

# The Human Cost of Trafficking

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## ABSTRACT

Every year, millions of people worldwide are bought or sold for purposes of forced labor or sexual exploitation. While the causes of human trafficking may vary widely, there is strong consensus that human trafficking is a crime with huge consequences to individuals, groups, nations, and the world at large. The human cost is not only substantial, but prolonged, and overwhelmingly skewed towards women and children. This article reviews the broad literature on human trafficking regarding its various associated human costs. It will analyze the domains and levels of the cost, as well as the factors accounting for the costs. In addition to the economic cost of human trafficking, which is the explanation most often offered by scholars, other types of costs, for example, psychological, emotional, and physical will be investigated. Overall, the message is clear, the mitigation of the human cost of human trafficking is hard to achieve because of the complexity of the phenomenon and the tenacity of those benefiting from it. An analysis of the human cost may help to drive greater global policy mobilization towards ensuring that the practice is at least curtailed, even if it cannot be totally eradicated

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## Introduction

Social problems such as wars, civil unrests, climate disasters have social and human costs. So is human trafficking. According to Jac-Kucharski (2012), the cost of human trafficking is borne globally, but its complex nature makes the precise figures and impact hard to calculate. However, some advocates have provided estimates of their impacts on humans. In their 2013 documentary, human trafficking advocates and filmmakers Sadhive Siddhalli Shree and Sakhivi Anubhuti, suggest that over 25 million people are exploited worldwide, the youngest victim is one year old, only 1% of the victims survive, and 80% do not seek help. As frightening as these statistics are, current research shows that the situation has not changed much. The Council on Foreign Relations (2020) places the number of victims worldwide as between 20 to 40 million, majority of whom are trafficked either for labor or sexual exploitation.

## Definitions

An Online dictionary, "English Club," defines human cost as "damage or loss caused to people or societies including material loss, social costs, psychological damage, etc." (Errey, n.d.). This definition shows that the cost is harmful at multiple levels, and borne by the individual victims, their families, and the society at large. Wheaton, Schauer and Galli (2010) suggest that human trafficking is characterized by injustice in which power is misused over

others to take away their life, dignity, liberty, or the fruits of their labor. The cost of this injustice can be both short and long term, and in essence, reduces the individuals to high levels of degradation and incapacitation that make their contributions to their family and society less than optimal.

Given its overall harmful effects, it is not surprising then that human trafficking is considered a crime by international and many State laws (Showalter, 2108). The following quotation from former President Obama's remarks at the Clinton Global Initiative in September 2012 captures some of its consequences, and highlights its severity, calling it "modern day slavery."

It is a debasement of our common humanity. It ought to concern every community because it tears at our social fabric, said Obama. It ought to concern every business because it distorts markets. It ought to concern every nation, because it endangers public health and fuels violence and organized crime. I'm talking about the injustice, the outrage of human trafficking, which must be called by its true name – modern slavery.

(Judges Journal, 2013, p.12)

Obama is not alone in the pessimistic view of this activity. Onuoha (2011) described it as "one of the social ills of the late twentieth century and a continuing scourge of the early twenty-first century" (p146). To understand its human cost, one should look no further than the definition of the term

itself. United Nations offers a very comprehensive definition stating,

‘Trafficking in Persons’ shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipts of persons, by means of 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 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 form of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, or practices like slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, or the removal of organs (UN, 2000b, Art.3).

In unpacking this definition, two issues stand out, human trafficking is an act of exploitation, and this act is made possible due to the vulnerability of the victims. It involves the misuse of power over a person who is at risk or in a vulnerable state with a view to making profit. According to Baird, (2013), vulnerability could be due to ignorance, need, war, poverty, crisis, desperation, marginalization, and fear. Individuals (majority of whom are women and children), are exploited to perform commercial sex or labor (Cary, Oram, Howard, Trevillion and Byford, 2016). In labor trafficking, individuals are forced to provide services, by force, fraud, or coercion. In sex trafficking, adults or minors are compelled to engage in sex also by force, fraud, or coercion (Lutya and Lanier, 2012, p.556). Showalter (2018) notes “either type of trafficking is a criminal law violation, but more than that, it is a public health issue that affects not only the victims but also their families and communities” (p.1). Whether it is a crime, slavery or even a public health menace as some have now considered it to be, human trafficking poses tremendous danger to our social, economic, and political wellbeing. Unfortunately, the causes are rooted in societal injustices, cruelty of human beings to one another, lapses in government policies, and other inefficiencies of the State and international bodies.

