

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING FACT SHEET

## PREVENT TRAFFICKING PROTECT THE TRAFFICKED PROSECUTE TRAFFICKERS

### Trafficking Denied:

The act of recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing or obtaining a person for compelled labor or commercial sex acts through the use of force, fraud or coercion. Individuals could be forced through debt, contract, physical force, withholding of documents and other means.

### The Numbers

Approximately 20.9 million people are trafficked worldwide . . . or three people for every thousand.

### Under Another Name

Here are the terms to look out for when exploring the issue on your own: trafficking in persons, human trafficking, modern slavery, involuntary servitude, debt bondage and forced labor.

### WHY IT HAPPENS

Globalization has created a widening gap in wealth between countries and has made many people victims of a global economy that gets rich by exploiting the poor. This global economy increases worker migration, instances of degrading work and income inequality. Such conditions increase the likelihood for human trafficking as more of the world's population becomes vulnerable to labor exploitation. Women in particular become vulnerable in this environment, as 70 percent of the world's poor are women. Most poor women have to tolerate their terrible conditions because of the limited options available to them, or take the risk of migrating and being trafficked. Women comprise 55 percent of the 20.9 million trafficked individuals. Of all people trafficked across national borders, 80 percent are women or girls.

### ESTIMATED SCALE

"Human trafficking is the second largest and fastest growing criminal industry in the world. The total annual revenue for trafficking in persons is estimated to be \$150 billion. Since December 2007, 29,696 cases of human trafficking have been reported in the United States through the National Human Trafficking Resource Center. Globally, an average of three people become victims of human trafficking for every 1,000 individuals. The number of people trafficked per 1,000 is highest in central and south-eastern Europe at 4.2 per 1,000 people, but more than half of all human trafficking victims are in Asia." According to the U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report 2017, worldwide convictions of human traffickers listed in this year's report were fewer than 10,000, while estimates of the number of victims of human trafficking remain in the tens of millions.

### POLICY

Countries have started taking human trafficking more seriously with stronger anti-trafficking legislation and efforts at the international, national and local levels. In 2000, the Senate ratified the U.N. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; it's also known as one of the Palermo Protocols. In the United States, legislation such as the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, passed in May 2015, and The Trafficking Victim Protection Act (TVPA), reauthorized in 2013, address the issue at home and abroad. The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act extended the minimum punishment for soliciting sex from a minor to 15 years and created more anti-sex trafficking task forces and state-administered outpatient treatment for survivors. The TVPA renewed efforts to protect victims and further prevent human trafficking by creating more youth employment opportunities, providing assistance to vulnerable populations in conflicted areas, prohibiting sex tourism and prohibiting the confiscation of passports or other personal identification documents from

an individual. Under the TVPA, the U.S. Department of State annually publishes a Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP), which reflects government efforts to combat trafficking and notifies Congress of its findings. The TIP report categorizes countries as to how fully they comply with the Act's minimum standards for prohibiting and punishing those involved in trafficking. To read the report, visit [www.state.gov/g/tip](http://www.state.gov/g/tip). At the state level, efforts are being made to tighten anti-trafficking laws. Most recently, Georgia will register convicted traffickers as sex offenders and have them pay into contributing to the new Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund. To see states' progress in the light against human trafficking, visit <http://ow.ly/QPjmc>.

In addition, Safe harbor laws were developed by states to address inconsistencies with how children that are exploited for commercial sex are treated. At the state level, United Methodist Women joined its partner organization, Living Water for Girls led by Lisa Williams, to pass Rachel's Law, a safe harbor bill in Georgia in 2015. And, in 2016 this law established a Safe Harbor Fund to aid victims and a mandate that requires convicted traffickers to be registered as sex offenders. Passage of Rachel's Law reflects the efforts of bipartisan, coalition-based advocacy.

### WHO IS BEING TRAFFICKED

"There are 20.9 million adults and children in forced labor, bonded labor and forced prostitution around the world, according to the International Labour Organization. Approximately 55 percent of all victims are women and girls, while children make up around one quarter of all victims. In the United States, runaway, homeless and throwaway children are the most vulnerable to trafficking, with about 199,000 incidents of sexual exploitation of minors occurring each year in the U.S."

## SIGNS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN A BUSINESS OR PRIVATE HOME

(From [humantrafficking.org](http://humantrafficking.org) and the U.S. Department of State)

- Are there barred windows, locked doors and electronic surveillance? Is it in an isolated location?
- Are individuals never seen leaving the premises unless escorted? Are they driven to and from work by a guard?
- Do the individuals live with the employer and/or at the business location?
- Are living conditions poor, with multiple people occupying the same space?
- Are individuals kept under surveillance during doctor/clinic visits?
- Is there a lot of foot traffic of mostly men arriving and leaving a location?
- Are individuals submissive and fearful? Are there signs of physical abuse?
- Are individuals unable to speak to you alone? Do their answers seem rehearsed or scripted?
- Is the employer holding employees' identifying documents?

### WHERE VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING CAN BE FOUND

Victims of trafficking can be found in all types of establishments and locations, in rural, suburban and urban settings, on streets; in houses; in trailers and on farms. However, the most common sites with trafficked individuals, according to the United Nations, are: agriculture or horticulture, construction, sweatshops in the garment and textile industries, catering sites and restaurants, domestic work, entertainment and the sex industry. More mainstream sites are food processing, healthcare and contract cleaning.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

**Contact your members of Congress to support the International Violence Against Women Act (H.R.1340 and S.713).** This landmark bill, re-introduced this session of Congress, would make efforts to address sexual violence a key priority in U.S. foreign assistance programs. **Find out if your state has a safe harbor law**, which treats those exploited by traffickers as victims, not criminals. These laws give survivors access to services, instead of a criminal conviction. About 22 states have some form of safe harbor law, though some states limited these laws to protecting children who are sexually exploited. For a model of a safe harbor law for your state, look at Rachel's Law in Georgia: <http://senatepress.net/safe-harbor-rachels-law-legislation-becomes-georgia-law.html>.

**All 50 states and D.C. have laws criminalizing trafficking, but most states either lack funding or adequate laws to aid trafficking victims.** Contact your state governor and legislators to urge anti-trafficking legislation, and the creation of a statewide taskforce to coordinate state and local victim services, as well as legal enforcement against traffickers.

**To ensure the protection of women and girls, organize with others to investigate how your community responds to human trafficking incidents.** How do your local law enforcement officers assist women and girls who are victims

of trafficking? Are there safe houses, legal or translation services, medical or counseling services to assist victims of trafficking in your community? Visit your local police department or contact your local elected officials. Tell us what you learn by e-mailing [csadc@unitedmethodistwomen.org](mailto:csadc@unitedmethodistwomen.org).

**Educate your community: Host a forum at your local church, school or organization.** Contact the United Methodist Women Washington Office of Public Policy at **202-488-5660**.

Visit the United Methodist Women website at [www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org) for resources.

### VICTIMS DON'T USUALLY IDENTIFY THEMSELVES

If you believe someone is being trafficked or sexually exploited, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at **1-888-373-7888**, the National Domestic Violence Hotline at **1-800-799-7233** or the National Runaway Hotline at **1-800-RUNAWAY**.

**United Methodist Women adopted a resolution on human trafficking in 2016. By increasing capacity and building coalitions, United Methodist Women strengthens its resolve to protect the human rights and lives of those ensnared by human trafficking.**

Read *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church 2016*, Resolution 6023, "Abolition of Sex Trafficking."



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