

DYNAMICS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN AFRICA A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Presented at
Countering Transnational and Organized Crime Seminar
Niamey, Niger; 13-17th January 2020

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Introduction

- Human Trafficking is one the most prevailing transnational organized crime in Africa and globally.
- It is a core human security challenge usually linked to either inter or intra migration.
- Despite the fact that some African countries have come up with legal instruments and mechanisms to deal with it, addressing it continues to be a challenge.



Introduction

There is a globally accepted definition which is:

“The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the 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 a 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 forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (United Nations, Treaty Series, 2000).



Facts about Human Trafficking in Africa

- It is a lucrative industry worth about \$13.1 billion out of which \$8.9 billion comes from the sexual exploitation (ACSS, 2018);
- Even though forced labour has more victims, the profit from sexual exploitation is higher;
 - Under age and forced marriages are culturally accepted – sometimes makes it difficult to identify victims
 - Armed conflicts on the continent deepens existing challenges like poverty, breeds child soldiers etc
- African countries are yet to fully comply with the minimum standards for fighting human trafficking as provided by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA);



Facts about Human Trafficking in Africa

- Cultural norms facilitate human trafficking on the continent. Poverty provides an excuse for parents to assent to their children or wards being sent to extended family members, friends, associates to assist in ‘taking care of the child’;
- Interagency rivalry and lack of cooperation between law enforcement, security and justice actors
- Deep seated mistrust between civil society actors, governments and its agencies.



MIGRATION, HUMAN SMUGGLING AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human smuggling and migration are two current trends that are different from human trafficking but linked to it under certain conditions.

In the cases of persons sold at the slave market in Libya, and forced into prostitution in Italy, migration was initially a means to gain employment overseas. These persons enlisted the help of professional smugglers to make the journey.

Upon arrival at the destination, smugglers have been seen to either sell migrants to the highest bidder, or force migrants to work off costs of travel through prostitution, or other means.

PATTERNS AND TRENDS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Trafficking in persons during conflict

Forced recruitment of men, women and children into armed groups such as Boko Haram for the purposes of fighting, labor, sexual services or forced marriage

Trafficking for forced labor

False promises of employment overseas resulting in illegal migration attempts. In some cases, migration attempts have resulted in modern slavery with migrants being sold to the highest bidder to cover travel costs e.g Modern slave trade in Libya

Procurement of women for sexual exploitation

In 2018, NAPTIP received 222 victims of human trafficking as a result of procurement for foreign travel which promotes prostitution, and 172 victims of procurements for sexual exploitation or prostitution externally 97% of whom were women.

Child trafficking

This includes trafficking for organized begging in major Nigerian cities, such as Lagos, Ibadan, Kano and Kaduna, and recruitment of children as domestic helps.



PECULIAR DRIVERS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- Unequal access to education that limits women's opportunities to increase their earnings in more skilled occupations;
- Societal tolerance and/or permissiveness of Sexual Gender based Violence (SGBV)
- Lack of legitimate and fulfilling employment opportunities particularly in rural communities;
- Sex-selective migration policies and restrictive emigration policies/laws, instituted often as a "protective" measure, limit women's legitimate migration. Most legal channels of migration offer opportunities in typically male-dominated sectors (construction and agriculture work);
- The growth of the billion-dollar sex and entertainment industry, tolerated as a 'necessary evil' while women in prostitution are criminalized and discriminated against;
- The low risk-high profit nature of trafficking encouraged by a lack of will on the part of enforcement agencies to prosecute traffickers (which includes owners/managers of institutions into which persons are trafficked);
- Lack of access to legal redress or remedies, for victims of traffickers



PROFILE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN NIGERIA

- Nigeria remains a source, transit and destination country when it comes to human trafficking. Per the latest Global Slavery Index (2018) Report, Nigeria ranks 32/167 of the countries with the highest number of slaves – 1,386,000 –
- The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) reports that the average age of trafficked children in Nigeria, now upgraded to a Tier 2 country on the U.S. State Department's Trafficking In Persons Report (2019), is 15.
- NAPTIP further contends that 75% of those who are trafficked within Nigeria are trafficked across states, while 23% are trafficked within states. Only 2% of those who are trafficked are trafficked outside the country, according to NAPTIP (2016).
- According to UNESCO human trafficking is the third most common crime in Nigeria after drug trafficking and economic fraud.



EFFECTS ON POLITICS, ECONOMY AND THE SOCIETY

- The trafficking of people brings in the third largest amount of money in the world, just behind drug and weapons dealing. The uneven distribution of this money however continues to drive poverty and unemployment in Africa. Criminal organizations use profit from human trafficking to traffic more and more people overseas, as well as use some money for other areas of crime, including arms dealing and narcotics.
- Conversely, available data on cross-border crimes in West Africa such as human trafficking, drug trafficking and livestock poaching show that transnational social networks can have negative effects on nation's security. There is an emerging evolution of clubs in Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt to embedding sex industry.
- In some parts of Nigeria, there are reports of migrants being involved in illegal mining across the country – south west, north central, north east regions.
- Undocumented persons pose a threat to the nation's public safety and security structure.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

- Africans should 'own' the narratives – conduct researches to get empirical data which can be analysed and framed within our context;
- Use the 3 Ps (Prevention, Prosecution and Protection) as a constant monitoring and review mechanism for legislations, policies etc
- Collaborations, Partnerships across sectors
- Community awareness going hand in hand with providing alternative sources of income
- Be innovative – think outside the box
- Whole of government approach to responding to Human Trafficking



Questions, Interactive Discussions



THANK YOU

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