The consequences of human trafficking occur at many levels- direct to the individual (comprising victim and traffickers) and indirectly to families, community, and the society at large. Lutya and Lanier (2012) identified three variables leading to human trafficking- the traffickers decision making, victim vulnerability and

societal or cultural factors. However, they conceded that, due to its complexity, there is no one theory to adequately explain the consequences of human trafficking. They argue instead for an integrative theoretical approach for the different variables.

Wheaton, Schauer and Galli (2010) noted, “Because freedom of choice and economic gain are at the heart of productivity, human trafficking impedes national and international economic growth” (p.116). The costs are hard to access due to poor data of the actual occurrences and victims especially of human trafficking for forced labor (HTFL). (Wheaton, Schauer & Galli, 2010; Baird, 2013; Showalter, 2018). For individuals, associated costs are both physical and psychological, and short and long term. What is interesting is that the costs are discussed in relation to not only the victims but also the perpetrators and activists against human trafficking. However, this chapter will focus primarily on the cost to the victims and the society at large.

### **Significance**

Everyone has a moral responsibility for combatting human trafficking due to its global impact. In the United States alone, every year, one to two million people become victims to human trafficking. According to the 2020 Federal Human Trafficking Report (Feehs & Wheeler, 2021), 25% of the victims are children and the rate of sexual abuse of trafficked children in the United States rose in 2020 to 55% compared to 2019. Children may be forced into child labor because parents are too poor to raise them or perceive it as a way for their children to earn money to be able to get married. Developing countries are not exempt. World News suggests that Africans account for 23 percent of global modern slavery and the human trafficking industry generates \$13.1 billion in Africa.

Besides the obvious human and legal rights violations and abuse of the victims, human trafficking also has negative impact on the world’s economy due to the significant loss of human and social capital. Documenting its costs to individuals, groups and the society at large will increase the awareness of the persistence of the problem, the severity of its consequences, and the urgent need to assess the policies and political will that increases the risks, penalties, and punishments for those who exploit others (Jac-Kucharski (2012). Understanding the magnitude of the human cost

of human trafficking as this chapter intends to address, should help enhance the control and prevention strategies for this deplorable act. Human trafficking is akin to slavery and should be treated as such.

### **Vulnerability and Intentionality**

Human trafficking is an exploitation of a person in a vulnerable position which denotes placing hardship on another person (s). Vulnerability involves the loss of agency (Wheaton et al, 2010, p.115-116) as a result of which the trafficked individual becomes “commodified.” Loss of agency means imitation or loss of control over an individual’s fate in life-who they are, what they can do, where they can go, etc. They are subjected to degradation on a scale that compares to the life of a slave or servant as previously noted. Victims of human trafficking are robbed of future aspirations and the choice to determine their education or employment. Instead, they are forced to engage in prostitution or menial jobs like domestic service, agricultural work, work in small factories and workshops, mining, land clearance, hawking of wares, and even begging (Wheaton et al, 2010).

There are push and pull factors which make individuals vulnerable. These include poverty, universal devaluation and marginalization of women and children, political instability, globalization, low education, and low skill levels (Wheaton et al, 2010, p.121). Attributes such as family income, gender, social standing, age, and education level, what Othman (2006) suggests are push factors, contribute to number of hours relegated to activity in the labor market. Other factors such as the economy, globalization, the stability of the political environment and the availability of information, which Othman refers to as pull factors, impact labor supply decisions. If agency is present, all these factors impact decisions made concerning work locations (Wheaton et al., 2010). It is this push and pull factor that some criminologists and sociologists believe create vulnerabilities for people and lead to exploitation in the labor market and perhaps human trafficking. According to Ejalu (2006) the push factors for human trafficking include, being poor and uneducated; domestic abuse; corruption; difficulty obtaining visas to list a few. Across international and national markets, the decision to migrate (pull factors) is based on the availability of better paying jobs and more opportunities than are available within the nation of origin compared to the destination state.

