

# EXPLORATORY ASSESSMENT OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION:

The Bahamas  
Barbados  
Guyana  
Jamaica

The Netherlands Antilles  
St Lucia  
Suriname  
Trinidad and Tobago



Domestic Servitude



Forced Labor



Sexual Slavery

Second Edition



IOM International Organization for Migration  
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations  
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental body, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration, advance understanding of migration issues, encourage social and economic development through migration and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

This publication was made possible through the support of the United States Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM).

The opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Department of State or IOM.

**Publisher:**

**International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

17, route des Morillons  
1211 Geneva 19  
Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 717 91 11

Fax: +41 22 798 61 50

Email: [hq@iom.int](mailto:hq@iom.int)

Internet: <http://www.iom.int>

1752 N Street NW, Suite 700

Washington, DC 20036

United States of America

+1 202 862 1826

+1 202 862 1879

[mrfwashington@iom.int](mailto:mrfwashington@iom.int)

<http://www.iom.int/unitedstates>

ISBN 978 92 9068 249 3

©2005 (first edition) International Organization for Migration (IOM)

©2010 (second edition) International Organization for Migration (IOM)

**Design:** Noelle Ahmann

**Copy Edit:** Sinéad Costelloe

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher.

# **Exploratory Assessment of Trafficking in Persons in the Caribbean Region**

**The Bahamas  
Barbados  
Guyana  
Jamaica  
The Netherlands Antilles  
St Lucia  
Suriname  
Trinidad and Tobago**

**Second Edition**



---

IOM International Organization for Migration  
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations  
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones



---

## Acknowledgements

IOM would like to express its gratitude to the many counter-trafficking governmental and non-governmental partners in The Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, St Lucia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago for their contribution to both editions.

In particular, IOM thanks the following persons for research content, technical advice or editorial input: Carla Bakboord, Rosilyne Borland, Micah Bump, Nidia Casati, Liz Collett, Diane Cummins, Jennifer Holder Dolly, Ashley Garrett, Chanzo Greenidge, Laurence Hunzinger, Jobst Koehler, Maylene Leu-Bent, Amy Mahoney, Jacqueline Martis, Heikke Mattila, Chissey Mueller, Audrey Ingram Roberts, Sybil Douglas Ricketts and Karen de Souza.

The *Exploratory Assessment* is part of a larger regional programme - the Caribbean Counter-Trafficking Initiative - launched by IOM in 2004. The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization for American States (OAS) was one of the original partners.

This study and the regional programme were made possible through the funding and support of the Bureau of Populations, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) of the United States Department of State, and the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



## Foreword

### Notes on the First Edition

IOM published the First Edition of the *Exploratory Assessment of Trafficking in Persons in the Caribbean Region* in 2005 with chapters on The Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, St Lucia and Suriname.

The *Exploratory Assessment* was published primarily as a qualitative exercise. It was not intended to supply statistics on the numbers of human trafficking victims. Rather, the purpose was to provide a starting point for the participating countries to examine human trafficking within their local context, namely the level and scope of human trafficking activity and the characteristics and profiles of potential victims and human traffickers.

The methodology included a literature review, desk legal review and an exploratory field assessment by national researchers within each participating country. Media reviews, national surveys and key informant interviews were used to develop country reports on the context of human trafficking in the participating Caribbean countries. Anecdotal information from key informants provided the base of the research findings. Key informant groups were small and purposively selected, which limited the amount of information received. These reports were finalized by IOM on the basis of information in the country reports provided by the national researchers, in combination with additional information and data obtained by IOM. This material was then compiled into the *Exploratory Assessment of Trafficking in Persons in the Caribbean Region*.

### Notes on the Second Edition

For the Second Edition, IOM updated the *Exploratory Assessment* by expanding the section on the definition of human trafficking, as well as by adding a chapter on Trinidad and Tobago, reorganizing some of the content, adding new information obtained since 2005 and updating the recommendations on responding to human trafficking.

The information obtained during the research for both editions referred to numerous situations of human trafficking as well as the exploitation of persons working in degrading and inhumane conditions. While not allowing any overall estimates on the magnitude of the problem in the participating countries, the findings point to some level of human trafficking in the areas of forced labour, sexual exploitation and domestic servitude.

Since publishing the first edition in 2005, IOM and its Caribbean partners have made considerable progress in the fight against human trafficking. Activities over the past five years have included training and information campaigns, and legislative and institutional improvements. Most importantly, the combined efforts of IOM and its Caribbean partners have resulted in the identification of and assistance being provided to victims of human trafficking and/or the prosecution of human traffickers in Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles,<sup>1</sup> Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. Thus far, the experiences of the human trafficking victims who have been identified in the Caribbean recently reinforce the trends highlighted in the First and Second Editions of the *Exploratory Assessment*.

As of December 2010, the First and Second Editions of the *Exploratory Assessment* constitute the only research material available publically that examines the context of human trafficking in several English and Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries.



# Table of Contents

<b>Acronyms and abbreviations</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>List of charts</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>5</b>
 <b>Part I. Introduction - understanding human trafficking</b>	 <b>7</b>
1. The definition of human trafficking	7
2. How human trafficking happens	8
<i>Identifying human traffickers</i>	13
<i>How human traffickers control their victims</i>	13
3. The difference between human trafficking and migrant smuggling	16
4. Root causes of human trafficking	17
<i>For the victim</i>	17
<i>For the community</i>	18
6. The global scale of trafficking	19
 <b>Part II. Exploratory field assessment</b>	 <b>21</b>
1. Methodology	21
2. Caribbean regional overview	24
<i>Migration trends and mobility</i>	24
<i>Main findings: an analysis of cross-country trends in human trafficking</i>	29
3. The Bahamas - country report on human trafficking (2004)	47
<i>Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey</i>	47
<i>Media review</i>	57
<i>Conclusion</i>	59
<i>Specific methodology of The Bahamas country report (2004)</i>	60
4. Barbados - country report on human trafficking (2004)	63
<i>Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey</i>	63
<i>Main findings: key informant interviews</i>	66
<i>Media review</i>	82
<i>Conclusion</i>	84
<i>Specific methodology for the Barbados country report (2004)</i>	85

5. Guyana - country report on human trafficking (2004)	88
<i>Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey</i>	88
<i>Main findings: key informant interviews</i>	93
<i>Media review</i>	101
<i>Conclusion</i>	102
<i>Specific methodology of the Guyana Country report (2004)</i>	104
6. Jamaica - country report on human trafficking (2004)	109
<i>Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey</i>	109
<i>Main findings: key informant interviews</i>	113
<i>Media review</i>	120
<i>Conclusion</i>	122
<i>Specific methodology of the Jamaica country report conducted in 2004</i>	122
7. The Netherlands Antilles - country report on human trafficking (2004)	125
<i>Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey</i>	125
<i>Main findings: key informant interviews</i>	130
<i>The sex trade in the Netherlands Antilles</i>	132
<i>Media review</i>	139
<i>Conclusion</i>	140
<i>Specific methodology of the Netherlands Antilles country report (2004)</i>	140
8. St Lucia - country report on human trafficking (2004)	143
<i>Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey</i>	143
<i>Main findings: key informant interviews</i>	146
<i>Media review</i>	152
<i>Conclusion</i>	152
<i>Specific methodology of the St Lucia country report (2004)</i>	154
9. Suriname - country report on human trafficking (2004)	155
<i>Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey</i>	155
<i>Main findings: key informant interviews</i>	159
<i>Media review</i>	168
<i>Conclusion</i>	168
<i>Specific methodology of the Suriname country report (2004)</i>	170

10. Trinidad and Tobago - country report on human trafficking (2007)	173
<i>Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and national survey</i>	173
<i>Main Findings of Key Informant Interviews</i>	180
<i>Media review</i>	199
<i>Conclusion</i>	201
<i>Specific methodology for the Trinidad and Tobago country report (2005 - 2007)</i>	201
<b>Part III. Responding to human trafficking</b>	<b>205</b>
1. Select Caribbean country responses to human trafficking	206
2. Recommendations	212
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>217</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>219</b>
<b>Annex: Semi-structured interview questionnaire template</b>	<b>239</b>



