to prevent human trafficking through legal advocacy, technology interventions, and strategic collaborations with NGOs and corporations in Asia and globally. It has developed the VCMS as a shared platform for survivor case management that addresses the challenges of data collection, standardization, aggregation, and protection. Currently, 54 NGOs share data on the platform, and VCMS has contributed more than 25,000 cases to IOM's CTDC.
- **Polaris**. Polaris works to eradicate modern slavery and restore freedom to survivors in the United States. Polaris collects data from its National Human Trafficking Hotline and Polaris BeFree Textline and also contributes case data to the CTDC. More than 49,000 cases of human trafficking have been reported to the Hotline in the last 10 years. Twenty-four percent of texting conversations on the Polaris BeFree Textline originated from survivors of human trafficking compared to 14 percent of phone calls to the Hotline.
- **UNODC Global Report on Human Trafficking.** The 2018 UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons is the fourth of its kind mandated by the General Assembly through the 2010 United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. The Report covers 142 countries and provides an overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at global, regional, and national levels, based primarily on cases detected by governments between 2014 and 2016. As UNODC has been collecting data from governments systematically on trafficking in persons for more than a decade, the report is able to present trend information for a broad range of indicators.
- **Southern African Development Community (SADC) Anti-Trafficking in Persons Network.** Since 2014, UNODC has helped 12 countries (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) set up national data hubs linked to a regional data hub administered by UNODC. The SADC network collects data from governments on both victim and trafficker profiles, trafficking routes, traffickers' methods and types of exploitation, assessments of victim services, and the status of investigations and prosecutions. The data collection system also offers a repository of case law, legislation, and policy from southern Africa, which is accessible to the public.
- **UNODC Human Trafficking Knowledge Portal.** UNODC launched the Human Trafficking Case Law Database in October 2011 to provide immediate, public access to officially documented instances of this crime. Through this project, UNODC has documented 1,486 case briefs available from 103 jurisdictions, 102 countries, and two supranational courts. Housed on UNODC's Human Trafficking Knowledge Portal, the database contains information on the nationalities of trafficking victims and perpetrators, trafficking routes, verdicts, and other information related to prosecuted cases around the world.

EXPLOITATIVE SHAM MARRIAGES AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN EUROPE

ROMANIA
GERMANY

A trafficker, posing as a friend, offered a 23-year-old Romanian woman a lucrative job contingent on her moving to Germany and marrying an Indian man. With the hope of a better life and opportunities abroad, the woman agreed, moved across Europe, and married the man. Once in Germany, however, she learned that the job was no longer available. With no means to support herself, she turned to her "friend" for help but over time became dependent on him for money, eventually accumulating debt she could not afford to repay. The trafficker coerced her into sex trafficking through the use of debt bondage. The woman is now receiving care and services from an NGO in Romania.

"Sham marriages" typically involve the scenario where two individuals give their consent and agree to marry subject to conditions that include an exchange of benefits, financial or otherwise, in order for one party to obtain permanent residency in another country. This practice is distinct from forced marriage, which is a marriage that takes place without the full and free consent of one or both people to the union. Recently experts have highlighted human trafficking in the context of "sham marriages" as an increasingly prevalent trend in Europe.

A Syrian victim of sex trafficking sits in a safe house after she fled a brothel in Lebanon where she had been held captive. Some governments seize brothels and place victims in safe houses where they receive support services.

Various academic studies and projects of other institutions, NGOs, and international organizations have sought to understand and analyze the link between human trafficking and sham marriages in Europe. One notable EU project developed the expression "exploitative sham marriages" to describe sham marriages involving any form of exploitation, including human trafficking. The project found certain exploitative sham marriages exhibit all three elements of the crime of human trafficking. In recruiting victims via sham marriages, traffickers use personal contacts, including family members and friends, and social media such as Facebook, internet dating sites, and advertisements, to lure potential victims with false promises of money, misleading job offers, or other fraudulent opportunities. Traffickers typically, but not exclusively, target women as potential victims, often from impoverished backgrounds, with minimal education, or originating from vulnerable populations or destitute communities, such as the Roma. Forms of exploitation range from sex trafficking to domestic servitude to forced criminal activities. These studies further show that exploitative sham marriage schemes tend to be carried out by organized crime syndicates also engaged in other forms of exploitation. For example, recruiters—most often helping men from India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh to obtain EU residency benefits, work, and citizenship rights—convince women from the Baltics, Eastern Europe, Portugal, or France with promises of money or a lucrative job to move to the UK, Ireland, or Germany and marry men they have never met. Once married, the men are able to travel, live, and work anywhere within the 28 EU member states.

Although the victims understand from the beginning that the marriages are shams, they believe the arrangement will benefit them and provide economic opportunity. The reality, however, is very different from their expectations. Traffickers mislead victims with false information about financial remuneration, accommodations, job opportunities, and divorce procedures. Before the victims realize it, they are trapped in a situation based on lies, exploited, and living in fear in a foreign country.

Exploitative sham marriages are deliberate and coordinated crimes that crime syndicates facilitate, often by working across multiple continents and engaging in numerous different schemes. In Scotland, for example, investigators uncovered European and Asian crime networks working together with European traffickers who recruited and transported victims from Eastern Europe, and Asian traffickers who arranged the accommodations. In some cases, the "grooms" participate in recruiting the potential victims. In other cases, middlemen recruit potential victims. The middlemen tend to be either EU nationals from the same community or country as potential victims or men from the same country as the "groom." Traffickers pay recruiters to find victims to serve as brides. These exploitative practices are extremely profitable. For some crime networks, it can be a multi-million dollar enterprise where human trafficking is just one part of a larger operation involving other illegal activities, such as migrant smuggling and organ trafficking.

The trend of exploitative sham marriages has been a concern in Europe for several years. With international studies and organizations shedding more light on the issue, awareness has grown across the continent, resulting in increased training, capacity building, and enhanced cooperation, including joint investigative teams. Countries, such as Latvia, the UK, and Ireland, have financially invested in addressing the root causes and empowering vulnerable populations. Aiming to find ways to address poverty and social exclusion can help potential victims avoid agreeing to marry strangers in exchange for money or jobs in another country, and instead help them create and pursue their vision of a better life in other ways.

A survivor of sex trafficking struggles to cope with the trauma she experienced. Experts estimate sex traffickers exploit millions of people in commercial sex globally.

UNITED KINGDOM

At the age of 16, in her home country, Amy married a man she barely knew. Just days later he began forcing her to work, confiscating any pay she made. For more than 20 years, Amy's spouse subjected her to forced labor. Toward the end of this time, her husband sold her to traffickers who moved her to the United Kingdom and forced her to work 20-hour days as a janitor. The traffickers threatened to kill her children if she ever said anything about her situation. Amy suffered years of physical pain, abuse, and depression, even reaching a point where she was unable to walk. Finally, one of her friends helped her escape and contact officials in the Home Office who moved her into a safe house. Amy is gradually learning how to adjust to a new life. She hopes to be reunited with her children one day, but fears for their safety, as she believes her husband is back in her home country.

"They have been beaten, they have been threatened with deportation, their families may have been threatened with harm, and then they're forced to stay in that situation and they don't have means to escape."

– Evangeline Chan
Safe Horizon

DEDICATED PROSECUTION UNITS

Human trafficking schemes take many different forms and affect many different types of victims. The widely ratified Palermo Protocol requires governments to criminalize human trafficking and related offences. Trafficking is a hidden crime whose victims are often reluctant to cooperate with law enforcement. To effectively combat human trafficking, those responsible for identification, investigation, and prosecution efforts need a breadth and depth of expertise, including a familiarity with the spectrum of tactics used by human traffickers and the unique needs of victims. Successful identification, investigation, and prosecution of human trafficking crimes requires substantial specialized expertise in detecting trafficking indicators, stabilizing and protecting victims, and investigating conduct that may span both domestic jurisdictions and international borders.

Dedicated prosecution units in many countries play a critical role in comprehensive anti-trafficking efforts. These units provide subject matter expertise in often-complicated human trafficking prosecutions and play a key role coordinating the variety of stakeholders across government who are needed to prosecute successfully the full range of human trafficking crimes. Dedicated units that have been properly trained in victim-centered, trauma-informed anti-trafficking strategies are better able to build trust with victim-witnesses and partnerships with victim service providers and advocates, navigate the complexities that often arise in the process, and ensure that victims are afforded access to protection and services.

In addition, prosecution units dedicated specifically to anti-trafficking efforts are able to bring about challenging trafficking prosecutions that set precedents and continue to build expertise year after year.

Law enforcement officials raid a karaoke bar in Thailand where traffickers exploited women in sex trafficking. They often deceive and lure women to Thailand from surrounding countries such as Laos and Cambodia and force them into commercial sex.

WHAT ELEMENTS ARE NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE HUMAN TRAFFICKING PROSECUTION UNITS?

- Dedicated personnel with advanced expertise focused on identifying, investigating, and prosecuting both labor and sex trafficking cases.
- Leadership roles in building strong anti-trafficking partnerships, including partnerships:
  - within the criminal justice system (e.g., financial investigators, organized crime prosecutors);
  - with other governmental and intergovernmental authorities (e.g. immigration agencies, labor officials, local governments, foreign law enforcement counterparts);
  - with external stakeholders (e.g. nongovernmental victim service providers, victim and survivor advocacy groups, organizations serving vulnerable populations).
- Comprehensive training programs to deliver specialized training on identification, investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases, including for police, border patrols, prosecutors, judges, government agencies, and social workers.
- Commitment to advancing approaches to human trafficking that are comprehensive, victim-centered, and trauma-informed.
- Focus on internal as well as transnational human trafficking cases.
- Nationwide geographical coverage to ensure consistency in responses and victim-centered practices across regions (not limited to the capital).
- Prioritization of efficiency to reduce the time needed to complete cases.

An increasing number of governments are developing and applying promising practices to improve the prosecution of human trafficking cases. In an effort to strengthen the criminal justice response, many countries now have dedicated prosecution units and courts, and provide specialized training for judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement, among others.