Migration can be positive or negative depending on education, with those possessing higher education having a positive experience because they can obtain jobs requiring high skill levels (Borjas, 2008). However, those with lower education levels qualify for jobs requiring low skill levels, which makes their experience negative. Unskilled occupations such as domestics, agriculture and manufacturing are often ripe for forced labor (ILO, 2014). Those who migrate illegally tend to have lower education and skill levels than those who migrate legally. According to Bales (2007) the reason for this is that governments place restriction on low skilled migration. These restraints can force the low education and low skill level population seek ways to migrate illegally, making them vulnerable to traffickers. This relocation is seen as a method to assist the family by contributing additional financial resource or by removing the financial burden the family has for the individual. Relocation costs are varied and depend on the circumstances of the individual. Some of the cost can include separation from family and friends, cost of relocation services, the possibility of exploitation and learning a new culture and a new language.

However, those who migrate believe that the possible benefits will outweigh the costs.

### **Consequences of Human Trafficking**

Given the atrocities to which victims of human trafficking are subjected, it is understandable that this victimization can result in a wide range of challenging effects. Megesa and Kitula (2020) posit that the costs and consequences of human trafficking are numerous, with some being temporary but others having lifelong effects. The horror victims endure because of human trafficking can lead to victims suffering with issues with mental and physical health, and victims can be affected economically, socially, and morally (Wakgari, 2014; Mtewe, 2012; Mathias 2011 and Kamazima, 2009). As suggested by Megesa and Kitula (2020) there is a diminution of the worth and dignity of trafficking victims’ bodies. As a result of the exploitation and numerous abuses, victims are left feeling unworthy and have few job opportunities because they are seen as untrustworthy. The challenges faced by trafficking victims can lead to substance abuse, self-harm, stealing and violence. All of which are damaging to the victims.

According to Jac-Kucharski (2012), there is direct cost to the individual victims and indirect cost to their family and community through threats to their loved ones. Jac-Kucharski (2012) specifically identifies three main types of costs of trafficking in human beings in general. These are i) the use of services (coordination and prevention, specialized services, law enforcement, health services and social protection; ii) the loss of economic output; and finally, iii) the lost quality of life (p.31).

### **Human Rights Violations**

The 30 Articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Right (UDHR) established human rights that are due everyone starting at birth (United Nations, 1948). Moreover, a person's human rights cannot be taken away by anyone according to Article 30 (United Nations, 1948).

Coker-Kolo and Jones (2021) agreed with the United Nations that all people should have certain rights irrespective of any status held to include race, sex, ethnicity, nationality, religion and others. They go on to support the concept that everyone should have access to these rights without discrimination and that these rights are the foundation of humanity.

There are some that do not acknowledge human trafficking as an issue related to human rights. However, Meshelemiah and Lynch (2019) contend that it is imperative to see human trafficking as a human rights issue and frame policies and practices accordingly. For example, according to Article 25 of the UDHR, all persons have the right to an adequate standard of living to include the health and well-being of self and family. These 30 Articles point to having basic needs and access to social services as human rights. However, when persons lack agency, their human rights are denied.

Contemporary human trafficking practices are in violation of international human rights laws, including debt bondage, where a person uses their personal services as security for a debt (UN Fact Sheet 36, 2014). Those being trafficked go into debt with their abusers and this debt can be used to exploit and control the victims. Forced labor is also prohibited under human rights law and many other practices related to trafficking such as forced marriage, prostitution, and slavery. In recent years, the international world had deemed trafficking a major violation of human rights. It has been repeatedly established by the United

Nations that trafficking is a violation and impairment of human rights.

The Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking (2019) posits the following are human rights that are often connected to human trafficking:

Article 1: the right to freedom

Article 2: the right to freedoms without respect of race, color sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status Article 3: the right to freedom and security of person

Article 4: the right not to be enslaved or held in servitude

Article 5: the right not to be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

Article 8: right to an effective remedy for violations of fundamental rights Article 13: the right to move freely within borders

Article 14: the right to seek and enjoy asylum from prosecution in other countries

Article 17: the right to associate freely

Article 23: the right to freely choose employment and to just and favorable working conditions and appropriate compensation

Article 24: the right to rest and leisure and limitation of work hours

Article 25: the right to a standard of living that is adequate to social security and special care and assistance for mothers and children.

