

Commission on Crime Prevention and Justice

Strengthening coordination of efforts to combat
human trafficking



Forum	Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
Issue:	Strengthening coordination of efforts to combat human trafficking
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Introduction

While over 150 years have passed since the Emancipation Proclamation in the United States and the Abolition Act in the United Kingdom, slavery is still widespread. Human trafficking has become a prominent modern-day issue, viewed as contemporary servitude, directly violating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 4, Freedom from Slavery. It is the fastest growing criminal activity in the world, with an estimated 40.3 million victims and very low prosecution rates for traffickers.

Trafficking can happen within a country or a community and affects all people from a range of different backgrounds, although some members of society are more vulnerable than others. The majority of trafficked people became victims through attempting to escape poverty, persecution, or discrimination, or hope to improve their lives to support their families. Traffickers often lure in these vulnerable victims with false promises, such as job offers, relationships or money, only to then trap them and often seize their documents.

Social media and online platforms are increasingly used by traffickers to identify and recruit victims in addition to advertising services provided by victims. The COVID-19 pandemic has also worsened economic and social inequalities, which are among some of the root causes of human trafficking.

Definition of Key Terms

Human trafficking

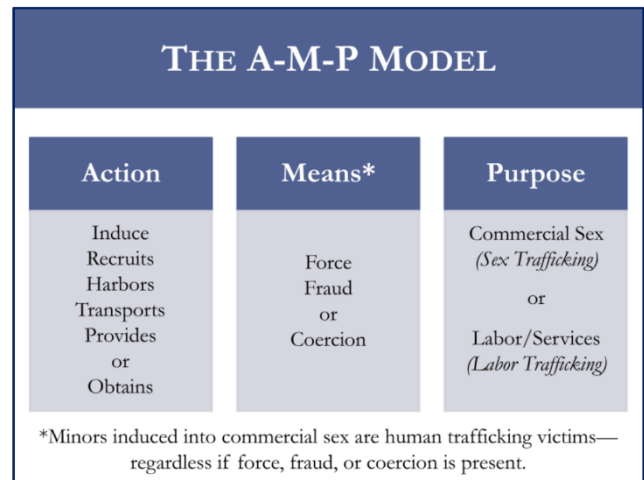
Human trafficking is the recruitment and transfer of people through deception or coercion for exploitation to generate profit. Physical and psychological harm is often induced on victims to control them.



Action-Means-Purpose Model

The Action-Means-Purpose Model is a mechanism used to demonstrate the definition of trafficking in persons, as seen in the United States Trafficking Victims Protection Act (2000). This law launched new criminal offenses and protections for victims of trafficking. According to the model, trafficking occurs when a perpetrator, or trafficker, takes any of the Actions (see Figure 1), followed by utilising a Means, for the Purpose of forcing the victim to provide commercial sex acts or labour. With the exception of minors under the age of 18 being coerced into commercial sex, one element from each column, at minimum, must be present in order for a potential human trafficking situation to be established.

Action + Means + Purpose = Human Trafficking



Sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation entails men and women who have either involuntarily joined the commercial or private sex industry or have joined voluntarily but cannot leave. It also includes all children in the commercial sex industry.

Commercial sex act

A commercial sex act is the performance of prostitution, pornography, or a sexual act in exchange for basic necessities such as food, shelter, money, or clothes.

Forced labour

Forced labour is work or services done by someone involuntarily, whilst being threatened with punishment. This can include domestic, agricultural, construction work, and more.

Debt bondage

Debt bondage is when personal debt is used to forcefully obtain labour from a person and sometimes also their family. This can go on for generations until the debt is 'paid off' through labour.



Frequently, the total work done once someone is released from their debt adds up to more than the initial amount of debt.

General Overview

Principle types of human trafficking

There is an abundance of reasons for human trafficking. Main examples include sexual exploitation, forced labour, organ harvesting and forced marriage. These examples affect people from a multitude of backgrounds and cultures with the most prominent type differing per region. Yet, there still remains high uncertainty and underreporting of data due to the sophisticated nature of the crime and few survivors speaking out. Those who have been sexually trafficked often fear prosecution as a result of coming forward due to the stigma and criminalization of prostitution in most nations worldwide.

Sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation is a purpose of human trafficking which almost exclusively affects females. Forms of sexual exploitation exist within a plethora of scenes and businesses, including prostitution, online pornography, sex tourism, fake massage businesses, escort services and more. It is a market-driven criminal industry, thriving due to the high demand. As buyers increase the demand and fuel the industry, traffickers search for new victims to seek greater profits. Main types of traffickers for sexual exploitation include romantic partners or family members. These traffickers often recruit their victims through grooming, using love or protection to make victims vulnerable to manipulation. The vulnerability of victims allows traffickers to trick them into unknowingly cooperating with their own exploitation.