- In **Guatemala**, the Attorney General's Office (Public Ministry or "MP") expanded its anti-trafficking prosecutor's office and inaugurated a new regional office in April in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala's second largest city. The new office will cover nine departments consisting of 38 percent of the country's population, including those closest to the Mexican border where traditionally there has been little MP coverage of human trafficking prosecutions. The new office will add 12 additional members to the anti-trafficking team. Shifting their focus to more complex cases, the MP's specialized office will carry out large-scale raids on human trafficking networks in conjunction with the National Police Force.
- **Thailand** established the Department of Anti-Human Trafficking at the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) in October 2015 to be operated alongside the anti-trafficking division of the Royal Thai Police, and the Special Human Trafficking Division within the Criminal Court in Bangkok (established in August 2015). The trafficking unit takes on all tasks conducted by the OAG related to trafficking cases and prosecutes them within the jurisdiction of the Bangkok Criminal Court, while local public prosecutors continue to handle cases in each province. Complex cases or those that may involve public officials can be transferred to the trafficking unit in Bangkok. The OAG trafficking unit conducts training for prosecutors in the provinces on techniques to prosecute effectively trafficking crimes, and as of December 2016, public prosecutors are required to file all trafficking cases to the unit for consideration.
- In the **United States**, the Department of Justice created a specialized Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit (HTPU) within its Civil Rights Division in 2007 to consolidate human trafficking prosecution experience. HTPU provides subject matter expertise on forced labor, transnational sex trafficking, and sex trafficking of adults. The Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), created in 1987, provides subject matter expertise on the sexual exploitation of minors in any form, including foreign and domestic child sex trafficking, technology-facilitated child sex trafficking, and child sex tourism.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINES

National human trafficking hotlines, or helplines, are critical components of a comprehensive anti-trafficking response and can be a powerful instrument in combating human trafficking. Hotlines are often one of the safest and most efficient tools for callers to access emergency assistance, connect to services, and learn about available resources. They also often serve as the first point of contact for the public on human trafficking concerns. However, insufficient funding and a lack of operational protocols, personnel training and retention, service and law enforcement referral networks, and engagement from government institutions can hinder a hotline's ability to assist callers effectively and could even place them in danger. As governments and communities explore starting a hotline, or improving one that already exists, it is important to evaluate capacity and resource levels to determine which structure would lend itself to the most effective, sustainable hotline.

Hotlines and the organizations that run them can enhance anti-trafficking efforts, but only work if the public is confident that they will lead callers to help. The quality of this help depends on the strength of the local government and nongovernmental response, as well as on the level of trust and relationships between the hotline and these partners. It also depends on how developed the service infrastructure is and whether it is reliable for caller referrals. If governments and service providers are not able to provide basic emergency assistance, longer-term care, and reintegration support, the effectiveness of the hotline may be limited.

A hotline's ability to serve its callers also hinges on its organizational stability. The amount of available, steady funding, trauma-informed responses, and trained personnel often determine a hotline's operational scope, such as hours of operation, live or recorded responses, forms of human trafficking it can address, and range of caller assistance it can provide. Effective hotlines adhere to a clear mission and well-established protocols for core staff functions, roles, and relationships to referral entities. In keeping with the practice of victim service providers, anti-trafficking hotlines should maintain strict procedures to safeguard victims' personal information to avoid placing them in danger and set clear expectations with callers regarding the hotline's role and next steps. One of the strongest indicators of caller volume for human trafficking hotlines has been whether a hotline offers anonymity. How a hotline adopts mandatory reporting requirements and clarity about caller confidentiality and reporting policies can help individuals decide if or when they feel safe contacting the hotline.

The structure and features of human trafficking hotlines often reflect the local profile of human trafficking cases and social norms. Having a strong sense of how traffickers operate, where cases typically occur, and which populations traffickers target can help a hotline to serve best the intended constituency. In addition, knowing the most common forms of communication within local communities and how reliable the telecom infrastructures are can help determine which platforms the hotline should invest in. National hotlines have included toll-free telephone lines with easy-to-remember numbers, email accounts, SMS textlines, mobile applications, online chat functions, website forms, and social media accounts. Identifying the most likely callers and their common critical needs can help a hotline determine if it should prioritize offering interpretation or translation services in multiple languages and which types of partnerships or referrals it should feature, such as shelter, legal aid, or counseling services.

A Mauritanian survivor of human trafficking stands in her shop where she sells her hand-crafted veils. After a very difficult journey, she has managed to successfully reintegrate into her community through the establishment of her own micro-business.

NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE STRUCTURAL MODEL EXAMPLES

Government Operated

- **Argentina:** The government's General Prosecutor's Office for Human Trafficking and Sex Exploitation (PROTEX) and the National Rescue Program, which coordinates emergency victim services, operate a national 24-hour human trafficking hotline, called Linea 145, which has helped facilitate investigations of trafficking allegations.

NGO-run and Government Supported

- **Norway:** The Ministry of Justice fully funds the 24-hour NGO-run hotline, which is included in the state budget, to connect trafficking victims who call the hotline at 22 33 11 60 with law enforcement and direct service providers, as appropriate.

NGO-run and Privately Funded

- **Greece:** An international NGO operates the national hotline and handles tips, makes service referrals, and responds to requests for information or training. While private donors provide funding and support to the hotline, the Greek government endorses the 1109 hotline and maintains close partnerships with local governments and municipalities for awareness campaigns, including free television and radio airtime for hotline advertisements, as well as police trainings.

NGO-run and funded by multiple channels

- **United States:** A national NGO runs the national human trafficking hotline, which receives funding from the U.S. government and nongovernmental sources. The NGO relies on its network of law enforcement and service provider partners to connect with and direct callers to the appropriate points of contact throughout the country. Callers reach the hotline by dialing 888-373-7888, texting 233733, and initiating online chats.

Equally important is identifying barriers that could potentially prevent people, especially victims, from calling a hotline. Organizations that run hotlines can shape their outreach strategy and build public trust by learning about local or cultural attitudes toward service providers and government-supported resources or reporting. Over time, national human trafficking hotlines have earned reputations for credibility through the help of partners in the field, previous callers sharing their experiences, independent evaluations, and statistics or reports the hotline publishes.

National human trafficking hotlines have evolved differently to reflect a country's unique trends or most common human trafficking cases, cultural and structural contexts, and availability of reliable resources. A number of governments have chosen to fund and operate hotlines that can offer a rapid and streamlined referral to government and community services and criminal justice remedies. Governments have operated hotlines out of different agencies depending on the intended role and audience. For example, some countries with large migrant worker populations have established hotlines within their labor ministries to receive forced labor complaints or distribute information about workers' rights and labor laws.

While government support for a hotline may increase credibility as the official reporting and referral mechanism for victims, it can also intimidate people from making contact. Especially in societies with a high rate of government mistrust, an independent hotline can provide callers a stronger sense of safety from reprisal or misuse of information. A number of governments have partnered with an NGO or international organization to develop hotlines, with the degree of government involvement ranging from providing promotional assistance, to material or personnel resources, to full funding. In most cases, hotlines run by an NGO or international organization have served primarily as conduits, relying on extensive referral networks to connect callers to services or resources.

Legislative or regulatory requirements to post information about human trafficking hotlines also can spread awareness among populations, industries, and venues at high risk for human trafficking. Proactive consultation with survivors, whether by hiring them to work as hotline staff or appointing them to participate on external advisory councils, will also facilitate the effectiveness and responsiveness of hotlines.

Where no dedicated national human trafficking hotlines exist, governments and NGOs often have incorporated anti-trafficking response mechanisms into existing hotlines for victims of related crimes, such as domestic violence, child abuse, and gender-based violence, as well as general crime hotlines. Worker rights hotlines have also fielded human trafficking calls. Even countries with a dedicated national hotline on human trafficking can establish referral protocols with local hotlines and other related issue hotlines that could potentially receive calls on human trafficking.

In addition to receiving tips, national hotlines can be a central repository of human trafficking data and can play a key role in advancing anti-trafficking efforts, assuming caller confidentiality is protected. Using its data to identify common trends, intersections with industries and government systems, and gaps in victim support can help the field develop targeted public awareness or advocacy campaigns, engagement strategies for current and potential stakeholders, and protocols for addressing weaknesses. With appropriate safeguards and protections, hotline data can also be a useful tool for spurring regional coordination on cross-border human trafficking trends and referrals. Regardless of the structural model a hotline uses—whether government-operated or completely NGO-run and funded—human trafficking hotlines have served as both the foundations of national anti-trafficking responses and drivers of progress within the field.

PROMOTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVOR LEADERSHIP AND INPUT

The survivor voice is a vital part of establishing effective and comprehensive anti-trafficking strategies that advance prosecution, protection, and prevention efforts. Now more than ever, survivors are leaders in the anti-trafficking movement, whether they run organizations, advocate before legislatures, train law enforcement, engage with the public, or collaborate with governments to improve domestic and foreign programs. Survivors know firsthand what is needed to improve government anti-trafficking responses and their input is key to ensuring anti-trafficking policies reflect perspectives that only those with a lived experience can provide.

For any entity, whether a government, business, or civil society organization, adopting a survivor-informed approach means seeking meaningful input from a diverse community of survivors at each stage of a program or project. This includes a wide range of opportunities, from the initial program development and design stage throughout implementation of the project as well as during any evaluation activities. The United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking—comprising survivor leaders presidentially appointed to advise the Executive Branch on anti-trafficking policies—defined "survivor-informed" in its 2019 annual report as the incorporation of survivor expertise from inception through development and completion of efforts relating to all forms of anti-trafficking work. In particular, governments and organizations should avoid making requests that involve final or close-to-final products, tight time constraints, or other factors that could impair the quality of input and be counter-productive to establishing a truly survivor-informed product.

Women participate in a support group in rural India to combat debt bondage in their communities. A form of forced labor, debt bondage is prevalent in agricultural sectors in rural areas of India.

Entities should take steps to become survivor-informed in all aspects of their anti-trafficking response. The first step is understanding whether and how well an entity seeks and incorporates survivor input, as well as identifying gaps and opportunities to do so effectively.

Knowing how to engage with survivors appropriately and responsibly is also critical to establishing a survivor-informed practice. Engagement should be trauma-informed, which means having an understanding of the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma on the individual, as well on the professionals who work with them. Entities should also promote survivor empowerment and self-sufficiency, and consider ways to employ survivors in leadership positions as staff members, consultants, or trainers. Increasing leadership opportunities for survivors is not only an appropriate response to the survivor community, but also provides for greater effectiveness across all efforts to combat human trafficking. Survivors, like any other employee or consultant, should receive financial compensation for their time and expertise. Additionally, survivors should represent diverse perspectives, including experiences of both sex and labor trafficking, as well as across age, gender, race, national origin, and sexual orientation.

Organizations should also seek training on best practices in engaging with survivors and partner with survivor-led organizations and groups that have successful survivor leadership models, including knowledge in the field of professional and leadership development. For example, the Cameroonian NGO, Survivors' Network, has built a unique approach to survivor empowerment by focusing on economic independence and fostering entrepreneurship among women and girls. TIP Report Hero Francisca Awah Mbuli founded this organization and under her leadership, Survivors' Network has helped create economic opportunities for survivors across Cameroon by providing micro-financing to small businesses and income-generating projects as well as job and small business training.

Survivors have worked hard to secure a leadership voice in the anti-trafficking movement. Governments and civil society must prioritize partnerships with survivors that reflect not only positive, but also meaningful engagement that promotes leadership. Survivor voices should be at the core of any comprehensive response to combating human trafficking.