Article 26: the right to education

Globally, poor women, men and children, people in developing nations, people of color, those seeking asylum, immigrants and migrants are often denied the human rights listed above (Meshelemiah and Lynch, 2019). Sadly, the violation of some people's human rights is a regular routine of daily living. Enrile (2018) espouses that basic human rights are fundamental and should be given to everyone. These rights must be an integral part of each nation's infrastructure and represented in their policies, practices, and legislation.

Human trafficking, involving child displacement, abduction, sexual exploitation and violence against girls and young women poses great risks to the safety, stability, and expression of women rights, especially their right to education. Investing in girls' education has a multiplier effect, transforming communities, countries, and the entire world. Quality education, even for women in rural or low socio-economic environments, leads them to develop a sense of agency about gender equality and the assertiveness to ward off unwanted sexual advances. Human trafficking or child displacement hinders girls' opportunity for education. In turn, lack of education disempowers women and exposes them to violence.

### **The Gender Dichotomy**

The cost of human trafficking is skewed towards girls and women who are used either for commercial sex or labor. Luty and Lanier (2012) suggest three factors are associated with increasing demands for prostitution. These are "the purchasers of sex, cultural attitudes associated with prostitution, and violence towards women" (p 555-557). Moreover, they employed a "Victimological theoretical framework" to explain why certain women are more prone to being victimized than others, victim offender interaction, and the loss and pain associated with human trafficking. Additionally, they identified 3 factors which create vulnerability of girls and women to victimization. These are "victim proneness, precipitation, and provocation" (p,560). ILO (2014) indicates that approximately 55 percent of those who are victims of forced labor are women and girls, with the majority of the those forced into being domestics and sexual slaves are women and girls. Interestingly, when other economic activities are reviewed, men and boys have a disproportionate representation. According to ILO data men and boys are more at risk of being a victim of forced labor than women and girls. One explanation for this is the data collected by the ILO was focused on debt bondage or bonded labor. Hence, gender may be a determining factor in who become prey in the forced labor industry, but it is contextual and differs depending on the nation, sectors, and types of labor.

A report by the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking( UNGIFT) (2008) suggests that, too little has been done to address the vulnerabilities of girls in areas affected by conflict and terrorism creating a gap that enables armed and extremist groups to take advantage of the strategic and financial benefits of human trafficking to expand their military and economic power.

For example, Armed and extremist groups use trafficking, especially of girls, as a strategy to boost recruitment, generate revenue, and support operations. For example, the Islamic State attracted thousands of male recruits by offering kidnapped women and girls

as "wives," and raised significant revenue through sex trafficking, sexual slavery, and extortion through ransom. For those girls who manage to escape areas affected by conflict or terrorism, many find that being displaced from their homes has devastating effects on their rights and opportunities. Moreover, girls are 2.5 times more likely than boys to be out of school in humanitarian contexts ( United Nations: Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, 2008). As refugees, girls remain at particular risk of sex trafficking and forced marriage, exacerbated by a breakdown of legal and social protection systems, especially the lack of adequate funding.

Alarming upticks in child marriage have been documented in humanitarian emergencies around the world, as families force adolescent girls to marry early as a means of protection or as an economic safety net.

### **Moral and Social Devastation**

A deficit in morality is one of the consequences of human trafficking. Quora (2019) as cited in Megasa & Kitula, 2020, suggests that victims of human trafficking have limited opportunities to make decisions between doing what is good or doing what is bad because of the atrocities they have suffered. In an effort to limit these atrocities, victims opt for being bad over being good. The development of immorality by victims becomes a coping measure, albeit a negative one, for survival of their situation, and the resulting consequences.

Victims may engage in self-mutilation or result to violence against abuser or community members (OVC, 2012). Additionally, some victims have difficulty managing extreme anger issues.