## Acronyms and abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
APA	Amerindian People's Association
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BWU	Barbados Workers' Union
CAFRA	Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBS	Statistics Netherlands
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Cepep	Community-Based Environmental Protection & Enhancement Programme
CIM	Inter-American Commission of Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSME	Caribbean Single Market and Economy
CSO	Central Statistical Office
CSW	Commercial Sex Worker
CTO	Caribbean Tourism Organization
DR	Dominican Republic
ERP	Economic Recovery Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHRA	Guyana Human Rights Association
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPI	Human Poverty Index
IDA	International Development Association
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMP	International Migration Policy Programme
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JSLC	Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions
KN	Kaiaeteur News
NAP	National Action Plan
NAVAS	Netherlands Antilles Aliens Registration System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIS	National Insurance Scheme

NWD	North West District
OAS	Organization of American States
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PANCAP	Pan Caribbean Partnership Against AIDS
PRM	Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (U.S.)
RBDF	Royal Bahamas Defence Force
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SMLA	Stichting Maxi Linder Associate
SN	Stabroek News
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
UK	The United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCATOC	United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US	The United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
UWI	University of the West Indies
WIDER	World Institute for Development Economics Research

## List of charts

- Chart 1: Human trafficking context in participating countries
- Chart 2: Human trafficking of adults
- Chart 3: Human trafficking of children
- Chart 4: GDP/capita in select Caribbean countries
- Chart 5: Caribbean development indicators
- Chart 6: Cross-Country Analysis of Trends in Migration and Mobility
- Chart 7: Percentage of victims of human trafficking in The Bahamas in terms of points of origin according to respondents
- Chart 8: Number of interviews in The Bahamas
- Chart 9: Select Caribbean country rankings in Human Poverty Index (HPI) and Human Development Index (HDI)
- Chart 10: Lower level occupations of persons with Gross Income below GY\$30,000 per month
- Chart 11: Professional occupations of persons with Gross Income below GY\$30,000 per month
- Chart 12: Characteristics of respondents
- Chart 13: The migration trends of the Netherlands Antilles
- Chart 14: Geographic distribution of key informant interviews in the Netherlands Antilles
- Chart 15: Overview of commercial sex workers for the period January-December 2004
- Chart 16: Number and breakdown of the various interviews with informants
- Chart 17: Distribution of key informants interviewed in Trinidad and Tobago
- Chart 18: The institutional framework of Select Caribbean country responses to human trafficking prior to the publication of the *Exploratory Assessment* First Edition in June 2005
- Chart 19: The institutional framework of Select Caribbean country responses to human trafficking subsequent to the publication of the *Exploratory Assessment* Second Edition in 2010





## Executive summary

The definition of human trafficking that was applied to this research is provided by the *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*.

This research was primarily a qualitative exercise and was not intended to supply statistics as to the numbers of human trafficking victims within each participating country. As noted in the literature review, there is a lack of statistical data regarding this crime in each participating country as well as across the region.

The field assessment findings compiled by IOM point to some level of human trafficking in each participating country, as outlined in the chart below:

**Chart 1: Human trafficking context in participating countries**

	Source country	Transit country	Destination country	Internal trafficking
1. The Bahamas	-	X	X	-
2. Barbados	-	X	X	-
3. Guyana	X	X	X	X
4. Jamaica	X	-	X	X
5. The Netherlands Antilles	X	X	X	-
6. St Lucia	X	X	X	X
7. Suriname	X	X	X	X
8. Trinidad and Tobago	-	X	X	-

Source: IOM, 2010.

Note: Based on the research findings of the eight country reports in this *Exploratory Assessment*.

Victims of human trafficking in the eight participating countries included men, women, boys and girls from within and outside the region. While women and girls were found to be vulnerable to falling victim to human trafficking due to gender-based violence, discrimination and sexual exploitation, boys were increasingly found to be at risk. Some boys were already living on the streets and were exposed to drug traffickers, while others were forced into sexual relationships with older men as a means of survival for themselves or their families. Men were most typically found to be at risk of falling victim to human trafficking for labour exploitation in the industrial sector, with some evidence of human trafficking for sexual exploitation and domestic servitude.

Word of mouth, advertisements in local newspapers and the internet were cited as common recruitment methods; often, the messages would be interlaced with deception about a job or educational opportunity.

Though human trafficking has a range of exploitative forms, the strongest trends identified in the eight participating countries were human trafficking for forced labour, sexual exploitation and domestic servitude.

## Part I. Introduction - understanding human trafficking

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery, involving victims who are typically forced, defrauded or coerced into various forms of exploitation. Men, women and children are treated as inexpensive, expendable and profitable commodities to be used for the benefit (financial or otherwise) of the human trafficker. Human traffickers often use existing migration flows to source and transport their victims and they look for migrants who can potentially be exploited. The crime has become one of the fastest growing and most lucrative criminal activities, occurring across borders and within individual countries, including those in the Caribbean region.

### 1. The definition of human trafficking

This *Exploratory Assessment* uses the definition of human trafficking established by the United Nations *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, herein referred to as the Protocol.<sup>1</sup>

In 2000, the international community defined human trafficking in a supplemental protocol to the United Nations *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*. The Protocol was signed in December 2000 in Palermo, Italy. The text reads as follows:

(a) “Trafficking in persons” shall mean 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.

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2000) *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*. Available online at: [http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking\\_protocol.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_protocol.html).

(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article.

(d) “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

The Protocol came into force 25 December 2003 and is an important international instrument that defines and standardizes counter-trafficking terminology. The Protocol requires States to:

- define and criminalize human trafficking;
- provide assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking in countries of origin, transit and destination;
- assist in the repatriation of victims of human trafficking;
- manage migration to prevent and detect human trafficking (for example, border control and travel documents);
- provide training, research and information to prevent and combat human trafficking;
- abide by technical provisions (related to signature or ratification).

## 2. How human trafficking happens<sup>2</sup>

Human trafficking is extremely complex and there is no single description of how human trafficking takes place. The local context of each country and the specific situation of the potential victim will determine which persons are most at risk, as well as how they fall into the hands of traffickers and how they are exploited.

Human trafficking occurs in a variety of ways that depend on the level of organized crime, a legal structure that punishes the criminals and not the victims and the local context of a country. The key to understanding this definition is to recognize the three interdependent elements that must be cumulatively present to constitute human trafficking:

- **Activity** - the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons.
- **Means** - 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.

<sup>2</sup>

Material included in this section has been adapted from the *IOM Counter-Trafficking Training Modules*, 2006, Washington, D.C.

- **Exploitation** - 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.

At the minimum, the definition of human trafficking stipulates that one element from the categories of *activity*, *means* and *exploitation* must be linked and present to constitute a case of human trafficking.

### *Activity*

Though national legislation and definitions of human trafficking vary from country to country, it is generally recognized that an essential element of the crime of human trafficking is the process of moving the victim from one place to another, although not necessarily across a national border; human trafficking can also occur when persons are moved from one place to another within the same country.

For victims who are moved across borders, human trafficking can occur in stages that involve countries of origin, transit and destination. Victims may be transported internally and received and harboured in safe houses before being trafficked out of the country. This process may continue through a number of transit countries before finally arriving at the destination country.

The amount of time that victims spend in transit countries may also vary. Victims can be physically and sexually abused and exploited en route to the final destination and sometimes become the subject of sale or re-sale at each transit stage. Depending on the methods used and the geographical context, there may not be a transit stage and victims may simply be transferred directly from one part of a country to another or from one country to another, for example when victims fly directly from a Caribbean country to a destination country in Europe.

The transportation method used in human trafficking also varies greatly. Victims may be smuggled from one country to another, often without any form of identification or by using stolen or forged documents supplied to them by the traffickers. Conversely, many victims of human trafficking travel across borders using genuine travel documents such as valid visas. Travel may be by land, water or air, in public or private vehicles. Victims may travel alone, together with other victims or be part of a larger group that includes migrants that are being smuggled into another country. They may be concealed in secret compartments in ships or vehicles, hidden in the back of trucks or vans or they may simply walk across a porous border. Victims are usually accompanied by members of the human trafficking network who have experience passing through border checkpoints or airports. Identification and travel documents are usually retained by the human

traffickers, except when they are required for inspection, for example, at a border checkpoint.