CHECKLIST FOR ESTABLISHING A SURVIVOR-INFORMED PRACTICE:

- Assess the degree to which your organization is survivor-informed
  - Identify gaps and opportunities
- Provide paid employment opportunities for survivors
  - Staff positions
  - Consultants
  - Trainers
- Seek input from a diverse community of survivors
  - Both sex and labor trafficking perspectives
  - Diversity in age, gender, race, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, etc.
- Create a plan for accessing survivor input throughout all stages of a project
  - Program development and design
  - Implementation
  - Evaluation

PROMISING PRACTICES IN THE ERADICATION OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS: INCREASED FOCUS ON LABOR RECRUITMENT

Combating human trafficking in global supply chains has been an issue of growing importance in the anti-trafficking movement over the last decade. Governments, the private sector, and civil society are increasingly examining human trafficking through this lens as a part of broader anti-trafficking strategies. As labor is a critical part of global supply chains, there has also been an increased focus on labor recruitment as one of the most important pressure points in the global economy for addressing this crime. The past five years have witnessed an exponential growth in initiatives focused on eradicating exploitative labor recruitment practices, developing models for fair recruitment, and changing industry standards in hiring practices.

As globalization increasingly drives markets toward temporary or seasonal contract workers who are mobile and flexible, the importance of the recruitment industry grows. Each year, millions of workers turn to or are approached by labor intermediaries—recruiters, agents, or brokers—who facilitate the movement of labor both within countries and across borders to satisfy global labor demands. A 2018 ILO report estimates there are 164 million migrant workers worldwide, an increase of nine percent since the last estimate in 2015.

Labor intermediaries function as a bridge between workers and employers and, at their best, can provide helpful guidance and assist in matching workers with jobs and in arranging visas and documentation, medical checkups, pre-departure orientation, training, and travel. At their worst, labor recruiters exploit the vulnerability inherent among those migrating for work, often engaging in fraudulent and misleading recruitment practices that can lead to human trafficking.

In particular, low-wage migrant laborers are extremely vulnerable to and at high risk of exploitative practices such as unsafe working conditions, unfair hiring practices, and debt bondage—a form of human trafficking. Some recruiters take advantage of the fact that migrant workers lack information on the hiring process, are unfamiliar with the legal protections they are owed and options for recourse, and often face language barriers. Certain unscrupulous recruitment practices known to facilitate human trafficking include worker-paid recruitment fees, misrepresentation of contract terms, contract switching, and destruction or confiscation of identity documents.

A forced labor victim works on an engine at an illegal gold mine in Peru. The remote nature of illegal gold mines leaves adults and children vulnerable to sex and labor traffickers.

RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES AND NEW RESOURCES

Promising new initiatives focused on recruitment have recently emerged. If governments and other stakeholders can sustain this momentum and work to connect and create areas of collaboration, there is huge potential for progress in improving recruitment practices and protecting workers from human trafficking. Some of the many initiatives can be found below.

International Labor Organization (ILO) General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment

In 2016, the ILO published a set of non-binding principles and guidelines to "inform the current and future work of the ILO and of other organizations, national legislatures, and the social partners on promoting and ensuring fair recruitment." The principles cover the recruitment of all workers, both within a country and across borders, and in all sectors of the economy. They provide broad tenants for the protection of workers throughout the recruitment process and detail the specific operational responsibilities of governments, the private sector, and public employment services.

ILO Fair Recruitment Initiative

Launched in 2014, the Fair Recruitment Initiative is a multi-stakeholder collaboration aimed at protecting workers from abusive and fraudulent practices during the recruitment process. It focuses on enhancing knowledge of national and international recruitment practices; improving laws, policies, and enforcement mechanisms for fair recruitment; promoting fair business practices; and empowering and protecting workers.

International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS)

In 2014, the IOM brought together a coalition of stakeholders to develop the IRIS initiative. IRIS is a "social compliance scheme" designed to promote fair labor recruitment. Its primary goal is to identify and support ethical labor recruiters through a variety of tools: establishing a benchmark for ethical recruiting—"the IRIS Standard," establishing a voluntary certification process for recruiters, creating a list of certified recruiters to help employers and workers make informed decisions, and establishing a monitoring and compliance mechanism to ensure standards are lasting. Central to the model is a prohibition on worker-paid recruitment fees or related expenses.

The Issara Institute Ethical Recruitment Program

Through the Ethical Recruitment Program, the Issara Institute brings employers and recruitment agencies together to analyze their current recruitment practices, identify strengths and weaknesses, receive worker voice feedback, and make improvements, so that jobseekers are more protected in the recruitment process. Over a 12-month period, the Issara Institute helps both businesses and recruiters improve their processes by providing an assessment and recommendations, using worker feedback throughout. The program helps participating businesses and recruitment agencies to examine and implement improvements in their contracts and service agreements, cost structures, grievance mechanisms, and capacity building trainings.

Responsible Labor Initiative (RLI)

In 2017, the Responsible Business Alliance or RBA (formerly the Electronic Industry Citizenship Coalition) launched a multi-industry, multi-stakeholder initiative to help companies address the root causes of forced labor. RLI's mission is for its members companies, suppliers, recruitment partners, and stakeholders to "use their collective influence and application of due diligence to drive the transformation of recruitment markets and reduce the risk of forced labor in global supply chains." RBA actively recruits new companies to join RLI and implement forced labor due diligence in their supply chains.

U.S. GOVERNMENT'S FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION DEFINITION OF "RECRUITMENT FEES"

The U.S. government released in December 2018 an official definition of "recruitment fees" that applies to all federal contractors and their subcontractors and gives further meaning to the prohibition on charging workers recruitment fees. While this definition applies only in the context of public procurement by the U.S. government, it represents a model for global efforts to define the types of fees and costs that should no longer be borne by recruited workers to reduce the risk of exploitation and human trafficking.

With an effective date of January 22, 2019, the final rule entitled "Federal Acquisition Regulation: Combating Trafficking in Persons – Definition of "Recruitment Fees" provides the following definition:

Recruitment fees means fees of any type, including charges, costs, assessments, or other financial obligations, that are associated with the recruiting process, regardless of the time, manner, or location of imposition or collection of the fee.

(1) Recruitment fees include, but are not limited to, the following fees (when they are associated with the recruiting process) for—

(i) Soliciting, identifying, considering, interviewing, referring, retaining, transferring, selecting, training, providing orientation to, skills testing, recommending, or placing employees or potential employees;

(ii) Advertising;

(iii) Obtaining permanent or temporary labor certification, including any associated fees;

(iv) Processing applications and petitions;

(v) Acquiring visas, including any associated fees;

(vi) Acquiring photographs and identity or immigration documents, such as passports, including any associated fees;

(vii) Accessing the job opportunity, including required medical examinations and immunizations; background, reference, and security clearance checks and examinations; and additional certifications;

(viii) An employer's recruiters, agents or attorneys, or other notary or legal fees;

(ix) Language interpretation or translation, arranging for or accompanying on travel, or providing other advice to employees or potential employees;

(x) Government-mandated fees, such as border crossing fees, levies, or worker welfare funds;

(xi) Transportation and subsistence costs—

(A) While in transit, including, but not limited to, airfare or costs of other modes of transportation, terminal fees, and travel taxes associated with travel from the country of origin to the country of performance and the return journey upon the end of employment; and

(B) From the airport or disembarkation point to the worksite;

(xii) Security deposits, bonds, and insurance; and

(xiii) Equipment charges.

(2) A recruitment fee, as described in the introductory text of this definition, is a recruitment fee, regardless of whether the payment is—

(i) Paid in property or money;

(ii) Deducted from wages;

(iii) Paid back in wage or benefit concessions;

(iv) Paid back as a kickback, bribe, in-kind payment, free labor, tip, or tribute; or

(v) Collected by an employer or a third party, whether licensed or unlicensed, including, but not limited to—

(A) Agents;

(B) Labor brokers;

(C) Recruiters;

(D) Staffing firms (including private employment and placement firms);

(E) Subsidiaries/affiliates of the employer;

(F) Any agent or employee of such entities; and

(G) Subcontractors at all tie

A sex trafficking victim sits alone in a brothel. In addition to traditional red light districts, traffickers exploit women and children in sex trafficking in small hotels, vehicles, huts, and private residences.

A former child soldier holds a gun as he participates in a child soldier release ceremony in South Sudan.

CHILD SOLDIERS PREVENTION ACT LIST[1]

The Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008 (CSPA) was signed into law on December 23, 2008 (Title IV of Pub. L. 110-457), and took effect on June 21, 2009. The CSPA requires publication in the annual Trafficking in Persons Report of a list of foreign governments identified during the previous year as having governmental armed forces or government-supported armed groups that recruit and use child soldiers, as defined in the act. These determinations cover the reporting period beginning April 1, 2018, and ending March 31, 2019.

For the purpose of the CSPA, and generally consistent with the provisions of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, the term "child soldier" means:

(i) any person under 18 years of age who takes a direct part in hostilities as a member of governmental armed forces;

(ii) any person under 18 years of age who has been compulsorily recruited into governmental armed forces;

(iii) any person under 15 years of age who has been voluntarily recruited into governmental armed forces; or

(iv) any person under 18 years of age who has been recruited or used in hostilities by armed forces distinct from the armed forces of a state.

1. This section reproduces relevant portions of section 402(2) of the Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008 (Title IV of Pub. L. 110-457), as of April 1, 2018, the beginning of the reporting period for this report. On January 8, 2019, prior to the end of the reporting period on March 31, 2019, Congress passed the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Pub. L. 115-425), which among other changes amended section 402 of the CSPA relating to the definition of child soldier. For reference, this section as amended appears on page 514 of this report.

The term "child soldier" includes any person described in clauses (ii), (iii), or (iv) who is serving in any capacity, including in a support role, such as a "cook, porter, messenger, medic, guard, or sex slave."

Governments identified on the list are subject to restrictions, in the following fiscal year, on certain security assistance and commercial licensing of military equipment. The CSPA, as amended, prohibits assistance to governments that are identified in the list under the following authorities: International Military Education and Training, Foreign Military Financing, Excess Defense Articles, and Peacekeeping Operations, with exceptions for some programs undertaken pursuant to the Peacekeeping Operations authority. The CSPA also prohibits the issuance of licenses for direct commercial sales of military equipment to such governments. Beginning October 1, 2019, and effective throughout Fiscal Year 2020, these restrictions will apply to the listed countries, absent a presidential national interest waiver, applicable exception, or reinstatement of assistance pursuant to the terms of the CSPA. The determination to include a government in the CSPA list is informed by a range of sources, including first-hand observation by U.S. government personnel and research and credible reporting from various UN entities, international organizations, local and international NGOs, and international media outlets.

"I knew no one else and thought they were my family. I did not sleep with them in the same house. I was afraid of them, they struck me… raped me. I wanted to be like children my age, going to school, and studying. I was alone."

– Survivor of Human Trafficking

The 2019 CSPA List includes governments in the following countries:

1. Afghanistan
2. Burma
3. Democratic Republic of the Congo
4. Iran
5. Iraq
6. Mali
7. Somalia
8. South Sudan
9. Sudan
10. Syria
11. Yemen

Child soldiers in South Sudan lay down their weapons during a release ceremony. Some governments and government-supported armed groups force children to serve as front-line soldiers.