Along with the morality struggles faced by human trafficking victims, some also grapple with various social effects (Fleisher et al., 2008 & UNGIFT, 2008). Some of the social consequences experienced by human trafficking victims can range from discrimination and stigmatization, familial and community rejection to loss of job opportunities and legal problems. Victims endure these effects while being held captive and when they are rescued. The sexual exploitation and shame that victims of trafficking experience can lead to being ostracized from

social circles and when trying to live a normal life being faced with marginalization and stigmatization (Megasa & Kitula, 2020). Across the globe, ostracization becomes a fact of life for victims of human trafficking. To avoid being disowned by their communities, who blame the victim instead of the trafficker, many family members will disown their children. When victims return home, they are can be forced to return to the degradation of the sex industry or move back to the urban areas because their families reject them (IOM, 2016 as cited in Megasa & Kitula, 2020). Some trafficking victims in some parts of Africa and South America can face stigmatization if they return home with a lack of money or the wealth that was promised.

Participants in a Megasa and Kitula 2020 study indicated that victims face discrimination when searching for new jobs. The employers would reject them once learning about their trafficking status. Many trafficking victims do not have the academic background for jobs, and many can only read and write their names relegating them to either waitress or domestic positions. In some cases, the victim is not perceived as a victim but a criminal and bears the blame for the perception people have of them. However, Mitchell (2010) found that when prostitution victims are younger, seem frightened or the police receive an outside report, they are often treated as victims by law enforcement officials instead of criminals. Thus, giving law enforcement officials great influence on the perception of victims.

### **Health Challenges**

Due to the pervasiveness of human trafficking, public health is a major concern (Nguyen et al, 2017). Unfortunately, it is also an area that has a paucity of research and is not well represented in the health care curricula. Moreover, in the healthcare setting, there is a lack of validated screening tools (Salami et al., 2018). A combination of these factors results in the knowledge gap related to health consequences of human trafficking. The scholarship concerning mental health consequences for victims of human trafficking is also limited (Hopper & Gonzalez, 2018; Litam, 2017). Additionally, evidence recording the harm trafficking persons endure to their social, financial, and legal well-being is also sparse (Ottisova et al., 2016). Much of the current scholarship is devoted to consequences related to the physical and

sexual health of victims (Oram et al., 2012; Litam, 2017; Ottisova et al., 2016).

Nevertheless, there are severe health and well-being consequences resulting from human trafficking that include mental, physical, and emotional struggles (Kilner & Stroud, 2012).

There is a growing body of scholarship that evidences the various health consequences for trafficking victims, with survivors encountering dangerous living conditions, hazardous working environments, and a multitude of negative impacts on health (Ottisova et al., 2016). Human trafficking can also leave victims struggling with severe mental health issues to include issues with anxiety, post traumatic distress disorder, Stockholm syndrome, substance abuse, depression, and other mental health consequences. Additionally, some victims can suffer with insomnia, body aches and nausea (Gozdzik et al., 2006). According to Oram et al. (2012), the longer the exploitation continues the greater the health risks, compromised health and increasing depression and anxiety. This is an outcome of the substandard working and living conditions, sanitation and overcrowding which can lead to the spread of disease (Hossain et al., 2010). Because victims tend to work long hours, have little rest, and receive poor nutrition, they can struggle with fatigue, be more prone to infections and weight loss during the trauma and after (Zimmerman et al., 2011). Oram et al. (2012) also indicates that trafficking victims, even during recovery, struggle with enduring health challenges.

### **Mental Health**

In discussing this cost, we will look at the trauma incurred by the victims and the cost of their recovery efforts and treatment. Like other areas of human trafficking, the lack of rigorous data makes it difficult to quantify the cost so the discussion in research has focused mainly on the behavioral consequences which are more obvious.

An exception was the study conducted in the United Kingdom by Cary, Oram, Howard, Trevillion and Byford (2016) in which they investigated the economic cost of mental health services to victims of human trafficking. In their article titled "Human trafficking and severe mental illness: an economic analysis of survivors' use of psychiatric services" they not only identified the psychological impacts but also quantified the economic cost to the victims and the society. Cary et al. (2016) opine that the treatment is very costly and varies among the

survivors, with those with histories of sexual abuse, psychotic disorder and pre-trafficking violence incurring a significantly higher expense. In their study of 190 psychiatric patients who had experienced human trafficking, they found that on the average, the cost of mental health services per individual was \$36,838 and each individual received services an average of 1,490 days. These costs include short- and long-term mental health, social and welfare services. The authors further suggest that trafficked individuals have longer duration of primary and secondary care in the UK and elsewhere compared to non-trafficked patients (p.5), making their costs higher. It is also noteworthy that most of the sample in the study were female and were trafficked for sexual exploitation (Cary et al, 2016, p.5).