Sometimes, the flow of human trafficking occurs from less-developed areas to wealthier areas. Examples of such movement include migration from rural to urban areas, from Hispaniola Island to the Eastern Caribbean islands, from Central Asia to the Middle Eastern states, or from Central and Southern Africa to South Africa. However, human trafficking routes may also lead into poorer countries, such as to tourist areas or cities experiencing economic growth. Human trafficking to these areas in poorer countries is due to the market for trafficking victims. A specific route may develop as a result of the presence of large numbers of international peacekeepers or civilian contractors, which occurred in the Balkans, for example. Routes may also reflect historic or linguistic factors; Brazilian victims destined for Western Europe are often routed through Portugal because the common language facilitates the process of human trafficking. Former colonial ties may have an impact on the visa requirements for travel between such countries, therefore affecting trafficking routes. Such a pattern may be found between some African and Caribbean countries and their former European colonial rulers.

### *Means*

Human trafficking can begin with deception, for example a false promise is used to recruit the victim. In some cases, the victim is aware that they are to be employed in a given activity but are partially deceived because they do not know under what conditions; a person may be told that they will work in a particular industry (for example, as an agricultural worker or as an exotic dancer) but is deceived as to the conditions under which they will have to work.

In other situations, victims are fully deceived by being told that they would be employed in one sector but are forced into a different type of work when they arrive at their place of employment. In such cases, victims are lured by promises of employment and financial gain and genuinely believe that they will be employed in the position that was originally offered. Such false offers may include restaurant work, office work or domestic work.

Though many victims are misled before they leave their homes, the deception sometimes occurs later, for example after they have been recruited, while they are being transported or being exploited. Sometimes, a person who intends to enter a country illegally (such as a smuggled migrant) is transferred by smugglers into the hands of human traffickers along the way.

There are also human traffickers who abduct their victims.

In each of these cases, regardless of the means, the victim will not have known in advance that they would be forced to work extended hours in arduous and often dangerous conditions for which they would receive little or no wages. Nor would they have known that their travel and/or identity documents would be taken away from them and that they would be unable to move freely or to leave. The victim would not have known at the beginning of the recruitment process that they would be threatened with violence or have violence inflicted upon them.

Moreover, if the human traffickers use any of the *means* of human trafficking in order to gain the victim's consent, then that consent is irrelevant.

### *Children as a Special Case*

The Protocol recognizes the special situation of children in Article 3 sub-paragraph (c), which removes the need for “means” to be present to be considered human trafficking under the Protocol. In other words, it is not necessary in cases involving children that there be “the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception . . .” to be considered human trafficking.

Human trafficking of children has a minimum of two interdependent elements which must be cumulatively present, *activity* and *exploitation*.

For example, if a parent arranges to have their child transported into a situation where they are forced to work, such as begging on the streets, this situation can be considered human trafficking, even if the child is a willing participant and is returned to the parent after a period of time. Note that national laws on child labour vary greatly from one country to another and may not agree with the standards set in the Protocol.

The charts below reflect the difference between adult and child trafficking. For adults, a *means* of human trafficking is necessary whereas for children it is not.

Chart 2: Human trafficking of adults

Activity:		Means:		Exploitation:	
Recruitment	+	Threat or use of force or other forms of coercion	+	Prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation	= human trafficking of adults
Transportation		Abduction		Forced labour or services	
Transfer		Fraud		Slavery or practices similar to slavery	
Harbouring		Deception		Servitude	
Receipt		Abuse of power or of position of vulnerability		Organ removal	
		Giving or receiving of payments or benefits			

Source: IOM, 2010.

Chart 3: Human trafficking of children

Activity:		Exploitation:	
Recruitment	+	Prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation	= human trafficking of children
Transportation		Forced labour or services	
Transfer		Slavery or practices similar to slavery	
Harbouring		Servitude	
Receipt		Organ removal	

Source: IOM, 2010.

Exploitation

Exploitation is at the heart of human trafficking. Traffickers seek out victims for the sole purpose of their own benefit, either financially or in-kind, which is achieved through the exploitation of their victims. Though some traffickers make large amounts of money, some individuals in the human trafficking network make small



sums of money per victim, working mainly in the areas of recruitment, deception and transportation. In some situations, no monetary gain occurs, however the trafficker benefits through considerable “savings,” such as free labour or services.

Often, the exploitation of a victim occurs after arriving at the point of destination. However, a victim can be raped, beaten or experience other forms of exploitation before arriving at the destination; a tactic used by the trafficker as a way of “breaking” the victim. This process can benefit the trafficker at the point of destination because the “broken in” victim would be less likely to fight, run away or otherwise disrupt the exploitation activity.

While the forms of exploitation may differ based on the local context, some forms include:

- sexual exploitation - streets, bars, brothels, massage parlours, saunas, call-girl agencies;
- forced labour - mines, agriculture, fishery, construction, sweatshops, catering;
- domestic servitude - child care, housekeeping, cooking, gardening,
- street peddling/begging;
- forced military service;
- organ removal - whereby the victim was trafficked specifically for the exploitative purpose of removing organs.

### ***Identifying human traffickers<sup>3</sup>***

There is no single profile of those who traffic and exploit others. A human trafficker may be female or male, a member of an organized crime network, part of a small family business or an amateur operator who assists in the transportation, documentation or logistics of a human trafficking operation. Family members, friends and acquaintances of the person who has been trafficked may have participated in or lead the recruitment of the victim or other stages of the trafficking and exploitation process. Some human traffickers are former victims of human trafficking who now recruit and control other victims.

### ***How human traffickers control their victims***

The fundamental aim of human traffickers is to profit through the exploitation of another person, therefore they protect their investment by ensuring that the victim performs according to instructions and that any efforts to escape or fight back are

<sup>3</sup> This section was extracted from the IOM publication, *Caring for Trafficked Persons - Guidance for Health Providers* (2009): 8. Available online at [http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main\\_page=index&language=en](http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=index&language=en).

neutralized. Traffickers use common control tactics to manipulate, manage and force their victims to comply with their instructions. Traffickers select the best way to control and manipulate a victim based on his or her personality. Control tactics may include physical violence, psychological coercion, debt bondage, threats against family members, lies and deceit, withholding documents and subjecting victims to unpredictable or uncontrollable conditions.

Traffickers can also use a combination of physical and psychological coercion, such as direct physical violence to the victim and death threats toward the victim's loved ones. Regardless of the control tactic employed by the human trafficker, the result is that the victim usually perceives no other option than to stay under the control of the human trafficker.

### ***Use of psychological coercion***

A human trafficker may use psychological coercion by developing an emotionally dependent relationship between the trafficker and the victim, for example, by insisting that "if you love me, you'll do this for me." Another example of psychological coercion is when a trafficker uses the cultural or religious background of the victim, or their strong sense of shame, failure, or devotion to and protection of loved ones, to coerce them to complete the exploitative work.

Specific psychological coercion is also effective on victims from some cultures. With certain cultural groups, rituals or other symbolic gestures (for example, voodoo) can instill a terrible fear and allow the trafficker to have more control. Traffickers may use the religious beliefs of the victim as a means of control, as in "you'll do this to prove your devotion."

The fear of shame is another powerful control mechanism, particularly in cases of sexual exploitation. For example, photographs may be taken during the sexual exploitation of a victim and then used as blackmail. Traffickers will threaten to send the pictures to the victim's loved ones to help ensure strict compliance to the trafficker's orders.

### ***Use of physical coercion***

Traffickers use violence and the threat of violence as an effective means of control. Victims may be burned, beaten and raped, confined, kept in long periods of isolation, deprived of food and water, drugged or forced to consume alcohol or drugs (some becoming addicted) and/or tortured. These abuses may be inflicted as punishment or may be designed to ensure that victims are fully aware of the consequences of any transgression. Sometimes, traffickers will make an example of a victim by abusing or even killing him or her in order to intimidate other victims.

One of the most effective and problematic threats is the threat of violent reprisals against the victim's loved ones. The trafficking network has direct links to the community of origin, often through the connections or continued presence of the recruiter. The trafficking network allows traffickers to know details about a victim's personal circumstances, such as a loved one's nickname, their whereabouts or address. Regardless of the actual amount or accuracy of information possessed by a human trafficker, the victim perceives the threat as real and is unwilling to jeopardize loved ones by causing trouble or trying to escape.