In South Asia, traffickers exploit men, women, and children in forced labor in factories, and the work sometimes involves dangerous chemicals.

METHODOLOGY[2]

The Department of State prepared this Report using information from U.S. embassies, government officials, nongovernmental and international organizations, published reports, news articles, academic studies, research trips to every region of the world, and information submitted to tipreport@state.gov. This email address provides a means by which organizations and individuals can share information with the Department of State on government progress in addressing trafficking.

U.S. diplomatic posts and domestic agencies reported on the trafficking situation and governmental action to fight trafficking based on thorough research that included meetings with a wide variety of government officials, local and international NGO representatives, officials of international organizations, journalists, academics, and survivors. U.S. missions overseas are dedicated to covering human trafficking issues year-round. The 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report covers government efforts undertaken from April 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019.

2. This section describes portions of sections 108 and 110 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (Div. A, Pub. L. No. 106-386), as of April 1, 2018, the beginning of the reporting period for this report. On January 8 and 9, 2019, prior to the end of the reporting period on March 31, 2019, Congress passed the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Pub. L. 115-425) and the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2017 (Pub. L. 115-427), respectively. Among other changes, these acts amended the TVPA, including sections 108 and 110 relating to the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and the annual TIP Report's tier rankings. For reference, these sections as amended by these acts appear on page 514 of this report.

TIER PLACEMENT

The Department places each country in this Report onto one of four tiers, as mandated by the TVPA. This placement is based not on the size of the country's problem but on the extent of governments' efforts to meet the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking (see page 40-41), which are generally consistent with the Palermo Protocol.

While Tier 1 is the highest ranking, it does not mean that a country has no human trafficking problem or that it is doing enough to address the problem. Rather, a Tier 1 ranking indicates that a government has made efforts to address the problem that meet the TVPA's minimum standards. To maintain a Tier 1 ranking, governments need to demonstrate appreciable progress each year in combating trafficking. Indeed, Tier 1 represents a responsibility rather than a reprieve.

Tier rankings and narratives in the 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report reflect an assessment of the following:

- enactment of laws prohibiting severe forms of trafficking in persons, as defined by the TVPA, and provision of criminal punishments for trafficking offenses;
- criminal penalties prescribed for human trafficking offenses with a maximum of at least four years' deprivation of liberty, or a more severe penalty;
- implementation of human trafficking laws through vigorous prosecution of the prevalent forms of trafficking in the country and sentencing of offenders;
- proactive victim identification measures with systematic procedures to guide law enforcement and other government-supported front-line responders in the process of victim identification;
- government funding and partnerships with NGOs to provide victims with access to primary health care, counseling, and shelter, allowing them to recount their trafficking experiences to trained social counselors and law enforcement in an environment of minimal pressure;
- victim protection efforts that include access to services and shelter without detention and with legal alternatives to removal to countries in which victims would face retribution or hardship;
- the extent to which a government ensures victims are provided with legal and other assistance and that, consistent with domestic law, proceedings are not prejudicial to victims' rights, dignity, or psychological well-being;
- the extent to which a government ensures the safe, humane, and to the extent possible, voluntary repatriation and reintegration of victims;
- governmental measures to prevent human trafficking, including efforts to curb practices identified as contributing factors to human trafficking, such as employers' confiscation of foreign workers' passports and allowing labor recruiters to charge fees to prospective migrants; and
- governmental efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts and international sex tourism.

BOTSWANA
UNITED STATES

Keeya's neighbors in Botswana knew her family was struggling to pay for her education and offered her a scholarship to a good college and free accommodations in the United States in exchange for working at their daycare center. When she arrived in the United States, she called the family she was supposed to work for and they gave her another number to call, telling her never to call them again. When Keeya eventually arrived at her new family's home, the woman there confiscated her identity documents, forced her to work as her nanny, and physically and verbally abused her for more than a year. The trafficker eventually kicked Keeya out of her home after she sought medical attention at a hospital. Eventually, Keeya was able to find help, connect with law enforcement, and secure a job and safe place to live. She is now a survivor advocate who speaks out publicly about human trafficking to raise awareness in an effort to help others.

"We strongly believe that the work we do as survivors matters. Our work on the Council is grounded in hope and integrity and a shared mission that meaningfully calls upon each of its members and the agencies with which we collaborate."

– Tanya Street
Survivor Advocate and Member of the U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking

"These are poor regions with high illiteracy rates. If a relative or friend turns up offering someone a job, it is often the girls' parents themselves who encourage them to go, without realizing what is really happening. It is the perfect breeding ground for traffickers."

– Anuradha Koirala
founder of Maiti Nepal

A Uighur woman cries for her husband who was detained in a Chinese internment camp. Many Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and ethnic Kyrgyz detained in these camps have experienced forced labor.

Tier rankings and narratives are NOT affected by the following:

- efforts, however laudable, undertaken exclusively by nongovernmental actors in the country;
- general public awareness events—government-sponsored or otherwise—lacking concrete ties to the prosecution of traffickers, protection of victims, or prevention of trafficking; and
- broad-based law enforcement or developmental initiatives.

A GUIDE TO THE TIERS

Tier 1

Countries whose governments fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.

Tier 2

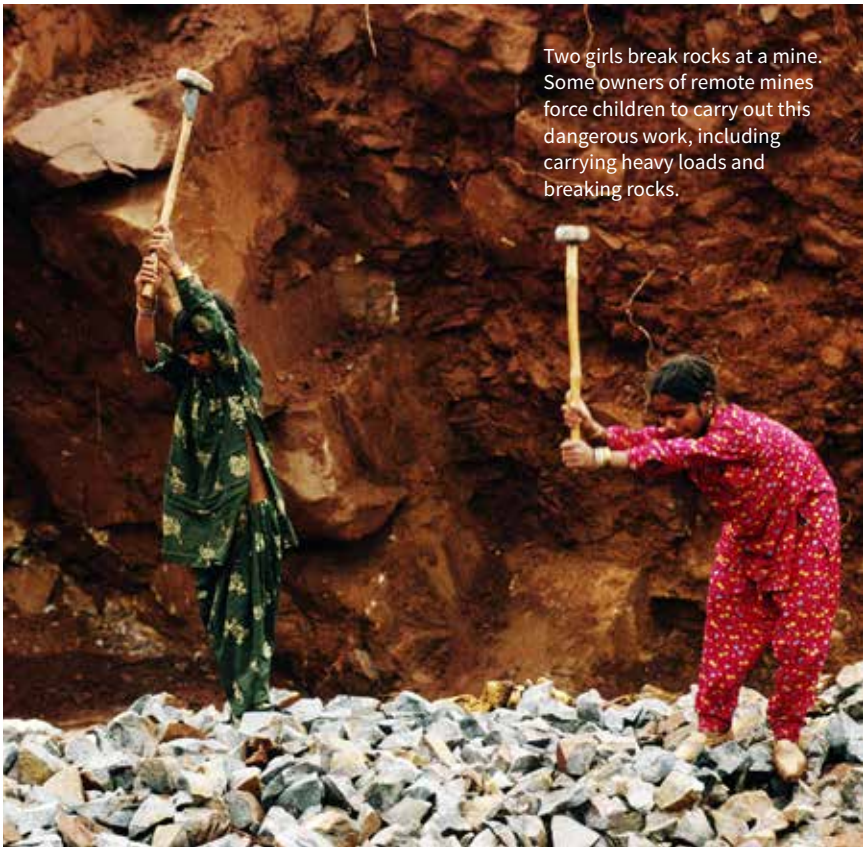
Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

Tier 2 Watch List

Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards, and for which:

a) the absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing;

b) there is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year, including increased investigations, prosecution, and convictions of trafficking crimes, increased assistance to victims, and decreasing evidence of complicity in severe forms of trafficking by government officials; or



Two girls break rocks at a mine. Some owners of remote mines force children to carry out this dangerous work, including carrying heavy loads and breaking rocks.

INDIA

When Fateh, Hassan, and Emir's father died, they inherited the debt he owed to the owner of the brick kiln where he worked. Through manipulation and deceit, the debt had ballooned in the ten years since its origination and continued to do so after the three brothers assumed it. The brick kiln owner forced Fateh, Hassan, and Emir to work for 13 years as bonded laborers, during which they endured 14-hour days molding and hauling heavy bricks, constant harassment, and physical abuse. The brothers were able to escape and sought assistance from a local NGO. With the help of a local government official, they received release certificates freeing them from the false debts and local law enforcement filed charges against their trafficker.

c) the determination that a country is making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with minimum standards was based on commitments by the country to take additional steps over the next year.

Tier 3

Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

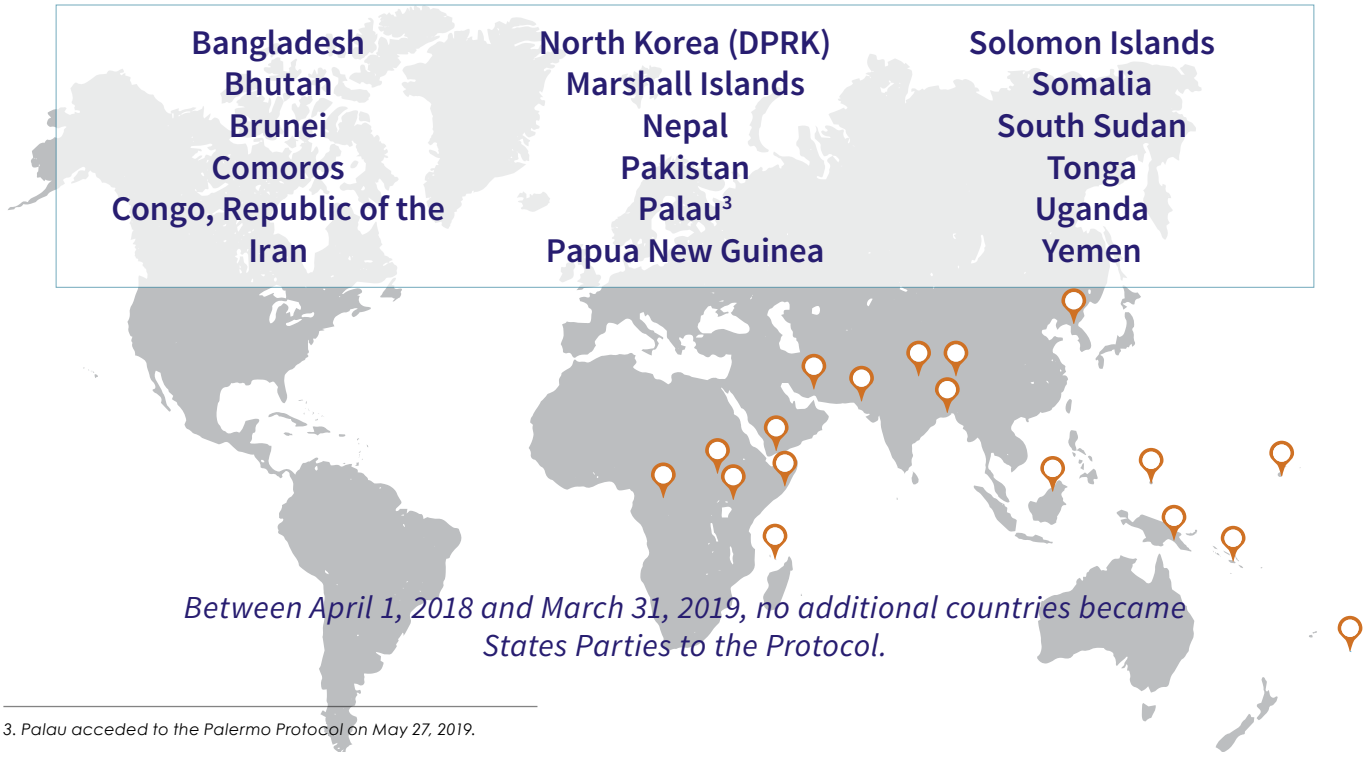
No tier ranking is permanent. Every country, including the United States, can do more. All countries must maintain and continually increase efforts to combat trafficking.