### **Public Health**

According to a United Nations Office of Drug and Crime (UNODC) 2018 report, human trafficking as traditionally been viewed as an issue to be addressed by law enforcement with efforts that extend globally to monitoring criminal legislation, arrests, prosecution, and convictions for those involved in human trafficking. In recent years there has been a push to position human trafficking as a public health concern (Macias-Konstantopoulos et al., 2013; Todres, 2012). According to Ravi (2019) it is imperative to look at human trafficking as a public health issue for its prevention, as health issues can influence and is influenced by other sectors of society. Human trafficking and exploitation can create a burden for public health. The health of individuals, groups and communities are adversely impacted and requires focusing on the needs of the whole population.

On a global scale, particularly low-income countries, there is minimal scholarship devoted to the health risk or consequences for migrant workers (Buller et al., 2015).

Nevertheless, there is scholarship that suggests that the inequities in the labor market are associated with a healthy life expectancy, mortality and rates of injury, (Muntaner et al., 2010; Benach et al. 2011). Moreover, there are high rates of sexually transmitted infections and regions with high rates of HIV report elevated rates for HIV among trafficked victims, specifically young victims (Greenbaum, 2020). Victims are face with the dilemma of either having protected sex to satisfy their trafficker or having unprotected sex because buyer who insist on unprotected sex may threaten violence if victims use a condom (Gupta et al., 2009; Ravi et al., 2017).

Then, traffickers threaten violence if victims are injured because their profitability diminishes if injured or disfigured. These complex decisions and reactions of the trafficker and the buyer can lead to severe trauma for the victim.

Those trafficked for sex are at risk for drug addiction because drugs are used as a means to perpetuate the exploitation long-term (Diaz, et al., 2014). Addicted victims are promised drugs by their traffickers which exploits this area of vulnerability. Macias-Konstantopoulos, (2016) contends that because human trafficking is entrenched in violence and trauma, victims abuse substances to manage chronic pain and mental health related issues such as depression, anxiety, stress disorders and PTSD, even after being freed from the trafficking lifestyle. Victims of trafficking are at risk for long term substance abuse due to the trauma experienced because of trafficking and non-trafficking trauma. Linking substance abuse to trauma related issues can move substance abuse to a public health issue and away from a criminal justice issue, allowing survivors, families and communities to reap the benefits.

Another worldwide threat to medical and public health is mass incarceration (American Academy of Family Physicians, 2017). Criminalization of trafficking survivors can happen as a result of victims being forced into criminal behavior, thus putting them at risk for incarceration (Serita, 2013). A criminal record can lead to health-related social problems such as ineligibility for housing and limited employment opportunities after incarceration (Dennis et al., 2015).

Moreover, incarceration can increase exposure to more mental, physical, and sexual trauma for victims and put them at a higher risk for infectious disease (American Academy of Family Physicians, 2017). Additionally, while incarcerated, victims have less access to services for substance abuse, which may put them at risk of overdosing one released. There is also the possibility of pregnancy during incarceration which leads to the victims being separated from their children. Being the offspring of an incarcerated person is considered an adverse childhood experience (ACE), which puts the child at risk for victimization in the future (American Academy of Family Physicians, 2017; Davis & Shlafer, 2017). Fortunately, there is a trend in some systems to see trafficked persons as victims instead of criminals. This is a move in the appropriate direction.

## **Economic Consequences**

Along with the severe human cost of trafficking people, there is an economic factor. It is estimated that the industry of human trafficking is worth over a billion dollars. The economic effects of human trafficking do not only impact the victim and the victims' family, but also the country (Wakgari, 2014). Migration once thought to be a solution for the economic crisis has instead become a burden for households. For example, many migrant women borrow money promising to pay it back upon their return, but sometimes default resulting to being forced into sexual trafficking. Countries that have a high demand for low-wage workers and insufficient labor governance can be seen as fertile ground for human trafficking (ILO, 2011 & Reinecke and Donaghey, 2016). The potential to earn large sums of money makes human trafficking an attractive means of living for those who are from families and regions in need of money.

Wakgari (2014) also indicates that large sums of money are received by traffickers from prospective victims and family members. Victims who have no legal permit for employment and whose employers exploit them often return home without anything.