### *Other forms of control*

Some victims are imprisoned by locks or bars and watched by guards or "chaperones". Their identity and/or travel documents may be confiscated, used as collateral or destroyed. Sometimes, victims may seem to have the freedom of physical movement but are controlled through confiscated documents, social and linguistic isolation or debt bondage. Traffickers often use a combination of physical and psychological coercion and other forms of control to physically prevent the victim from escaping or instill a perception that there is no other option but to suffer through the situation of exploitation.

### *Confiscation of identity and/or travel documents*

Human traffickers often confiscate the identity and travel documents of their victims, usually after arrival at the point of destination. This robs a victim of their official identity and in many cases results in an irregular immigration status, making it very difficult for them to seek help or to escape. Many victims come from countries where the police are viewed as a force of oppression rather than a means of assistance; therefore, they may be unwilling to contact the police for help. The trafficker often reinforces this perception by telling the victims that they are free to go to the police if they wish but that they will be immediately imprisoned and/or deported. Unfortunately, the traffickers are often correct in this assertion because most victims of transnational human trafficking that come to the attention of the police are likely to be jailed and deported rather than treated as victims of a serious crime. Traffickers may also tell victims that there is no point in seeking assistance from police or other authorities because they are corrupt and in the pay of human traffickers. Such methods of control help reduce the likelihood that a victim will attempt to escape or lodge an official complaint.

*Isolation - linguistic and social*

Victims of human trafficking can be kept in conditions where they are deliberately prevented from communicating in their mother tongue or have any form of social contact with persons of similar backgrounds. Victims of human trafficking are often prevented from having any form of communication outside of their trafficking situation (they cannot receive or send letters, receive or make phone calls or interact with persons in the community).

*Debt bondage*

Human traffickers may offer to obtain documents, purchase travel tickets and provide housing to a potential victim either as a gesture of goodwill or as an advance loan that can be paid quickly through the work the victim performs at the point of destination.

This situation creates a “debt bond” that human traffickers use to ensure that victims engage in the planned activity. A debt bond, which can grow to be thousands of dollars, seldom relates to the actual expenditures incurred by the human trafficker. Traffickers will add their “fees” to the travel costs to create an even larger debt bond. These fees compound daily and are augmented by additional charges for food, water, clothing, etc. These cumulative charges amass an insurmountable debt that cannot be “worked off” or paid back regardless of how much a person is exploited. This excessive debt generates profit for the trafficker and serves as a mechanism by which to control the victim.

Victims of human trafficking may also be subject to a debt bond as a result of being sold to third parties, but they are responsible for repaying their own purchase price. Even victims who have been abducted and transported may also find themselves forced into exploitative activities to repay the money spent by one human trafficker to purchase them from the original abductor.

**3. The difference between human trafficking and migrant smuggling**

Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are often confused as being the same thing. Both are profitable businesses involving the movement of individuals and are associated with criminal networks. However, human trafficking and migrant smuggling are two distinct crimes. The United Nations *Protocol against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air* defines the crime as:

(a) “Smuggling of migrants” shall mean the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident;

(b) “Illegal entry” shall mean crossing borders without complying with the necessary requirements for legal entry into the receiving State;

In essence, migrant smuggling is the facilitated, illegal entry of a person into a country; it is a crime against the State. What is being bought and sold is the service and assistance provided by the smuggler to facilitate the illegal border crossing of the person; therefore, a person cannot be smuggled within their country. Smuggling does not involve the means and exploitation inherent in human trafficking.

In human trafficking, the person and their potential exploitation is bought and sold; it is a crime against the individual. Victims of human trafficking are often controlled and coerced, their freedom of movement restricted and their documents taken. They may or may not cross a border.

The two crimes can be distinguished by taking the perspective of the criminal. A migrant smuggler intends to benefit from facilitating an illegal border crossing by being paid for providing this service. A human trafficker intends to place an individual into an exploitative situation, through coercion, fraud, deception or force, where the trafficker receives financial or other benefits through the exploitation of that individual.

#### **4. Root causes of human trafficking**

People desire to migrate for many reasons. Some people want better educational or employment opportunities, others may simply like to travel and want to experience other cultures, while others seek safety (from war, persecution or violence). These “push factors” may also include poverty, lack of livelihood opportunities, economic transitions, difficulty with entering another country, poor governance, corruption and/or gender-based discrimination caused by deep-rooted patriarchal structures. Human traffickers can take advantage of the vulnerability caused by any one of these factors. Moreover, a strong demand for various categories of labour in both the formal and informal sectors creates a “pull factor”. Human traffickers use these push and pull factors as opportunities to ensnare potential victims and benefit through their exploitation.

#### **5. The Consequences of Human Trafficking**

##### ***For the victim***

When a person is trafficked, the consequences for the individual can be extremely serious and varied. During the human trafficking process the basic human rights of the victim are repeatedly violated. Trafficked persons are verbally, mentally and/

or physically abused; in some cases, they do not survive. While under the control of the traffickers, the trafficked person may not realize that he or she is a victim. Often, the victim does not know where to go for assistance and/or is too scared to seek help. Sometimes, victims who escape their traffickers are re-victimized by the authorities who deport them as a consequence of their irregular immigration status rather than grant them the protection they deserve. Even after exiting the trafficking situation, the physical and psychological consequences related to the abuse and trauma experienced by the victims continue to affect their well-being. Stigmatization is also one of the frequent consequences of human trafficking. Victims are often ashamed of what they have been forced to do and do not want their communities to know what they have endured. Families may reject returning victims, jeopardizing or preventing their reintegration into their home communities.

### ***For the community***

The consequences of human trafficking for communities of origin, transit and destination can be grim. The appearance of a victim of human trafficking in a country usually means that there are one or more criminal groups that are manipulating official or unofficial mechanisms to deceive, recruit, transport and exploit persons. These organizations are often linked to criminal activity, including arms and drug trafficking and money laundering. Consequently, this may indicate corruption among officials that facilitates the illicit activities of human traffickers. Destabilization of the economy and the public sector through corruption can have serious consequences. Public confidence in the government can also be negatively impacted.

## 6. The global scale of trafficking<sup>4</sup>

Although human trafficking is recognized as a crime that can affect any country, there are no reliable statistics on how many people are trafficked globally. Obtaining reliable data on human trafficking is difficult for a variety of reasons that include the fact that human trafficking is a clandestine activity and many cases go unidentified and/or unreported. Cases that do surface may not receive priority from law enforcement or, if there are no specific or stringent laws on human trafficking, a case may be reported as another crime, such as domestic violence. The capacity to collect and maintain data may be weak or there may be no organized response to human trafficking in a community/country. Also, the sharing of information between organizations, agencies and governments is generally lacking. When information is shared, the methodology for obtaining data is often unclear. Regardless, “[w]e... need to move beyond stating that trafficking is a problem to assessing in more detail how well we are dealing with this problem. If our understanding of trafficking is to improve, we also need to find ways to generate much better data and indicators of the problem.”<sup>5</sup> The crime of human trafficking is not likely to abate as it is both profitable and difficult to detect.

---

4 Content extracted from *Handbook on Performance for Counter-Trafficking Projects*, 2008: 7. Available online at [http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main\\_page=index&language=en](http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=index&language=en)

5 IOM, *Caring for Trafficked Persons - Guidance for Health Providers* 2009: 8. Available online at [http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main\\_page=index&language=en](http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/index.php?main_page=index&language=en)





## Part II. Exploratory field assessment

### 1. Methodology

This research contributes to an increased understanding of the scope and context of human trafficking in the participating Caribbean countries through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The applied research consisted of four key components designed to provide a targeted assessment of the current situation within these eight countries.

*Component I* consisted of gathering general research that provides an overview of the current understanding of human trafficking in the Caribbean region. The national researchers of the eight participating countries were provided with this initial literature review compiled by IOM as a starting point for country-specific literature.

*Component II* consisted of legal research. The legal research methodology consisted of three parts: data collection, data analysis (content analysis of compiled legislations, legal codes and legal mechanisms to prevent human trafficking, prosecute offenders and protect and assist victims) and synthesis of collected information, including a set of recommendations for policy development at the national and regional levels.