FUNDING RESTRICTIONS FOR TIER 3 COUNTRIES

Pursuant to the TVPA, governments of countries on Tier 3 may be subject to certain restrictions on assistance, whereby the President may determine not to provide U.S. government nonhumanitarian, nontrade-related foreign assistance. In addition, the President may determine to withhold funding for government official or employee participation in educational and cultural exchange programs for certain Tier 3 countries. Consistent with the TVPA, the President may also determine to instruct the U.S. Executive Director of each multilateral development bank and the International Monetary Fund to vote against and use his or her best efforts to deny any loans or other uses of the institutions' funds to a designated Tier 3 country for most purposes (except for humanitarian, trade-related, and certain development-related assistance). Alternatively, the President may waive application of the foregoing restrictions upon a determination that the provision to a Tier 3 country of such assistance would promote the purposes of the TVPA or is otherwise in the national interest of the United States. The TVPA also authorizes the President to waive funding restrictions if necessary to avoid significant adverse effects on vulnerable populations, including women and children.

Applicable funding restrictions apply for the next Fiscal Year, which begins October 1, 2019.

Countries in the *2019 TIP Report* that are not States Parties to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking In Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime



Between April 1, 2018 and March 31, 2019, no additional countries became States Parties to the Protocol.

3. *Palau acceded to the Palermo Protocol on May 27, 2019.*

GLOBAL LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA

The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) of 2003 added to the original law a new requirement that foreign governments provide the Department of State with data on trafficking investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences in order to fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking (Tier 1). The 2004 TIP Report collected this data for the first time. The 2007 TIP Report showed for the first time a breakout of the number of total prosecutions and convictions that related to labor trafficking, placed in parentheses.

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2012	7,705 (1,153)	4,746 (518)	46,570 (17,368)	21
2013	9,460 (1,199)	5,776 (470)	44,758 (10,603)	58
2014	10,051 (418)	4,443 (216)	44,462 (11,438)	20
2015	19,127 (857)	6,615 (456)	77,823 (14,262)	30
2016	14,939 (1,038)	9,072 (717)	68,453 (17,465)	25
2017	17,471 (869)	7,135 (332)	96,960 (23,906)	5
2018	11,096 (457)	7,481 (259)	85,613 (11,009)	5

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

A man sits on a pile of cotton at a harvesting plant in Uzbekistan. Government-compelled forced labor of adults, including public sector employees, remained during the 2018 cotton harvest.

SECTION 108 OF THE TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT[4]

Minimum Standards for the Elimination of Trafficking in Persons

(1) The government of the country should prohibit severe forms of trafficking in persons and punish acts of such trafficking.

(2) For the knowing commission of any act of sex trafficking involving force, fraud, coercion, or in which the victim of sex trafficking is a child incapable of giving meaningful consent, or of trafficking which includes rape or kidnapping or which causes a death, the government of the country should prescribe punishment commensurate with that for grave crimes, such as forcible sexual assault.

(3) For the knowing commission of any act of a severe form of trafficking in persons, the government of the country should prescribe punishment that is sufficiently stringent to deter and that adequately reflects the heinous nature of the offense.

(4) The government of the country should make serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons.

Indicia of "Serious and Sustained Efforts"

(1) Whether the government of the country vigorously investigates and prosecutes acts of severe forms of trafficking in persons, and convicts and sentences persons responsible for such acts, that take place wholly or partly within the territory of the country, including, as appropriate, requiring incarceration of individuals convicted of such acts. For purposes of the preceding sentence, suspended or significantly reduced sentences for convictions of principal actors in cases of severe forms of trafficking in persons shall be considered, on a case-by-case basis, whether to be considered as an indicator of serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons. After reasonable requests from the Department of State for data regarding investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences, a government which does not provide such data, consistent with the capacity of such government to obtain such data, shall be presumed not to have vigorously investigated, prosecuted, convicted, or sentenced such acts. During the periods prior to the annual report submitted on June 1, 2004, and on June 1, 2005, and the periods afterwards until September 30 of each such year, the Secretary of State may disregard the presumption contained in the preceding sentence if the government has provided some data to the Department of State regarding such acts and the Secretary has determined that the government is making a good faith effort to collect such data.

(2) Whether the government of the country protects victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons and encourages their assistance in the investigation and prosecution of such trafficking, including provisions for legal alternatives to their removal to countries in which they would face retribution or hardship, and ensures that victims are not inappropriately incarcerated, fined, or otherwise penalized solely for unlawful acts as a direct result of being trafficked, including by providing training to law enforcement and immigration officials regarding the identification and treatment of trafficking victims using approaches that focus on the needs of the victims.

(3) Whether the government of the country has adopted measures to prevent severe forms of trafficking in persons, such as measures to inform and educate the public, including potential victims, about the causes and consequences of severe forms of trafficking in persons, measures to establish the identity of local populations, including birth registration, citizenship, and nationality, measures to ensure that its nationals who are deployed abroad as part of a diplomatic, peacekeeping, or other similar mission do not engage in or facilitate severe forms of trafficking in persons or exploit victims of such trafficking, a transparent system for remediating or punishing such public officials as a deterrent, measures to prevent the use of forced labor or child labor in violation of international standards, effective bilateral, multilateral, or regional information sharing and cooperation arrangements with other countries, and effective policies or laws regulating foreign labor recruiters and holding them civilly and criminally liable for fraudulent recruiting.

(4) Whether the government of the country cooperates with other governments in the investigation and prosecution of severe forms of trafficking in persons and has entered into bilateral, multilateral, or regional law enforcement cooperation and coordination arrangements with other countries.

4. This section reproduces relevant portions of section 108 of the TVPA, as of April 1, 2018, the beginning of the reporting period for this report. On January 8 and 9, 2019, prior to the end of the reporting period on March 31, 2019, Congress passed the Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Pub. L. 115-425) and the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2017 (Pub. L. 115-427), respectively. Among other changes, these acts amended section 108. For reference, this section as amended by these acts appears on page 514 of this report.

(5) Whether the government of the country extradites persons charged with acts of severe forms of trafficking in persons on substantially the same terms and to substantially the same extent as persons charged with other serious crimes (or, to the extent such extradition would be inconsistent with the laws of such country or with international agreements to which the country is a party, whether the government is taking all appropriate measures to modify or replace such laws and treaties so as to permit such extradition).

(6) Whether the government of the country monitors immigration and emigration patterns for evidence of severe forms of trafficking in persons and whether law enforcement agencies of the country respond to any such evidence in a manner that is consistent with the vigorous investigation and prosecution of acts of such trafficking, as well as with the protection of human rights of victims and the internationally recognized human right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's own country.

(7) Whether the government of the country vigorously investigates, prosecutes, convicts, and sentences public officials, including diplomats and soldiers, who participate in or facilitate severe forms of trafficking in persons, including nationals of the country who are deployed abroad as part of a diplomatic, peacekeeping, or other similar mission who engage in or facilitate severe forms of trafficking in persons or exploit victims of such trafficking, and takes all appropriate measures against officials who condone such trafficking. A government's failure to appropriately address public allegations against such public officials, especially once such officials have returned to their home countries, shall be considered inaction under these criteria. After reasonable requests from the Department of State for data regarding such investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences, a government which does not provide such data consistent with its resources shall be presumed not to have vigorously investigated, prosecuted, convicted, or sentenced such acts. During the periods prior to the annual report submitted on June 1, 2004, and June 1, 2005, and the periods afterwards until September 30 of each such year, the Secretary of State may disregard the presumption contained in the preceding sentence if the government has provided some data to the Department of State regarding such acts and the Secretary has determined that the government is making a good faith effort to collect such data.

(8) Whether the percentage of victims of severe forms of trafficking in the country that are non-citizens of such countries is insignificant.

(9) Whether the government has entered into effective, transparent partnerships, cooperative arrangements, or agreements that have resulted in concrete and measurable outcomes with

(A) domestic civil society organizations, private sector entities, or international nongovernmental organizations, or into multilateral or regional arrangements or agreements, to assist the government's efforts to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and punish traffickers; or

(B) the United States toward agreed goals and objectives in the collective fight against trafficking.

(10) Whether the government of the country, consistent with the capacity of such government, systematically monitors its efforts to satisfy the criteria described in paragraphs (1) through (8) and makes available publicly a periodic assessment of such efforts.

(11) Whether the government of the country achieves appreciable progress in eliminating severe forms of trafficking when compared to the assessment in the previous year.

(12) Whether the government of the country has made serious and sustained efforts to reduce the demand for

(A) commercial sex acts; and

(B) participation in international sex tourism by nationals of the country.

In parts of South America, recruiters and agents of charcoal camps deceive laborers and use coercive debts to force them to work in charcoal production. This dirty and often dangerous work also exposes them to serious health risks.

2019 TIP REPORT HEROES

Each year, the Department of State honors individuals around the world who have devoted their lives to the fight against human trafficking. These individuals include NGO workers, lawmakers, government officials, survivors of human trafficking, and concerned citizens who are committed to ending modern slavery. They are recognized for their tireless efforts—despite resistance, opposition, and threats to their lives—to protect victims, punish offenders, and educate stakeholders about human trafficking trends in their countries and abroad. For more information about current and past Trafficking in Persons Report Heroes, please visit the Trafficking in Persons Report Heroes Global Network at www.tipheroes.org.

ADÉLAÏDE SAWADOGO
BURKINO FASO

Adélaïde Sawadogo is a proven, unwavering force against human trafficking in Burkina Faso. For the past 26 years, she has worked unrelentingly to protect vulnerable populations. Sawadogo is a social worker at Keoogo, an NGO specializing in child protection and advocacy. At the helm of Keoogo's human trafficking efforts, Sawadogo has directly assisted more than 1,500 human trafficking victims, including those whom the government does not have the resources to support. Serving on more than a dozen national and international committees, she has represented Keoogo's rights-based model for victims and influenced government policy on human trafficking and child protection. She has accompanied human trafficking victims back to their country of origin to ensure safe passage through insecure regions and across borders, liaising with border officials and police along the journey. She has worked together with human trafficking survivors to design reintegration programs focused on income-generating skills that foster economic stability. Sawadogo not only secured pro-bono legal counsel for survivors wishing to press charges against their traffickers, she also followed up with the Burkinabe government to ensure these cases progressed.