Victims who are targeted for human trafficking have very little income or no income at all and give up their agency or control, relegating them to becoming a commodity (Wheaton et. Al, 2010). Those who hire workers from forced labor are the primary beneficiaries because these employers either underpay workers or do not pay them at all. While these victims are held captive, some six months or less and other for two years, these criminal enterprises can make huge profits from forced labor (ILO, 2012). A 2009 ILO Global Report indicated that approximately 19.6 billion dollars was underpaid in wages due to coercion. While these corrupt employers and criminals are collecting large amounts of money from forced labor, the victims often end up in a situation that relegates them to a life of poverty.

According to a 2014 report from the International Labour Office (ILO), the enormous profits gained for human trafficking can circumvent a nation's system for collecting taxes and impact governments and societies. Additionally, governments and societies must also incur the huge cost of addressing cases related to forced labor. Moreover, businesses and employers who are law-abiding face disadvantages as forced labor creates competition that is

unfair and puts a blemish on the reputation of industries and sectors. The high cost is not always a deterrent to the traffickers and instead could lead to higher profit for them, (Inter-American Development Bank, 2006). Their recruitment venues include the internet which has made it easy to lure vulnerable young girls. Extremists use social media to groom vulnerable teenagers and bait them into joining, a tactic with which the Islamic State is particularly savvy. For example, with the use of social media campaign that emphasizes religious obligation, sisterhood, and opportunity to enjoy freedom and adventure, the Islamic State is able to lure record numbers of women and girls from Western countries to help build the caliphate. In some cases, girls are lured rather than abducted by armed groups — a trend facilitated today by the broad reach of the internet and the ease of international travel.

## **Conclusion**

Human trafficking is a worldwide phenomenon that can happen in any community. Victims can be of any age, social status, nationality, or gender. As noted in the significance of this chapter, the goal of the chapter is to increase the awareness of the tenacity of human trafficking, the severity of its consequences, and the urgent need to enhance the policies and political that will protect the victims, but increase the risks, penalties, and punishments for those who exploit them. This effort, we believe will lead to an enhancement of control and prevention strategies for this deplorable act. The authors have documented that human trafficking is a pervasive cancer eating its way through the lives of vulnerable persons, many of whom are women and girls. The effects are often long term as these victims are left to battle the many traumas of the horrors they experienced emotionally, physically, and of course financially. Worst of all is their loss of agency, resulting from the stigmatization of their abuse, the shaming of their family members, and their inability to re-enter the community as productive citizens after they have been victimized. The society is also impacted by the loss of productivity from the victims, the investment in mental health services, the violation of human and legal rights laws and the cost of enforcing immigration laws violated by the traffickers, among others. What is the way out? How can these costs be minimized, if not eliminated?

Four strategies proposed by the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe in their 2019 publication "Strategies for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2019-2024)" are worth considering. They



suggested to focus on the prevention of trafficking of human beings, the protection of victims of human trafficking, development of an efficient criminal or judicial response, and finally, partnership between, and collaboration of international prevention and intervention agencies. Direct support can be provided to the victims through medical assistance, survivor healing and empowerment workshops, and financial and material donations to victim shelters. Better yet are prevention strategies which could include offering on-site trainings or digital campaigns in schools and communities to create awareness of the lures of the traffickers, and to teach strategies to put an end to trafficking (Shree & Anubhuti, 2013).

Some (United Nations: Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, 2008; Onuoha, 2011) suggest that past measures to combat human trafficking have not been consistent and sustainable in their implementation. It is important for agencies to have a common definition of terms and agreed upon policies/legislations that can be implemented worldwide. On-going assessment of strategies is also necessary to know what works and what doesn't.

Governments, states, communities and concerned citizens must do they can do to eradicate the unscrupulous and criminal enterprise that is human trafficking. As previously mentioned more research into the effects experienced by victims is needed, especially in the area of health consequences. Additionally, basic human rights must be embodied in policies, laws, and systems and must be woven into the nation's infrastructure. Without serious mitigating measures to combat human trafficking, vulnerable victims will continue to suffer extreme consequences, communities will continue to hemorrhage the financial and health consequences and governments and nations will have maintain responsibility for the stain of devastated victims, families and communities.

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