*Component III* consisted of a field assessment conducted by national researchers within each participating country. This component used a literature review, statistical review, Media review, a national survey and key informant interviews to provide an exploratory assessment of the current context of trafficking within the specific country. The analysis by the national researchers aimed to identify current strengths and make recommendations to address gaps where found.

**Literature review:** The national researchers examined relevant national policy and legislation, NGO reports as well as international legal documents. This process also entailed a Media review of any coverage, or lack thereof, on the subject of human trafficking. This literature review was carried out in addition to the general overview of human trafficking in the Caribbean region and the annotated literature review conducted by IOM.

**Statistical review:** Special attention was paid to statistical information regarding human trafficking in the participating countries. Researchers sought to clarify if there were any direct

statistics available on human trafficking within the country. These statistics could include the following information:

- a. number of persons trafficked, disaggregated by sex, age and nationality;
- b. number of arrests, investigations, convictions for human trafficking and other related crimes with disaggregated data on sex, age, nationality, age of defendant, sex of defendant, nationality of defendant, summary of facts and sentence.

In most cases, direct statistics on human trafficking were not available and researchers focused on statistics indirectly related to human trafficking when available, which included:

- c. number of sex workers (legal, illegal) disaggregated by sex, age and nationality;
- d. number of known or licensed establishments related to the sex industry including type of activity (brothel, exotic dancing, etc.), as well as official and unofficial records;
- e. number of entertainment/artist/prostitution visas issued and disaggregated by sex, age and nationality;
- f. number of visas for unaccompanied minors disaggregated by sex, age and nationality;
- g. number of deportations and repatriations disaggregated by sex, age and nationality;
- h. health statistics of commercial sex workers;
- i. any statistics on missing children disaggregated by sex and age
- j. number of requests made to consular offices/embassies for assistance with missing persons;
- k. number of consular-facilitated repatriations disaggregated by sex, age and nationality;
- l. number of deportations linked to prostitution-related convictions.

**Primary data collection:** Researchers obtained information using survey and questionnaire tools. A standardised national survey (for conceptual information) was administered to all participants at the national seminar on human trafficking in each participating country. In addition, a standardised data-collection tool on types of key statistical data and a standardised interview questionnaire for key informant interviews were designed. Key informant interviews were conducted with law-enforcement officials, immigration and/or customs officials, social service representatives, health

workers, government agencies, NGOs, international organizations and other relevant parties thought to have information on human trafficking in the region. Each national researcher conducted a minimum of 20 interviews with key informants.

These key informants comprised of individuals and organizations who are important partners in strengthening the collaborative framework required to combat human trafficking. The breakdown of the type of key informant interviews was identified by the national researcher and coordinated with IOM. The assessment included all relevant sectors as much as possible. Key informant interviews were conducted to provide a more expansive assessment of the flows of human trafficking into, within, and from the Caribbean region.

Component IV consisted of two stages. The first stage was the development of a final country report for each of the eight countries, written by IOM, which compiled information from the country reports submitted by the national researchers, along with additional data gathered by IOM. The country reports provide exploratory information on the scope and context of human trafficking.

The second stage was the compilation of cross-country regional trafficking trends, consisting of the findings and analysis obtained from all three previous Components into an exploratory analysis of the scope and context of human trafficking within The Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, St Lucia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

While national researchers were provided with a standardised methodology as described above, the context of each country led to differences in the research between the countries in this *Exploratory Assessment*.

## 2. Caribbean regional overview

### *Migration trends and mobility*

#### *Links with history*

Migration has been a feature of life in the Caribbean since pre-slavery days, featuring movement of the indigenous Arawak and Garifuna people between the islands. During the times of slavery and indentureship the region experienced both forced and voluntary migration. Caribbean migration patterns were greatly influenced by the slave trade. Some have hesitated to call slavery “migration”, though it involved the transportation of millions of people from one continent to another and led to other migrant flows. Slaves were captured in Africa, transported across the Atlantic Ocean and exploited for their labour in the countries of the “New World”.

In the 1600s, the wide-scale importation of thousands of African men, women and children by Europeans into the Caribbean was motivated by the need for labour on the sugar- and cotton-producing plantations of the Americas. International relations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were defined by two major systems - colonialism and slavery. The slave trade was the commercial centrepiece of these systems until 1807 when the British government formally abolished it. With the subsequent abolition of slavery later in the 1800s, the large-scale movement of persons into the Caribbean by the British colonial empire continued with the introduction of East Indians as bonded or indentured labourers on the plantations. These indentured labourers were mainly shipped to the British colonies of Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>6</sup> Over the centuries that followed, emigration from the Caribbean to destinations in Europe and North America was a strategy used by the former slaves in the pursuit of their socio-economic improvement.<sup>7</sup>

The Caribbean is a region of extensive migration, with a rate of movement in relation to population that may be one of the highest in the world.<sup>8</sup> Despite migration being “a way of life” in the Caribbean, research on the impact of migration is limited.<sup>9</sup> All states and territories have been affected by inflows and outflows, both historically through slavery, colonial relationships and industries such as sugar,

6 Reddock, Rhoda E. (1994) *Women, Labour & Politics in Trinidad & Tobago: A History*, Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston.

7 Beckley, Hilary (1990) *A History of Barbados from Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, Cambridge University Press, New York.

8 The information from this point in this section was first published in IOM (2004) *HIV/AIDS and Mobile Populations in The Caribbean: A Baseline Assessment*, Santo Domingo, June : 4, Available online at: [http://www.iom.int/DOCUMENTS/PUBLICATION/EN/Final\\_Report\\_HIV-AIDS\\_and\\_Mobile\\_Populations\\_in\\_the\\_Caribbean.pdf](http://www.iom.int/DOCUMENTS/PUBLICATION/EN/Final_Report_HIV-AIDS_and_Mobile_Populations_in_the_Caribbean.pdf).

9 Nankoe, Alia (forthcoming) *Mobility and HIV in the Caribbean*, International Organization for Migration, Geneva.

and currently via globalization and regular and irregular transnational flows. The cultural histories of Caribbean nations have led to a variety of distinct migration patterns. The different migration flows are also influenced by the diversity of the region (both culturally and in terms of economic and human development) and by its geographical position.

While other forms of migration occur in the region, there are three primary migration flows in the Caribbean: internal migration (for example, from a rural area to a city within a country); intra-regional migration (for example, movement between islands); and outward migration (for example, movement to Latin America, Europe or North America).<sup>10</sup> Three important factors that influence these flows are socio-economic inequalities (both within the Caribbean and globally), tourism and irregular migration.

### ***Socio-economic disparity and labour migration***

Migration as a phenomenon is “perceived very positively by Caribbean peoples” and viewed as a strategy for “upward mobility and betterment.”<sup>11</sup> In some cases, the proximity of more prosperous countries located both within and outside the region has stimulated migrants to move in search of economic opportunity. A portion of this migration is intra-regional, with some countries acting as “receiving states” and others producing large numbers of economic migrants.<sup>12</sup> The Caribbean is comprised of high-, middle- and low-income countries; gross domestic product (GDP) per capita ranges from USD1,155 in Haiti to USD23,587 in Trinidad and Tobago, as reflected in the Chart 4.

As reflected in Chart 5, development indicators also vary widely, with life expectancy ranging from 61 to 78.5 years of age and adult literacy rates ranging between 62 percent and nearly 100 percent.<sup>13</sup> Such disparities in quality of life and opportunity are important push factors for migration and lead to movement both within and out of the region.