Undaunted by discrimination and threats of violence, Sawadogo has challenged traditional norms and religious precepts to combat forced begging of children by corrupt Quranic teachers and worked to increase access to health care for children in some of Ouagadougou's most dangerous neighborhoods.

AGNES DE COLL
HUNGARY

For the past decade, Agnes De Coll has dedicated her life to the fight against human trafficking. She has become a leading voice on the issue in Hungary and currently serves as senior expert and head of the trafficking in persons unit at Hungarian Baptist Aid (HBA). Through HBA, serves as the country's main victim witness advocate, providing survivors with support and guidance throughout their cases. Under her leadership, HBA has opened shelters and crisis intervention centers that provide critical assistance and programs to support human trafficking victims and their ability to transition successfully to a new life in Hungary.

De Coll regularly identifies challenges within the Government of Hungary's anti-trafficking response and advocates for and implements both immediate and long-term solutions. As an example, De Coll spearheaded a practice now codified into Hungary's criminal procedural rules that allows a civil society representative to accompany a human trafficking survivor to law enforcement hearings and interviews to support the survivor through an often difficult and emotional process.

The Hungarian government, law enforcement officials, service providers, and communities around the country rely on De Coll's expertise, strong network of personal contacts, and trusted relationships with human trafficking victims. Her efforts have significantly elevated the importance of combating human trafficking in Hungary.

DANIEL RUEDA
ECUADOR

VERONICA SUPLIGUICHA
ECUADOR

As tireless advocates and experts on human trafficking, Daniel Rueda and Veronica Supliguicha have earned widespread recognition and respect in Ecuador for strengthening the Ecuadorian government's protection framework. They are true pioneers, having co-founded Alas de Colibrí, one of only two human trafficking shelters in Ecuador. Since 2012, Rueda and Supliguicha have served more than 300 Ecuadorian, Colombian, Venezuelan, and Peruvian survivors of both sex and labor trafficking. Under their leadership, Alas de Colibrí has developed a highly personalized and holistic approach to victim protection that empowers and uplifts human trafficking survivors, primarily adolescent girls, by providing them with essential psychological, legal, education, and health services. Alas de Colibrí delivers livelihood trainings that cover topics such as entrepreneurship, business management, banking, and finance, and offers artistic, cultural, and environmentally focused activities.

In addition to managing the shelter, Rueda and Supliguicha have led human trafficking prevention campaigns focused on reaching marginalized populations throughout Ecuador. The two lead a network of anti-trafficking NGOs in Ecuador and were instrumental in organizing civil society input into the government's national action plan to combat human trafficking.

The Ecuadorian government, local organizations, and multilateral bodies routinely seek their advice on human trafficking-related legislation and social programs for refugees, migrants, at-risk children and adolescents, and other vulnerable populations. Rueda and Supliguicha are a formidable team and strong advocates for victims of human trafficking.

SISTER GABRIELLA BOTTANI
ITALY

Sister Gabriella Bottani is one of the most prominent and influential anti-trafficking advocates within the Catholic diaspora. Bottani's fierce resolve to support human trafficking victims around the world developed after she met a victim of sex trafficking in Rome. She has since dedicated her ministry in Italy to combating the crime.

In 2015, Bottani was appointed as the international coordinator to lead Talitha Kum, a global network across 77 countries of more than 2,000 Catholic nuns working on the front lines to end human trafficking. Established by the International Union of Superiors General in 2009, Talitha Kum has reached thousands of people through anti-trafficking awareness campaigns, education programs, international conferences, training manuals, vocational training, and hands-on services. Bottani and other members of this dedicated network have served 10,000 survivors, accompanying them to shelters and residential communities, collaborating nationally and internationally on cases, and assisting with voluntary repatriation. In addition, Bottani has organized and served as a consultant for numerous training courses and seminars to help service providers identify and respond to potential human trafficking cases.

Before leading Talitha Kum, Bottani played an essential role in advancing anti-trafficking efforts in Brazil by serving vulnerable children and women in favelas and leading a national campaign against human trafficking before and during the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Throughout her career, her work has inspired generations of anti-trafficking advocates within the Catholic faith.

ROSELINE EGUABOR
ITALY

Roseline Eguabor is a stalwart supporter for Nigerian and West African human trafficking victims and survivors, helping them leave their trafficking situations and integrate into Italian society. She is currently working with the IOM to promote victim-centered human trafficking screening, identification, and protection protocols on a global scale. In Italy, she serves as a cultural mediator and social entrepreneur.

Eguabor understands first-hand the importance of building stable relationships with victims of human trafficking and tenaciously works to earn and keep their long-term trust. Eguabor draws from her experience as a trafficking survivor and from her familiarity with the psychological manipulation trafficking victims endure.

She often starts building relationships by meeting victims upon their arrival at migrant reception centers and disembarkation points. Fluent in six languages, Eguabor fills a critical need for interpretation services for trafficking victims seeking help with local governments, law enforcement, and hospitals.

For the past decade, Eguabor has also volunteered with the Pellegrine Della Terra Association, helping survivors apply for work permits, legal residency, and jobs. In 2012, she co-founded the social cooperative, Al Reve, which helps survivors participate in the formal labor market. One of Al Reve's projects supports a workshop in which trafficking survivors repurpose textiles to create bags, armchairs, and clothing for sale locally and online.

RAOUDHA LAABIDI
TUNISIA

As President of the National Authority to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Raoudha Laabidi has been the driving force behind the government's efforts to implement a new law to combat trafficking in persons. She demonstrated exceptional leadership and an uncanny ability to marshal scarce resources to ensure the Government of Tunisia continues to improve its ability to deliver a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy.

Civil society organizations and government officials have credited Laabidi for turning the National Authority into an effective interagency anti-trafficking body in just two years as president. Laabidi's unwavering dedication to the issue and her remarkable understanding of legal nuances and bureaucratic processes has enabled the National Authority to establish a headquarters as well as a temporary shelter for human trafficking victims.

A judge by training, Laabidi served as the first female president of the Tunisian Magistrates Union prior to her appointment and chaired it for two terms during the critical period of democratic transition from 2012 to 2015. Throughout her career, Laabidi has forged strong, sustainable partnerships with civil society and international organizations to leverage their resources and expertise.

Through a concerted civic education campaign, Laabidi has shed light on a previously unknown crime within Tunisian society, greatly increasing public understanding about human trafficking.

CAMILIOUS MACHINGURA
ZIMBABWE

Camilious Machingura is an inspiring anti-trafficking advocate within Zimbabwe and the broader southern Africa region. As the Team Leader for the Zimbabwe Community Development Association (ZCDA), Machingura plays a pivotal role in raising national awareness about trafficking in persons by dedicating countless hours engaging with national, regional, and international media outlets to ensure all Zimbabweans can identify potential trafficking indicators. His meticulous efforts to socialize Zimbabwe's 2014 anti-trafficking law with community leaders and law enforcement officials and organize trainings and intragovernmental dialogues have elevated human trafficking as a policy priority for the government. Machingura also helped the government develop standard operating procedures to increase the effectiveness of its national referral mechanism for human trafficking victims.

Machingura is generous with his time and personal resources, helping trafficking survivors rebuild their lives and empowering vulnerable populations in rural communities throughout Zimbabwe to recognize traffickers' fraudulent recruitment tactics. ZCDA is a grassroots organization specializing in protecting vulnerable populations, promoting human rights, and advocating for the Government of Zimbabwe to prioritize providing the fundamental humanitarian and social services to its communities. Through ZCDA, Machingura has provided reintegration and counseling services to more than 150 Zimbabwean survivors whom traffickers fraudulently recruited to work in Kuwait in 2017, and designed livelihood programs aimed at providing them with the skills and abilities critical for supporting themselves and their families.

Young children work in a garment factory. In many countries, child labor is illegal, but factory owners force children to work in garment factories like these, often under dangerous conditions.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1

ARGENTINA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA
THE BAHAMAS
BAHRAIN
BELGIUM
CANADA
CHILE
COLOMBIA
CYPRUS
CZECH REPUBLIC
ESTONIA
FINLAND
FRANCE
GEORGIA
GUYANA
ISRAEL
JAPAN
KOREA, SOUTH
LITHUANIA
LUXEMBOURG
NETHERLANDS
NEW ZEALAND
NORWAY
PHILIPPINES
PORTUGAL
SLOVENIA
SPAIN
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
TAIWAN
UNITED KINGDOM
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TIER 2

ALBANIA
ANTIGUA & BARBUDA
ARMENIA
ARUBA
BENIN
BOTSWANA
BRAZIL
BULGARIA
BURKINA FASO
CABO VERDE
CAMEROON
CHAD
COSTA RICA
COTE D'IVOIRE
CROATIA
DENMARK
DJIBOUTI
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
ECUADOR
EGYPT
EL SALVADOR
ESWATINI
ETHIOPIA
GERMANY
GHANA
GREECE
GUATEMALA
GUINEA
HAITI
HONDURAS
HONG KONG
ICELAND
INDIA
INDONESIA
IRELAND
ITALY
JAMAICA
JORDAN
KENYA
KOSOVO
KUWAIT
LATVIA
LEBANON
MACAU
MACEDONIA
MADAGASCAR
MALI
MALTA
MAURITIUS
MEXICO
MICRONESIA
MOLDOVA
MONGOLIA
MOROCCO
MOZAMBIQUE
NAMIBIA
NEPAL
NIGER
NIGERIA
OMAN
PAKISTAN
PALAU
PANAMA
PARAGUAY
PERU
POLAND
QATAR
RWANDA
ST. LUCIA
ST. MAARTEN
ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES
SENEGAL
SERBIA
SEYCHELLES
SINGAPORE
SLOVAKIA
SOLOMON ISLANDS
SURINAME
TAJIKISTAN
THAILAND
TIMOR-LESTE
TOGO
TONGA
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
TUNISIA
TURKEY
UGANDA
UKRAINE
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
URUGUAY
ZAMBIA
ZIMBABWE