Forced labour

Labour trafficking is another one of the main types of human trafficking, estimated to affect 24.9 million women, men, and children worldwide. It has the highest prevalence in Asia, with every 4 in 1000 people being a victim. The most common areas of work this affects is domestic labour, followed by construction work. Forced labour often occurs in conditions of



poverty, unemployment, low levels of education, and a weak rule of law, as traffickers use these issues to recruit victims with false job advertisements. Due to weak or non-existent laws, traffickers can often enjoy impunity, profiting from the low-risk labour. Victims are often forced to live in inhumane conditions, such as in shacks which are shared with other victims. These shacks and small houses often lack basic necessities, such as heating and plumbing. Other examples of the ill treatment that victims face include threats, harm, restriction of movement, withheld wages and retention of documents.

Vulnerability

The reasons for trafficking often root from demand for cheap labour and sex as well as the decision traffickers to exploit others for profit. While, naturally, this explanation may differ per situation and region, there are several commonly recognized factors which increase the likelihood of being manipulated into a life of servitude and abuse. One factor is the exploitation of individual's aspirations to migrate, in hope for a better life. Traffickers can initially use this goal to recruit victims, gaining trust or control, only to then become coercive once they have moved the victim. Motives for migration include escaping poverty and oppression, a lack of economic opportunities, war, and natural disasters. These factors significantly increase the vulnerability of victims due to their desperation to move.

Another substantial pull method for victims to be trafficked is the (false) promise of money. Parents may migrate for money in hope to provide for their family, ensuring their child is given a better life. Alternatively, parents may also sell their children, not always only for money but sometimes also the hopes that their child can escape the chronic poverty within which they reside. With the increased introduction of internet and television in low-income countries, this too may foster desires for people to move to more developed countries, sourcing from false realities online. The internet has also become a tool for traffickers to enlist new people through advertisements and messaging.

Consequences

Victims of human trafficking can suffer from long-lasting physical and psychological trauma as a result of the conditions they have endured. Many survivors experience post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety as well as physical injuries caused by beatings and torture undergone throughout their captivity. Victims of trafficking can become vulnerable to health risks



such as sexually transmitted diseases or exposure to harmful chemicals. There is also a risk of victims becoming traffickers to escape victimisation, only adding to the vicious cycle of human trafficking.

In order to reduce human trafficking and the harmful effects, many organisations have been set up to help stop the crime. Some examples include The United Nations' Children Fund (UNICEF), which mainly focuses on the rights and well-being of children in their fight against trafficking and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) which primarily addresses the victims of forced labour. Organisations often intend to prosecute traffickers, protect victims, and prevent further human trafficking.

Major Parties Involved

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

The UNODC has been working against illicit drug trade, organized crime, corruption, and terrorism. Their aim is to achieve health, security, and justice for all by tackling these threats and promoting peace. In terms of human trafficking, the UNODC strives for the eradication of the crime and the conviction of perpetrators. It also works towards safeguarding people from abuse, neglect, exploitation or even death which is associated with human trafficking.

Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT)

ICAT is an organisation which intends to improve collaboration amongst UN agencies and other relevant international organisations to facilitate a holistic and comprehensive approach to preventing and combating trafficking in persons, including protection and support for victims of trafficking. There are over 25 members of ICAT. Its functions include coordination of information exchange, optimal use of existing information, frameworks, and resources and to support and counsel the UN and other organizations on their present strategies against human trafficking.

United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT)

The United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) was launched in March 2007 by a series of agencies to promote the global fight on human trafficking, stemming from international agreements reached at the United Nations. Due to the scale of human trafficking,



UN.GIFT works along different shareholders to develop effective tools to fight human trafficking as it believes that coordination of efforts is necessary to deal with the crime.

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

The International Labour Organisation unifies governments, employers, and workers to establish appropriate labour standards for women and men. It develops policies and programmes to support such standards and seeks working rights, employment opportunities and social protection of workers. Through these aims, it also intends to prevent human trafficking through labour rights for all. In 2014, all members adopted a new Protocol emphasising the relationship between forced labour and trafficking, with stress on protection, prevention, and compensation.