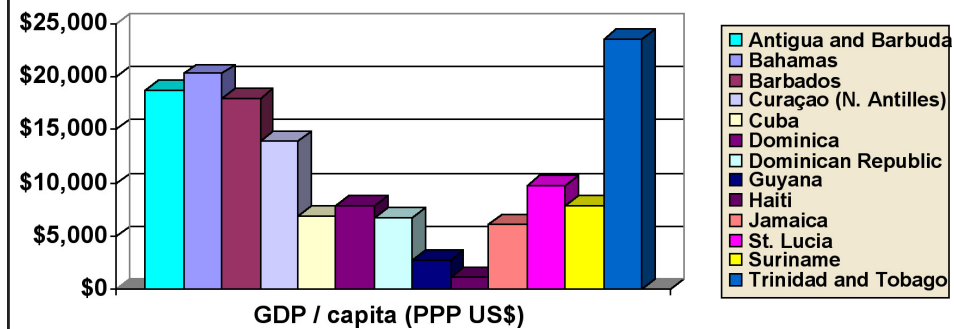
---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Marshall, Dawn (1998) *HIV/AIDS and Mobility in the Caribbean: Policies and Strategic Priorities for Interventions*. Caribbean Consultation on HIV/AIDS: Strategies and Resources for a Coordinated Regional Response, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 3 June: 11.

<sup>12</sup> International Migration Policy Programme (IMP) (2001) *The International Migration Policy Seminar for the Caribbean Region: Summary of Priority Topics Addressed*. Kingston, Jamaica, 28-31 May: 1-3.

<sup>13</sup> UNDP, *Human Development Report 2009*. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/88.html>; [http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/display\\_cf\\_xls\\_indicator.cfm?indic\\_byyear\\_id=88](http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/display_cf_xls_indicator.cfm?indic_byyear_id=88); <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/89.html>

**Chart 4: GDP/capita in select Caribbean countries**

Source: IOM, revised in 2010 based on the “UNDP *Human Development Report 2009* - Human development index 2007 and its components.”<sup>14</sup>

**Chart 5: Caribbean Development Indicators**

	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Adult literacy rate (% of those aged 15 and over)
The Bahamas	73.2	95.8
Barbados	77	99.7
Curaçao (Netherlands Antilles)	75	96.8
Cuba	78.5	99.8
Dominican Republic	72.4	89.1
Guyana	66.5	99.0
Haiti	61	62.1
Jamaica	71.7	86
St Lucia	73.6	94.8
Suriname	68.8	90.4
Trinidad and Tobago	69.2	98.7

Source: UNDP Human Development Report 2009.<sup>15</sup>

Intra-Caribbean labour migration will further be facilitated by the Single Market and Economy (CSME) of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). CARICOM was established by the Treaty of Chaguaramas, which was signed

14 IOM created this chart based on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2000* and the *2009 Human Development Report*, available online at: <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/91.html>.

15 <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/88.html>; [http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/display\\_cf\\_xls\\_indicator.cfm?indic\\_byyear\\_id=88](http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/display_cf_xls_indicator.cfm?indic_byyear_id=88) <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/89.html>

4 July 1973. The Treaty seeks “to provide dynamic leadership and service, in partnership with Community institutions and groups, towards the attainment of a viable, internationally competitive and sustainable Community, with improved quality of life for all.” Current CARICOM Member States include Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. The CSME envisions a Caribbean “without barriers, strengthened by its collective resources and opportunities.” Free movement of persons is not yet a reality in the region, although CARICOM has approved regulations that allow for the free movement of business people, artists, sportspersons and some categories of students; the movement of other groups has been under discussion for several years. Free trade and free movement of capital are slowly being implemented.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to intra-regional movement, migrants from the Caribbean region also travel to non-Caribbean countries in search of economic opportunity. Europe, the United States of America and Canada are popular destinations for this type of migration. Policies between these countries that are based on ties with former colonies in the Caribbean have traditionally influenced these flows. Such policies also include work programmes that were established to address shortages of professionals in destination countries (such as health workers in the United States).

Labour migration has had both positive and negative effects on the Caribbean. Intra-regional flows have helped support the tourism industry that is increasingly important in sustaining many economies in the region. Migrants who have established themselves in countries outside the region send significant quantities of money to their home countries in the form of remittances, an important contribution to the economy of many Caribbean states. However, the departure of professionals, also known as “brain drain”, poses a serious problem to the migration outflows of the Caribbean. The loss of professionals to developed countries has been identified as a major challenge for the Caribbean.<sup>17</sup>

At a meeting of the Pan Caribbean Partnership against AIDS (PANCAP), the migration of skilled labour was discussed as a problem requiring a regional response.<sup>18</sup> Brain drain not only results in shortages of professionals in certain sectors in the home country, but is also a drain on resources whereby less wealthy countries educate and train their nationals only to see them migrate elsewhere to put those skills to use. As such, the English-speaking Caribbean views itself as partly paying for the skilled labour needed in the United States and Canada. In

---

16 Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat (2003).

17 Nankoe forthcoming.

18 Greene, 2003.

Jamaica and Trinidad, the loss of nurses is creating serious problems in the health care sectors of those countries.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to the loss of professionals, labour migration has other consequences on the region, particularly when the migration is irregular. Many countries in the Caribbean receive boatloads of migrants attempting to enter neighbouring countries illegally. The policies regarding irregular migration differ across the region, but the responsibility to save lives, identify those in need of protection (such as asylum-seekers and victims of human trafficking), while effectively enforcing national migration policies and border control is extremely challenging.

### *Tourism*

The largest movement of people in the Caribbean is the movement into the region by recreational visitors, more than 20 million people annually according to the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO).<sup>20</sup> The natural beauty of the region has created an industry that sustains many of the people of the Caribbean, contributing half the GDP in some countries.<sup>21</sup> Relative to other regions in the world, the Caribbean has the “highest level of dependence” on the tourism industry.<sup>22</sup> Labour migration within the region is also linked to the tourism industry, with destination countries often being distinguished by economies based on tourism.<sup>23</sup> Immigration to such states has resulted in some microstates experiencing significant population growth.<sup>24</sup> The importance of tourism in the region has also led to the related phenomenon of tourism-oriented prostitution.

### *Irregular migration*

The high level of movement in the Caribbean features not only regular migration but also irregular migration flows. Irregular migration often refers to situations where migrants do not enter a country legally, but enter either clandestinely or with fraudulent documents.<sup>25</sup> Migrant smuggling is one kind of irregular migration;

<sup>19</sup> IMP, 2001: 3

<sup>20</sup> Marshall, op. cit., 1998: 4

<sup>21</sup> Dixon 2000 as quoted in Nankoe, op. cit., forthcoming

<sup>22</sup> Allen, Caroline, Roger McLean and Keith Nurse (2004) “The Caribbean, HIV/AIDS and Security,” in *Caribbean Security in the Age of Terror*, Ian Randle Press, Jamaica: 15.

<sup>23</sup> Marshall, op. cit., 1998: 16

<sup>24</sup> Marshall, op. cit., 1998: 11

<sup>25</sup> *International Migration Law No. 1*, (2004), *Glossary on Migration*, International Organization for Migration; Geneva: 34. Khoser, Khalid. (Sept. 2005). *Irregular Migration, State Security and Human Security - a paper prepared for the Policy Analysis and Research Programme of the Global Commission on International Migration*, University of College London: 5-7. Available at: <http://www.gcim.org/attachements/TP5.pdf>. According to Khoser, other examples include: “people who remain in a country in contravention of their authority (for example by staying after the expiry of a visa or work permit, through sham marriages or fake adoptions, as bogus students or fraudulently self-employed); people moved by migrant smugglers or human trafficking, and those who deliberately abuse the asylum system.”



asylum-seekers and refugees can also fall into the irregular category. Human trafficking can also constitute an irregular form of migration.

Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are some of the most serious and urgent challenges facing migration policymakers and practitioners today. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are rooted in the problems of poverty and lack of opportunity, marginalization and violence and predominately affect the most vulnerable members of society (particularly women and children in the case of human trafficking). Migrant smuggling often occurs as migrants attempt to cross borders that are otherwise closed to them. Human trafficking occurs in a variety of ways, for the purposes of sexual or labour exploitation, forced military conscription, domestic servitude, forced marriage and the sale of organs. The consequences of these irregular migration flows are often devastating, both for irregular migrants and for the wider society. Increased irregular migration, the presence of criminal organizations and problems with national security are some of the consequences for countries of origin, transit and destination. Broader implications include the general decline in the health and well-being of communities affected by these activities.