TIER 2 WATCH LIST

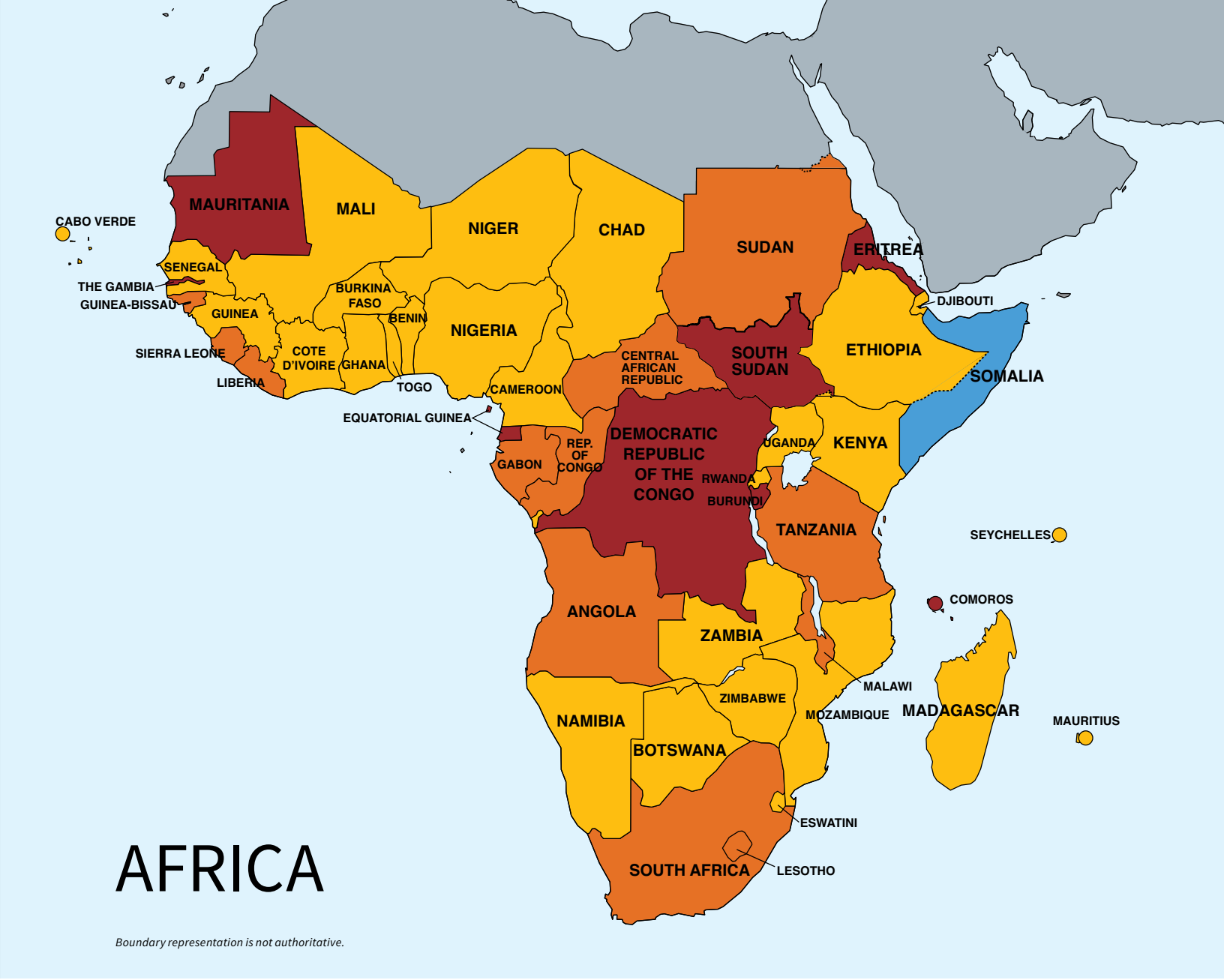
AFGHANISTAN
ALGERIA
ANGOLA
AZERBAIJAN
BANGLADESH
BARBADOS
BELIZE
BRUNEI
BOLIVIA
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA
CAMBODIA
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
CONGO, REPUBLIC OF THE
CURAÇAO
FIJI
GABON
GUINEA-BISSAU
HUNGARY
IRAQ
KAZAKHSTAN
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
LAOS
LESOTHO
LIBERIA
MALAWI
MALAYSIA
MALDIVES
MARSHALL ISLANDS
MONTENEGRO
NICARAGUA
ROMANIA
SIERRA LEONE
SOUTH AFRICA
SRI LANKA
SUDAN
TANZANIA
UZBEKISTAN
VIETNAM

TIER 3

BELARUS
BHUTAN
BURMA
BURUNDI
CHINA (PRC)
COMOROS
CONGO, DEMOCRATIC REP. OF THE
CUBA
EQUATORIAL GUINEA
ERITREA
THE GAMBIA
IRAN
KOREA, NORTH
MAURITANIA
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
RUSSIA
SAUDI ARABIA
SOUTH SUDAN
SYRIA
TURKMENISTAN
VENEZUELA

SPECIAL CASE

LIBYA
SOMALIA
YEMEN



TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3 | SPECIAL CASE

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2012	493 (273)	252 (177)	10,043 (6,544)	4
2013	572 (245)	341 (192)	10,096 (2,250)	7
2014	811 (49)	317 (33)	9,523 (1,308)	4
2015	1,517 (53)	719 (8)	12,125 (3,531)	6
2016	1,293 (54)	1,120 (21)	18,296 (13,205)	4
2017	1,325 (98)	515 (34)	26,517 (5,902)	2
2018	1,253 (37)	1,190 (29)	24,407(3,749)	2

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

EAST ASIA & PACIFIC

Boundary representation is not authoritative.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2012	1,682 (115)	1,251 (103)	8,521 (1,804)	4
2013	2,460 (188)	1,271 (39)	7,886 (1,077)	3
2014	1,938 (88)	969 (16)	6,349 (1,084)	3
2015	3,414 (193)	1,730 (130)	13,990 (3,533)	10
2016	2,137 (51)	1,953 (31)	9,989 (310)	7
2017	2,949 (77)	3,227 (72)	4,915 (669)	0
2018	2,351 (63)	1,275 (16)	5,466 (291)	1

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

* Islands in the Caribbean Sea—although part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and St. Maarten are covered by the State Department's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2012	3,161 (361)	1,818 (112)	11,905 (2,306)	3
2013	3,223 (275)	2,684 (127)	10,374 (1,863)	35
2014	4,199 (197)	1,585 (69)	11,910 (3,531)	5
2015	4,990 (272)	1,692 (245)	11,112 (3,733)	8
2016	2,703 (201)	1,673 (40)	13,349 (3,192)	3
2017	2,548 (179)	1,257 (53)	12,750 (3,330)	0
2018	2,394 (234)	1,379 (80)	16,838 (2,675)	1

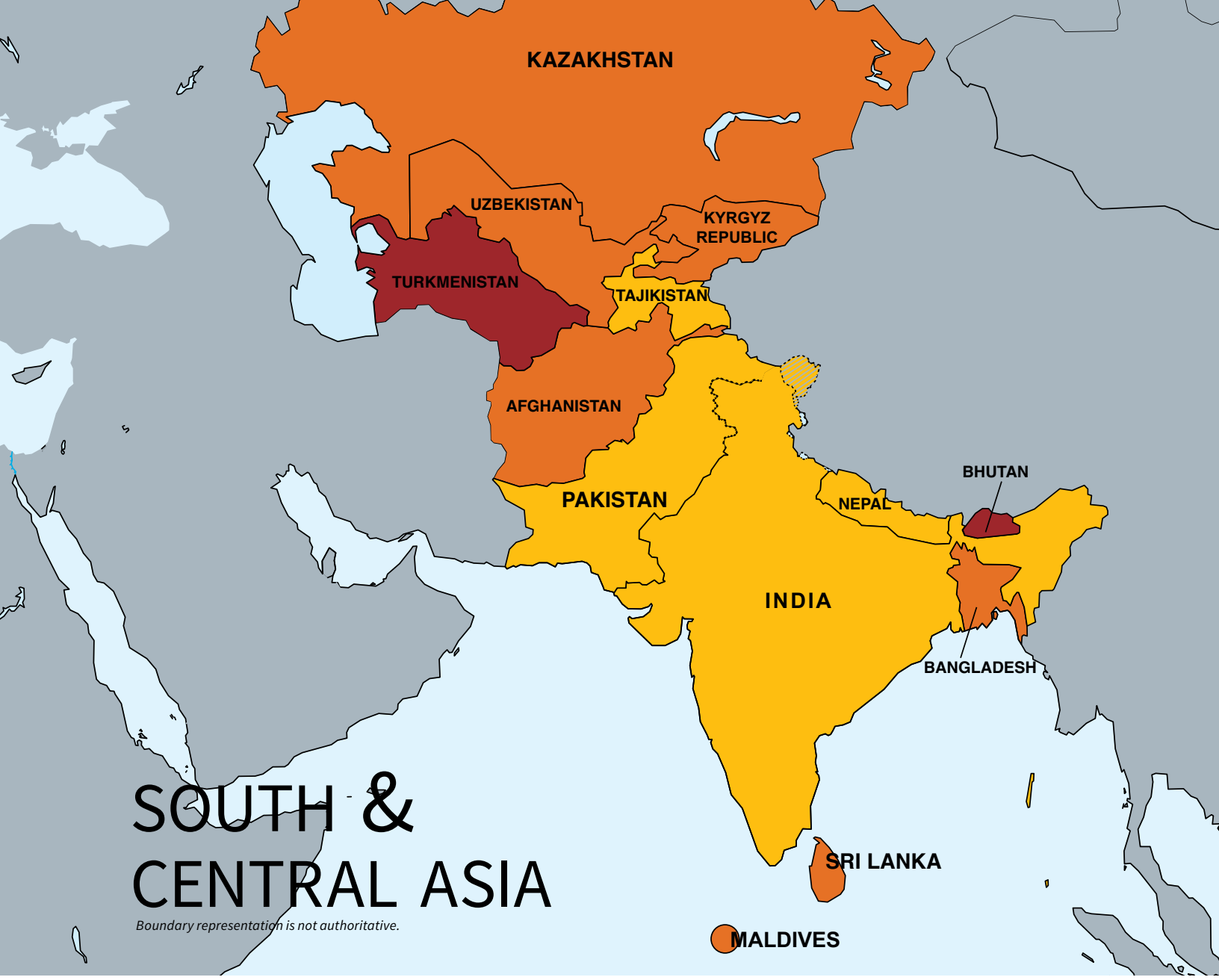
The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3 | SPECIAL CASE

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2012	249 (29)	149 (15)	4,047 (1,063)	1
2013	119 (25)	60 (4)	1,460 (172)	4
2014	320 (5)	144 (25)	3,388 (2,460)	0
2015	480 (31)	343 (31)	6,068 (156)	0
2016	996 (591)	1,187 (582)	3,292 (185)	4
2017	974 (112)	104 (11)	1,834 (53)	0
2018	738 (10)	155 (7)	2,675 (83)	0

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.



