

Human Trafficking in Asia

Burma, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Hong Kong SAR, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam

In Asia & the Pacific

1.4 million (56%) people in forced labor out of 2.5 million (including sexual exploitation)

\$9.7 billion (30.6%) annual profits from trafficking out of \$31.6 billion

- UN.GIFT [United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking]

What does it mean for a country to be a...

Source? People leave either voluntarily or involuntarily to be used for exploitation in another country

Transit? People go through this country as they leave their own to go to another in which they will be exploited

Destination? People are exploited (sexually or by labor) in the country

Who are the traffickers?

Crime syndicates, parents, relatives, friends, intimate partners, neighbors

CAMBODIA

source: sent for exploitation in Thailand, Malaysia, Macao, Taiwan

men—forced labor in agriculture, fishing, construction

women—factories, domestic servants, sexual exploitation

children—soliciting, street vending, flower selling, sexual exploitation

47% victims stated that their mother facilitated their trafficking

93% of families of trafficked people own their own house with no debt on the land

transit: Vietnam → Thailand

destination: from Vietnam and China (mostly sexual exploitation)

2005 report—2,000 victims (1/3 were children, 80% female)

causes: mainly poverty, socio-economic imbalance b/w rural and urban areas, increased tourism, lack of employment, education, safe migration

>>With over half of the population under the age of 20, the country has a problem of providing decent work to its young population

- Cambodian Government was placed in Tier 2 Watch List in the 2007 US Department of State's Trafficking in Person's Report (the reason being that many law enforcement and government officials were believed to accept bribes to keep the trafficking and sex trade going)

- 1996 Law on Suppression of Kidnapping, Trafficking, and Exploitation of Humans

trafficking person <15 yrs age = 15-20 years imprisonment, >15 yrs age = 10-14 years

- Government currently raising some awareness through posters, television, radio, campaigns

INDONESIA

source: many people seeking work abroad (6.5 million – 9 million)

Some voluntarily migrate but are later coerced into abusive conditions

- 69-75% of these workers are female

- The number of women who report rape increases each year (In 2010, 471 migrants returned from the Middle East pregnant from rape, and 161 came back with children born in the Middle East)

Labor recruiters (called PJTKIs) help people get employment opportunities abroad; some are legal but most are illegal trafficking rings and use fees to put people in debt bondage. Many of these use their ties with government officials and police to escape punishment.

destination: China, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Central Asia, Eastern Europe

internal trafficking: rural to urban places, women and girls exploited in domestic servitude and sexual exploitation

- Estimate 3.2 million children between the ages of 10–17 years old engaged in worst forms of child labor

- International sex tourism and child sex tourism remains an issue especially in major urban centers w/tourism

- According to the Director General for the Development of Tourist Destinations, an estimated 40,000 to 70,000 Indonesian children have been exploited in prostitution within the country

causes: poverty, lack of employment opportunities, unequal gender roles, community/family pressures to employ children, false/failed marriages (after which girls are sometimes forced into prostitution)

high risk for children: A quarter of middle school age students do not attend school. Although the law provides free education, most schools are not free. Also, 60% of children under 5 years old do not have official birth certificates, putting them at risk of trafficking.

JAPAN

“one of the most severe human trafficking problems among the major industrialized democracies”

transit: East Asia → North America

destination: East Asia, Southeast Asia, and to a lesser extent, Eastern Europe, Russia, and Latin America

“Recruitment techniques are often based on false promises of employment as waitresses, hotel staff, entertainers, or models. Traffickers also use fraudulent marriages between foreign women and Japanese men to facilitate entry of victims into Japan for forced prostitution”.

>>Major issue: production and trafficking of child pornography.

“Japan is home to an immense sex industry (themed-brothels, hostess clubs, escort agencies, ‘snack’ clubs, strip theatres, and street prostitution) Many are owned, controlled, or ‘taxed’ by the Japanese organized crime network, the Yakuza, or increasingly by foreign-based groups. Japanese men continue to be a significant source of demand for child sex tourism in Southeast Asia.”

internal trafficking: significant amount of women and girls for sexual exploitation. “Recruiters actively recruit in subways, popular hangout spots for youth, at schools, and other venues, making promises of success to young women and children if they model or work at certain clubs. Children are also often recruited at a young age to be abused through child pornography.”

- Japan does not have a comprehensive anti-trafficking law, but 2005 amendment to criminal code prohibits the buying and selling of persons

- Very little shelters or protection policies

only 8 convicted for child sex tourism since 2002

MALAYSIA

source: Singapore, China, Japan

destination: Indonesia, Nepal, India, Thailand, China, the Philippines, Burma, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Vietnam

- “Many migrate willingly to Malaysia seeking employment opportunities in plantations, construction sites, textile factories, and as domestic workers but subsequently encounter forced labor or debt bondage at the hands of their employers, employment agents, or informal labor recruiters.”

- Offenders: individual business people and large organized crime syndicates

“A significant number of young foreign women are recruited for work in Malaysian restaurants and hotels, some of whom migrate through the use of “Guest Relations Officer” visas, but subsequently are coerced into Malaysia’s commercial sex trade”

causes: “statelessness” Citizenship is derived from one's parents; however, many children are stateless because the government refuses to register their birth due to inadequate proof of their parents' marriage. Interfaith marriages are also not recognized by the government which sometimes results in undocumented children, making them vulnerable to trafficking.

- Government making some effort; increased the number of convictions

Resources:

<http://www.humantrafficking.org/>

http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/labour/Forced_labour/HUMAN_TRAFFICKING_-_THE_FACTS_-_final.pdf

<http://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/listen-experts-discuss-strategy-putting-end-human-trafficking>

<http://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2012/07/25/human-trafficking-in-east-asia/>