Human trafficking and migrant smuggling routes crisscross the globe, affecting all regions. As a region of origin, transit and destination, the Caribbean is beset by complex irregular migration flows. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling occur between and within Caribbean countries, and irregular migration movements link the region to other parts of the world, including Central and South America, Europe and Asia. The United States and Canada are typically preferred destinations. Though data on the levels of irregular migration is difficult to obtain, Caribbean states are particularly susceptible to irregular migration movements due to their “exposed geographical positioning” and “porous borders.”<sup>26</sup> These illicit activities place immense pressure on countries in the Caribbean region. Countries in the Caribbean region are confronted with the specific problems associated with human trafficking and migrant smuggling, such as managing borders, preventing illegal movement and addressing the need to prosecute human traffickers and identify and assist victims of trafficking, while drawing on limited resources and facing a range of other political and developmental challenges.

### ***Main findings: an analysis of cross-country trends in human trafficking***

This section serves to synthesize the extensive information obtained in the participating country reports into the broader regional context. Regional migration

---

26 Marshall, op. cit., 1998: 2

trends, methods of recruitment and movement and forms of exploitation are examined. While distinct differences are shown to exist between these countries, there are a number of similarities in the effects of exploitation and human trafficking in countries throughout the Caribbean.

### ***Regional migration***

Though traditionally there has been a considerable amount of intra-Caribbean movement, the impact of globalization has contributed to a rise in migration, and in female migration in particular. Many migrants come from poor or working-class circumstances, crossing borders or moving to cities in search of opportunities that will help improve their socio-economic status. Others may migrate due to the devastation caused by conflict or natural disasters, or to join family members or friends, or to seek out better educational opportunities.

As mentioned above, Caribbean migration is both internal and external, involving men, women and children. Some of the eight participating countries are source, transit or destination points for regular and irregular migrants, while some are a combination thereof. This research found the countries of Barbados, St Lucia, Jamaica, Suriname, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago to be source countries for emigration. In terms of transit countries, many regular and irregular migrants pass through Barbados, The Bahamas, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles and Trinidad and Tobago on their way to the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Canada. Jamaica and Guyana also have very active internal migration patterns.

The Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, St Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago are all destination countries for migrants seeking to improve their socio-economic status and as such are also destination countries for potential victims of human trafficking. Many of these countries are seen as attractive destinations because of higher levels of social and economic development. Others attract migrants because opportunities are believed to exist in specific industries such as tourism, agriculture or mining.

The absence of sustainable livelihood creates strong push factors for persons to seek new opportunities that enable them to provide for themselves and their families. These push factors merge with the increasing need among countries for low-skilled, inexpensive and temporary labour where employees are seen as expendable. The demand for such labour is also felt in countries in the Caribbean and this push-pull dynamic influences migration flows and patterns in the region.

In the case of irregular migrants, many people willingly seek out migrant smugglers to help them relocate to another country. Human smuggling and irregular migration

are relevant to human trafficking because of the vulnerability of migrants who are smuggled. These migrants can sometimes fall prey to unscrupulous people who seek to exploit them through sexual slavery, forced labour or domestic servitude. This vulnerability can also apply to those who migrate through regular mechanisms. Though a person may enter the country legally, they can still find themselves being taken advantage of by those wishing to exploit them.

As in the rest of the world, it is very difficult to assess the number of irregular migrants coming into or going through countries within the Caribbean. Human trafficking, migration and migrant smuggling are distinct but interconnected issues. Human trafficking follows regular and irregular migration patterns in the Caribbean. Chart 6 provides a brief overview of migration and mobility among the countries in this regional research.

### ***General Context of Human Trafficking in the Caribbean***

#### ***Recruitment methods***

Poverty, lack of opportunity or simply the desire for a better way of life all influence migration trends in the Caribbean. The need for inexpensive and/or low-skilled labour in some countries has led to advertisement for and recruitment of workers. While this can be an effective mechanism for facilitating migration, it can also be used to exploit vulnerabilities of migrant populations. Agencies throughout the Caribbean advertise and promote opportunities for work. Advertisements promise jobs as cashiers, bartenders, waitresses, domestic workers, salesclerks, baby-sitters, manual labourers, dancers and masseuses. Incentives such as arranged transportation, accommodation, training and enticing salaries are offered. These recruitment methods apply to internal and international opportunities. This type of recruitment is known to take place in Caribbean newspapers and through Internet sites; radio advertisements are also a possible method of recruitment.

All countries had cases of internal and external migrants being promised jobs and certain working conditions, with the conditions and terms of employment changing upon arrival. People throughout the Caribbean are lured into multiple forms of exploitation including forced labour, domestic servitude and sexual exploitation. While these recruitment mechanisms are not used purely for human trafficking, they are methods that human traffickers use to recruit those searching for employment and opportunity.

Haitian migration to The Bahamas and Guyanese migration to Barbados is believed to be perpetuated by advertisements from agencies promising opportunities for employment. Some Jamaican newspapers carry telephone numbers that a person

Chart 6: Cross-country analysis of trends in migration and mobility

	Bahamas	Barbados	Guyana	Jamaica	Netherlands Antilles	St Lucia	Suriname	Trinidad & Tobago
Regional source countries	Cuba Dominican Republic Guyana Haiti Jamaica	Guyana St Lucia St Vincent and the Grenadines	Brazil Internal: (especially Amerindians) Venezuela	Caribbean region Dominican Republic Internal	Colombia Cuba Dominican Republic Guyana Haiti Internal Jamaica Suriname Venezuela	Cuba Dominican Republic Internal St Vincent and the Grenadines Trinidad and Tobago	Brazil Colombia Dominican Republic Guyana Venezuela	Guyana Grenada St Vincent and the Grenadines Suriname
External source countries	China India Philippines UK US	India UK US		Canada China India Pakistan Russia Sri Lanka UK US	Canada China India Lebanon Peru Portugal South Africa the Netherlands US		China	Brazil China Colombia Ghana Nigeria UK US Venezuela
Destination countries	Canada UK US	Canada UK US	Barbados Brazil Suriname	Canada UK US	Aruba Coast Rica Internal the Netherlands US Venezuela	Bahamas Barbados Canada Martinique UK US	the Netherlands	Canada UK US
Transit countries	Cuba Haiti Jamaica				China Colombia Cuba Dominica Dominican Republic Haiti India Jamaica Lebanon Nigeria Pakistan Suriname Syria Venezuela			

Source: IOM, 2010.

Note: Based on the research findings of the eight country reports in this *Exploratory Assessment*.

can call to arrange a trip out of country. Attempting to delineate legitimate opportunities from those that are not is an extremely daunting task. In Jamaica, there were “warning signs” pointing to illegitimate “job opportunities” such as an unwillingness to divulge details over the phone.

The recruitment process in the Caribbean context is not limited to the use of advertisements and agencies. Informal channels, such as word of mouth, are commonly used throughout the Caribbean region. Intermediaries in the recruitment process can be agents sent to lure people into exploitation. However, recruiters are often familiar persons such as family members, neighbours and friends. Some persons that migrate based on promises of employment can be given a good experience so that he or she will return to their area of origin and persuade others. Recruitment does not necessarily entail a recruiter physically escorting someone into an exploitative situation. Recruiters can support unscrupulous “employers” by simply spreading false or exaggerated information about opportunities among vulnerable communities.

Informants in most countries believed that word-of-mouth recruitment is a common method used to lure people into exploitation throughout the Caribbean. Agents or recruiters typically receive financial compensation for each person they recruit into “employment.” For example, in Suriname, a club owner would charge an agent or recruiter with bringing in girls and women to work in the club. The recruiter travels from Suriname to Brazil, Colombia or the Dominican Republic to recruit girls and women. Once the girl or woman is recruited, her ticket to Suriname is purchased and the club owner arranges her travel visa.

Some prostitutes also act as recruiters to entice other girls or women into prostitution by telling them that they will earn large amounts of money. The prostitute receives payment for each girl or woman she recruits.

In Guyana, Jamaica and Suriname, recruiters will often offer opportunities to children while obtaining parental approval. They may even provide the parents with a cash advance.

As mentioned above, human trafficking often takes place within migration flows. This tendency increases the difficulty of identifying victims of human trafficking among regular and irregular migrants. Typically for human trafficking, most of those answering advertisements and those migrating for employment promised through informal channels will have little awareness of their potential of becoming subject to exploitation. This makes identification of victims of human trafficking at the recruitment stage very challenging.