SOUTH & CENTRAL ASIA

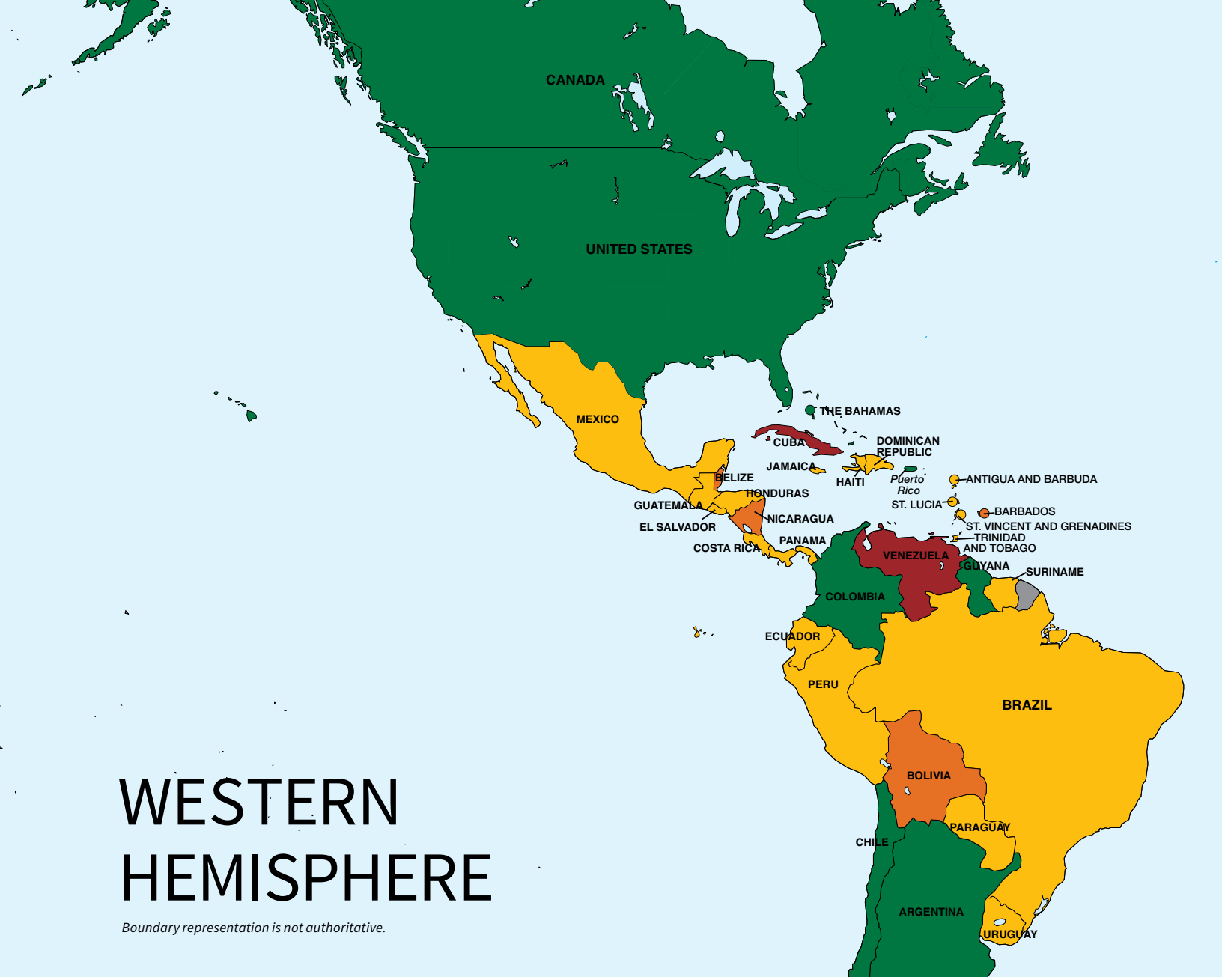
Boundary representation is not authoritative.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2012	1,043 (6)	874 (4)	4,415 (2,150)	1
2013	1,904 (259)	974 (58)	7,124 (1,290)	5
2014	1,839 (12)	958 (10)	4,878 (1,041)	3
2015	6,930 (225)	1,468 (16)	24,867 (1,191)	0
2016	6,297 (72)	2,193 (19)	14,706 (464)	5
2017	8,105 (264)	1,063 (48)	40,857 (11,813)	2
2018	3,102 (41)	2,465 (9)	24,544 (1,841)	1

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.



WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Boundary representation is not authoritative.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2012	1,077 (369)	402 (107)	7,639 (3,501)	8
2013	1,182 (207)	446 (50)	7,818 (3,951)	4
2014	944 (67)	470 (63)	8,414 (2,014)	5
2015	1,796 (83)	663 (26)	9,661 (2,118)	6
2016	1,513 (69)	946 (24)	8,821 (109)	2
2017	1,571 (139)	969 (114)	10,011 (2,139)	1
2018	1,252 (72)	1,017 (177)	11,683 (2,370)	0

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

Rohingya children walk in a monsoon in a refugee camp in Bangladesh. Some traffickers exploit the vulnerability of Rohingya men, women, and children from refugee camps to subject them to both sex and labor trafficking, including domestic servitude.

HOW TO READ A COUNTRY NARRATIVE

This page shows a sample country narrative. The tier ranking justification for each country in this year's report appears in the first paragraph of each country narrative and includes language that explicitly highlights the factors supporting a given tier ranking. The Prosecution, Protection, and Prevention sections of each country narrative describe how a government has or has not addressed the relevant TVPA minimum standards (see page 40), during the reporting period. This truncated narrative gives a few examples.

The country's tier ranking is based on the government's efforts to combat trafficking as measured against the TVPA minimum standards and compared to its efforts in the preceding year.

COUNTRY X: TIER 2 WATCH LIST

Synopsis of key developments that support the country's tier ranking.

The Government of X does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated significant efforts during the reporting period by undertaking awareness raising efforts and reaffirming its commitment to enact anti-trafficking legislation. However, the government did not demonstrate increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period. The government did not show evidence of overall progress in prosecuting and punishing trafficking offenders and identifying victims of trafficking. Therefore X remained on Tier 2 Watch List for the second consecutive year.

Prioritized recommendations for how the government can better meet the TVPA minimum standards.

PRIORITIZED RECOMMENDATIONS:
Enact the draft comprehensive anti-trafficking l[illegible] significantly increase efforts to investigate and prosecu[illegible] and convict and punish trafficking offender[illegible] apply formal procedures to identify [illegible] vulnerable groups, such as those arre[illegible] or prostitution: and collect, disaggreg[illegible] counter-trafficking law enforcement d[illegible]

TVPA Minimum Standards 1-3 – whether the government prohibits all forms of trafficking and prescribes adequate criminal punishments.

Summary of the government's anti-trafficking laws and law enforcement efforts.

PROSECUTION
The Government of Country X decreased efforts to investigate and prosecute trafficking offenses during the reporting period. Country X does not prohibit all forms of trafficking, but it criminalizes slavery under Section 321 and forced labor under Section 322 of its criminal law. The prescribed penalty for forced labor—up to six months' imprisonment—is not sufficiently stringent. Article 297 prohibits forced or coerced prostitution, and the prostitution of a child below age 15 even if there was no compulsion or redress; the prescribed penalty is up to 15 years' imprisonment, which is commensurate with penalties prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. Draft revisions to the penal code have not yet been enacted. An unconfirmed report indicates that four traffickers were charged with fraudulently issuing visas to workers who they then exploited. Two were reportedly deported, and two were reportedly convicted. The government did not confirm nor deny the existence of this case. The government did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government employees complicit in human trafficking offenses.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(1) – whether the government vigorously investigates and prosecutes trafficking offenses; convicts and punishes trafficking offenders; and provides data on these actions.

Summary of the government's efforts to ensure trafficking victims are identified and provided adequate protection.

PROTECTION
Country X maintained minimal efforts to protect victims of trafficking during the reporting period. Although health care facilities reportedly refer suspected abuse cases to the government anti-trafficking shelter for investigation, the government continues to lack a systematic procedure for law enforcement to identify victims of trafficking among vulnerable populations, such as foreign workers awaiting deportation and women arrested for prostitution; as a result, victims may be punished and automatically deported without being identified as victims or offered protection. The government reported that the Ministry of the Interior has a process by which it refers victims to the trafficking shelter; however, this process is underutilized in practice. The trafficking shelter assisted 24 individuals during the reporting period and provided them with a wide range of services, including full medical treatment and legal and job assistance.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(2) – whether the government adequately protects victims of trafficking by identifying them and ensuring they have access to necessary services.

Country X commonly fines and detains potential trafficking victim[illegible] for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being subjected t[illegible] trafficking, such as immigration violations and running away from their sponsors, without determining whether the individuals are victims of trafficking.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(2) – whether the government ensures victims are not penalized for the unlawful acts their traffickers forced them to commit and encourages victim participation in investigations and prosecutions, including by providing legal alternatives to their removal from the country.

Country X sometimes offers temporary relief from deportation so that victims can testify as witnesses against their employers. However, victims were generally not permitted to leave the country if there is a pending case. The government did not routinely encourage victims to assist in trafficking investigations or consistently offer victims alternatives to removal to countries where they may face retribution or hardship.

PREVENTION
Country X increased efforts to prevent trafficking in persons during the reporting period. While the government made no apparent effort to amend provisions of Country X's sponsorship law to help prevent the forced labor of migrant workers, the government did start to enforce other parts of the law to the benefit of migrant workers. One provision in the sponsorship law continues to require foreign workers to request exit permits from their sponsors in order to leave Country X. Although this may increase migrant workers' vulnerability to forced labor, the law created a new process through which a laborer who was not granted an exit permit due to a sponsor's refusal or other circumstances can seek one by other means. The Ministry of Labor sponsored media campaigns and organized informational workshops for officials, NGOs, and labor recruitment agencies. However, the government did not provide anti-trafficking training or guidance to its diplomatic personnel during the reporting period. The government has a national plan of action to address trafficking in persons, but did not publicly disseminate the plan or take steps to implement it during the reporting period. The government did not take any public awareness campaigns aimed at reducing the demand for commercial sex acts in Country X, but it government convicted two of its nationals for soliciting children for sex in other countries and sentenced them to 10 years' imprisonment.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(3) – whether the government is making adequate efforts to prevent human trafficking.

Summary of the government's efforts to prevent human trafficking.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(12) – whether the government has made efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts, and, if applicable, participation in international sex tourism by its nationals.

TRAFFICKING PROFILE
As reported over the past five years, Country X is a transit and destination country for men and women subjected to forced labor and, to a much lesser extent, forced prostitution. Men and women from South [illegible] Southeast Asia, East Africa, and the Middle East volun[illegible] X as laborers and domestic servants, but s[illegible] as indicative of involuntary servitude. [illegible] of serious harm, including threats [illegible] withholding of pay; restrictions [illegible] the confiscation of passports [illegible], mental, and sexual abuse. In [illegible] kers have found that the terms [illegible] wholly different from those they agr[illegible] es. Individuals employed as domestic servants [illegible] vulnerable to trafficking since they are not covered under the provisions of the labor law. A small number of foreign workers transit Country X and are forced to work on farms in Country Y. Country X is also a destination for women who migrate and become involved in prostitution, but the extent to which these women are subjected to forced prostitution is unknown.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(7) – whether the government has made adequate efforts to address the involvement in or facilitation of human trafficking by government employees.

Overview of human trafficking in the country and factors affecting vulnerability to trafficking of the country's nationals abroad.