

CHILD TRAFFICKING

Child trafficking can be defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring and receipt of a girl or boy of less than 18 years of age for the purpose of exploitation.

Children who have been trafficked are often forced into marriage or illegal adoption; they provide cheap or unpaid labour, working as house-girls/boys, beggars, or recruited into armed groups.

Trafficking exposes children to violence, sexual abuse and HIV infection, and violates children's inherent right to be free from all forms of abuse and exploitation and grow up in a protective environment.

FACTS AND FIGURES

- Child trafficking affects children throughout the developing and developed countries. It is estimated that 1.2 million children are trafficked worldwide each year.
- The secret nature of trafficking and the lack of strong data collection make it difficult to know the exact number of child victims in Uganda and across the African continent.

IMPACT

Children who have been trafficked for sexual purposes, or forced labour, and babies who have been taken for sale or adoption often suffer from inhumane living conditions, neglect, poor diet and hygiene, do not attend school, and receive limited health care. In addition, trafficked children often suffer from many forms of abuse (physical, sexual and emotional) and are unable to seek help from their family or community.

INFORMATION SHEET



**Let us protect
all children
within and
across our
borders.**

CHILD TRAFFICKING

VULNERABILITY

Child traffickers mainly target children in vulnerable situations such as those who have lost their parents, dropped out of school and are at the brink of poverty. Traffickers persuade children and/or their unsuspecting parents/guardians with sugar, bread, alcohol, money, and promises of employment opportunities, marriage proposals, and a better life.

FACTORS THAT MAKE CHILDREN VULNERABLE TO TRAFFICKING

POVERTY: Poverty often forces children to accept hazardous work.

INEQUALITY OF GIRLS: When girls are treated badly at home, they may turn to traffickers who promise a better life.

LOW SCHOOL ENROLLMENT: Uneducated children have few opportunities for their future.

LACK OF BIRTH REGISTRATION: When children do not have a legal identify, it is easier for traffickers to hide them.

ARMED CONFLICT: Children may be abducted or forced to participate in the violence.

DEMAND FOR CHEAP LABOUR: The motivation for profit might contribute to exploitative and hazardous work.

TRANSACTIONAL SEX: Norms which allow sexual exploitation of children without punishment increase vulnerability.

PREVENTION

BUILDING A PROTECTIVE ENVIRONMENT IS ESSENTIAL FOR REDUCING CHILD TRAFFICKING.

Starting in the home, with the family and community as the first line of response, **Ugandans must address the negative attitudes, customs and practices which promote child trafficking.** Abuse will continue when families use children as domestic servants, and when children are sent away from their families as a survival strategy due to conflict or other crises.

Elected leaders, teachers, religious leaders, police and children must also work together to create safe and prosperous communities.

- Children need access to essential services.
- Families and communities need knowledge, skills, and resources to identify and respond to child protection problems.
- Development partners need to involve and empower families to generate ideas and promote positive and viable livelihood activities.

For more information, please contact:

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