Timeline of Key Events

You can include a small paragraph to explain the timeline. Otherwise, you should follow the format specified below:

Date	Description of event
December 10 th , 1948	Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted
December 12 th , 2000	Palermo Protocol Established
2004	UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Girls appointed
2006	Stop the Traffik founded
July 27 th , 2006	ECOSOC Resolution 2006/27 passed
March 2007	ICAT established
March 26 th , 2007	UN.GIFT established
July 25 th , 2008	ECOSOC Resolution 2008/33 passed
July 30 th , 2010	United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons
December 20 th , 2012	General Assembly Resolution 67/190 passed
2018	CCPCJ Resolutions 27/2 and 27/3 passed
November, 2021	High level meeting on the Appraisal of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons



UN involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 12 December 2000
- Strengthening international cooperation in preventing and combating trafficking in persons and protecting victims of such trafficking, 27 July 2006 (ECOSOC 2006/27)
- Strengthening coordination of the United Nations and other efforts in fighting trafficking in persons, 25 July 2008 (ECOSOC Resolution 2008/33)
- United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, 30 July 2010 (A/RES/64/293)
- Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons, 20 December 2012 (A/RES/67/190)
- Preventing and combating trafficking in persons facilitated by the criminal misuse of information and communications technologies, 2018 (CCPCJ 27/2)
- Improving the protection of children against trafficking in persons, including by addressing the criminal misuse of information and communications technologies, 2018 (CCPCJ 27/3)

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, otherwise known as the Palermo Protocol, is the first legally binding treaty with an international definition for human trafficking. This definition served to be an essential tool to detect forms of exploitation which compose human trafficking as well as the identification of victims. The 178 nations which ratified the protocol legally must criminalise human trafficking and develop anti-trafficking laws. Although this is an important step to combat the crime, remain unpunished and conviction rates remain low, with many countries recording no convictions at all.



The establishment of ICAT allowed a better coordination of efforts to combat human trafficking. As multiple organisations which individually sought methods to solve trafficking came together, ICAT allowed for gaps in protocols and laws to be analysed, ensuring a well-rounded approach to trafficking of people. Since founding ICAT, multiple papers regarding key information about trafficking have been published. It also added an extra 'P' to the '3P framework' for Partnership. The other P's stand for Prosecution, Protection and Prevention. This highlights how joint efforts are necessary in order to combat trafficking, which is the aim of ICAT.

The resolutions in CCPCJ added a new layer to solving human trafficking. By addressing the influence of the technology and the Internet on human trafficking, it aimed to create awareness campaigns and use technology to find potential traffickers in businesses supply chains. This has been successful in the sense that more public movements, such as the Blue Heart Campaign launched by the UNDOC and Open Your Eyes to Human Trafficking by UN.GIFT. These campaigns seek to raise awareness as well as encourage participation from civil society, governments, and individuals to take action to prevent human trafficking. However, this resolution has not been hugely successful as many victims still are enlisted and exploited online.

Possible Solutions

There are numerous organisations which all act towards combatting human trafficking. However, many of these have different agendas when addressing the issue. For example, UNICEF's goals are to protect the wellbeing of the child whilst other organisations may prioritise prosecution of traffickers. Opposing policies and priorities make collaboration between groups difficult and information is often not shared. Solutions to strengthen the coordination of efforts to combat trafficking could include choosing what to prioritise for all Member States and how to ensure insightful communication between Nations and organisations could improve.

Moreover, especially in the case of cross-border trafficking, policies should be made to strengthen communication between countries where information is shared about potential traffickers and victims. This can reduce trafficking across borders as routes can be followed from the source to the destination. Multilateral agreements and disclosure of vital information could speed up the process of finding victims and persecuting perpetrators. High-risk countries could also increase patrolling and security along borders to survey the flow in and out the country.



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Appendix or Appendices

Appendix I

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 12 December 2000



<https://www.unhcr.org/protection/migration/4d52493b6/protocol-prevent-suppress-punish-trafficking-persons-especially-women-children.html>

Appendix II

Strengthening international cooperation in preventing and combating trafficking in persons and protecting victims of such trafficking, 27 July 2006 (ECOSOC 2006/27)

https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/Crime_Resolutions/2000-2009/2006/ECOSOC/Resolution_2006-27.pdf

Appendix III

Strengthening coordination of the United Nations and other efforts in fighting trafficking in persons, 25 July 2008 (ECOSOC Resolution 2008/33)

<https://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2008/resolution%202008-33.pdf>

Appendix IV

United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, 30 July 2010 (A/RES/64/293)

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N16/453/06/PDF/N1645306.pdf?OpenElement>

Appendix V

Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons, 20 December 2012 (A/RES/67/190)

https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_67_190.pdf

Appendix VI

Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage, 2017

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575479.pdf

Appendix VII



Preventing and combating trafficking in persons facilitated by the criminal misuse of information and communications technologies, 2018 (CCPCJ 27/2)

https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_27/CCPCJ_res2018/CCPCJ_Resolution_27_2.pdf

Appendix VIII

Improving the protection of children against trafficking in persons, including by addressing the criminal misuse of information and communications technologies, 2018 (CCPCJ 27/3)

https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_27/CCPCJ_res2018/CCPCJ_Resolution_27_3.pdf

Appendix IX

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, 2020

https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tip/2021/GLOTIP_2020_15jan_web.pdf



