



Get HOPE Global

## **Human Trafficking**

Trafficking is one of the most horrific end results of economic and social disparities that increase the vulnerability of millions of people. Such inequality allows many men, women, and children to be considered little more than disposable commodities. The modern-day slave trade is one of the fastest growing industries in the world, enslaving more than 30 million individuals today<sup>1</sup>. After drug dealing, trafficking of humans is the second-largest criminal industry in the world<sup>2</sup>. Human trafficking reportedly generates a profit of \$32 billion every year<sup>2</sup>.

The United Nations defines human trafficking as the acquisition of people by improper means such as force, fraud, or deception, with the aim of exploiting them. This exploitation includes sex slavery, coerced militia participation and forced labor, or any other practice involving the violation of human rights and dignity<sup>3</sup>.

### ***Economic, Environmental, and Social Factors Affecting Human Trafficking<sup>4</sup>***

- Economic vulnerability: Factors driving the increase and expansion of human trafficking not only include poverty itself, but also lack of employment options, increased economic disparity, and rapid and severe economic decline.
- Race to the bottom on labor standards/cost of production: Increased international competition to produce consumer goods at the lowest cost possible can, and has, exacerbated abusive labor practices, including forced labor and slave-like practices.
- Fluidity of capital: Recent advances in information systems have made the profits from criminal activity easier to transfer and launder rapidly across the globe.
- Corruption: State corruption is a serious concern in many societies and is closely tied to the spread of trafficking. Corruption of state representatives responsible for public and social welfare can be exacerbated by economic decline.
- Emergency and conflict: Natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies are linked to an increased risk of human trafficking. Displaced and endangered people make desperate decisions, including relying upon smugglers in an attempt to get out of harm's way.
- HIV/AIDS: Not only is human trafficking creating greater risk of exposure to HIV and AIDS, the HIV and AIDS crisis itself is driving greater victimization. Without the support of a family structure, children who have lost their parents to AIDS are particularly vulnerable to traffickers, and young children are trafficked precisely because they are less likely to be HIV-positive.
- Gender discrimination: Although men and boys are also vulnerable to trafficking, a significant social factor underlying trafficking is the low status of women and girls. Women are particularly hard hit when employment options and social safety nets disappear, or where they never existed. Current limitations on girls' access to education and information also increase their vulnerability.



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### ***Combating Human Trafficking – UN Recommendations***

The United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons consists of measures relating to data collection and research; border measures; economic and social policies aimed at addressing the root causes of trafficking in human beings; awareness-raising measures; and legislative measures<sup>3</sup>. The economic and social policies recommended include:

- Improving children’s access to educational and vocational opportunities and increasing the level of school attendance, in particular by girls and minority groups.
- Enhancing job opportunities for women by facilitating business opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Developing programs that offer livelihood options and include basic education, literacy, communication, and other skills, and that reduce barriers to entrepreneurship.
- Promoting flexible financing and access to credit, including microcredit and low interest.

### ***How Get HOPE Global Works to Alleviate Human Trafficking***

Get HOPE Global’s faith-based business training program and microloan opportunities address the above UN recommendations. The training program works to encourage, equip, and empower impoverished women and at-risk girls with life-giving HOPE to build a better business, build a better life, and build a transforming faith in Jesus Christ. Not only are the girls and women taught basic business skills and given the opportunity to secure a microloan to start or improve their own businesses, but they are also taught character-driven biblical lessons that support success in business and in life. Through a comprehensive one-year program, they are empowered to develop a business plan, launch or expand a business, and plan for long-term sustainability via ethical business practices. At the completion of the program, women are empowered to move out of the imprisonment of poverty and build a better future.

<sup>1</sup> Not For Sale Campaign. “Slavery” 2014. <<http://www.notforsalecampaign.org/about/slavery/>>

<sup>2</sup> Belser, Patrick. “Forced Labor and Human Trafficking: Estimating the Profits” International Labour Office 2005. <<http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1016&context=forcedlabor>>

<sup>3</sup> United Nations. “United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons” 2010. <<http://www.un.org/ga/president/64/letters/trafficking290710.pdf>>

<sup>4</sup> Catholic Relief Services. “Human Trafficking: An Overview” 2014. <[http://crs.org/public-policy/in\\_depth.cfm](http://crs.org/public-policy/in_depth.cfm)>