### *Transport methods*

Migration and mobility can be positive processes that lead to better living conditions or opportunities. However, in a climate of increasingly restrictive immigration policies, access to these opportunities may require the use of irregular

methods of migration. Migrant smugglers are employed to facilitate this process throughout the Caribbean. As previously mentioned, this method is also used to transport victims of human trafficking. Sometimes, they can be among migrants being smuggled into a country; in many situations, the migrant being smuggled may be a willing participant in the process who is unaware of the exploitation that awaits them. Boats, aeroplanes, cars and pedestrian methods are all used for human trafficking within the Caribbean.

The organization of the movement of victims of human trafficking exists in forms that vary from country to country, and the method of movement can change at any point in time. As these are criminal operations, human traffickers and migrant smugglers will often adopt new routes, names, contact information and means of transport to evade authorities. Those who have means of transportation are often also involved in recruiting. In The Bahamas, captains of boats and aeroplanes allegedly go to countries such as Haiti or the Dominican Republic claiming that there are jobs available in Nassau. They may also boast of free health care as an incentive. The migrant is offered transport to The Bahamas for a fee. The boats are often filled beyond capacity; at times they sink.

In some Caribbean countries such as Barbados, St Lucia, the Netherlands Antilles and Trinidad and Tobago, the entry into the country of migrants and possible victims of human trafficking also takes place within legal migration channels. In the case of air transport, tickets may be organized by an agency, recruiter, or “helper.” Allegedly, persons in the human trafficking network wait for “new recruits” at the airport or point of entry to help facilitate passage into countries such as St Lucia and the Netherlands Antilles. These facilitators are sometimes suspected of being law enforcement or immigration officials.

Other countries, such as Guyana and Jamaica, have high levels of internal movement. Much of this movement is from rural to urban areas. For example, in Guyana there is movement from the hinterlands to the coastal areas, and in Jamaica there are flows into the tourist areas. There is also urban to rural movement in Guyana, with some migrants moving from coastal areas to the hinterland to work in the mining industry. Due to the common occurrence of internal movement, it is extremely difficult to identify potential situations of exploitation and victims of human trafficking. The Bahamas, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles and Suriname are also used as transit points for regular and irregular migration. Migrants are often delayed in a country until they can earn money or find a means of passage to a third or destination country. During this time, the migrants are very vulnerable because they are open to any opportunities to earn money in order to complete

their journey. Therefore, migrants can end up in an exploitative situation, such as human trafficking, within a transit country.

### *Human trafficking for forced labour*

In all countries examined in this research, exploitative labour conditions of migrant populations were found to exist. Migrants in forced labour were usually deceived as to the conditions and type of employment in which they would be involved. They were forced to work in dangerous or poor conditions, with extremely long work hours and no time off (working seven days a week), while having to perform duties that were not part of the original agreement and receiving very little or no pay. They were also being sustained through minimum provisions of food and shelter.

Forced labour situations exist for adults of both sexes and for children throughout the Caribbean region. However, sectors of labour within the study were sex-specific and those found in exploitative or possible human trafficking situations fit into general categories. For example, men and boys were being exploited more in agriculture, construction, sawmills and mining; women were being exploited more in domestic and garment work and prostitution. However, there were crossovers and correlation between the sectors. For example, in Guyana some women worked in agriculture and in the Netherlands Antilles Indian men were found in domestic work. The case of children will be discussed in a following section.

The research found that many labourers were given credit instead of being paid a wage, which often resulted in debt bondage. They were also only given enough food rations for survival. The debt is often difficult to pay, as the “bosses” regularly add other costs in addition to the original debt. As a result, exploited labourers may have no means to return home; those that do earn the means to return home may not go because they would be returning empty-handed, or have no opportunities in their home region or country. In Suriname and Guyana, cases of this form of debt bondage were believed to exist.

Cultural differences, language barriers and the isolation of certain immigrant communities from the rest of the general population create further challenges in accessing many vulnerable migrant groups. In The Bahamas, Barbados, Suriname, the Netherlands Antilles and Trinidad and Tobago, it was difficult to access populations believed to be in forced or exploitative labour conditions. This situation seemed to be especially true for Chinese populations in Suriname, who are believed to be one of the migrant populations that suffer from labour exploitation and are potential victims of human trafficking.

The number of cases described in each country report that were actual human trafficking cases was difficult to discern. This situation is prevalent where conditions of labour exploitation exist. Such conditions allow human trafficking to occur and sometimes thrive. Exploitation easily transitions to forced labour where an industry or employer is allowed to abuse workers. Victims of human trafficking may be present in such exploitative conditions but remain undetected.

### *Human trafficking for sexual exploitation*

Common to all the participating countries was the deception of migrant women and girls who were offered work as waitresses, cashiers, bartenders, dancers, salesclerks or masseuses, only to be forced into prostitution after arrival at the destination point. Others were aware that they would be employed in the entertainment industry or even as prostitutes, but were not aware of the full working conditions in which they later find themselves. Sexual exploitation was found among those involved in prostitution, exotic dancing, massages and other related activities. While knowledge about persons forced into prostitution varied between the different countries in this research, all countries attested to having some cases of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. This included some knowledge of people being trafficked internally and externally for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

A common perception indicated in the country reports was that those involved in the sex industry came from dire socio-economic backgrounds and were seeking to improve their living conditions and those of their families. As such, the reports reveal that although the individuals may not want to be working in the sex trade, they felt that there was no other choice. Other country reports revealed a perception that prostitutes had a choice and remained in the sex trade because they earned high incomes from this type of work. Negative social attitudes about prostitution could serve as a disincentive for persons who have been forced into prostitution and sexual exploitation to seek help. However, these assumptions could not be well substantiated within the framework of this research process as access to prostitutes and victims of human trafficking was very limited.

Women in Jamaica, St Lucia, Suriname, The Bahamas, and the Netherlands Antilles are often brought in to these countries with a permit to dance and then may be forced into prostitution by their employer or by the circumstances these employers create. Even those who voluntarily work as prostitutes are often confronted with working conditions they did not expect. Employers use various forms of control to force them to perform certain actions against their will and prevent them from leaving the situation, thus making them victims of human trafficking.



Vulnerability to human trafficking in this context is not limited to girls or women. There were also reports of boys and young men trafficked for sexual exploitation. This was often said to be associated with the drug trade. The sections on children and links to drug trafficking will provide more information.

### *Human trafficking for domestic servitude*

Human trafficking is often linked to the demand for cheap domestic labour. Domestic workers are considered some of the most underpaid and overworked of those employed as cheap labour. Since domestic work typically exists within private households, the extent of abuse and exploitation of domestic workers is very difficult to discern. Domestic workers are often not included as a recognized labour force, falling outside the scope of labour exploitation laws and protection. Differences in race, class, age, sex and immigration status can intensify the potential for exploitation.

Exploited domestic workers may find themselves as slaves in debt bondage, having borrowed money for travel expenses or to pay fees to agencies that arranged their travel and/or employment. Others are told that their employer will cover their transportation costs. Once they arrive at their new job the costs are incurred to them as a debt. If the domestic worker is held in slavery, they are not paid and these debts cannot be paid off. Also, some domestic workers are tricked into domestic slavery, thinking that they are going to be employed in some other capacity, such as in a factory or restaurant.

Methods of exploitation and control of domestic workers are similar to other labour sectors. People are promised salaries but receive little or no money for their efforts. Passports and identity documents are confiscated; threats of violence, deportation or imprisonment are made to frighten the domestic workers into submission. Domestic servitude was reported to exist in most of the countries in this report, with some mention of people from the Caribbean being trafficked abroad as domestic workers as well.

While domestic workers are typically migrant females, in The Bahamas and the Netherlands Antilles some cases of male domestic servitude were reported. Informants in countries such as The Bahamas and Barbados explained that local people would not work as a domestic worker because of low pay, long hours, poor conditions and the “social status” associated with such work. This attitude reflected in the key informant interviews in the Barbados country report towards domestic work mirrors the other participating countries: The cases were primarily of young migrant household helpers made to work long hours, threatened with violence and reports to the Immigration Department, only able to have a limited

social life, being locked in and either paid low or “starvation” wages or through a barter system that is the provision of housing and food.

Some cases of exploitation of domestic workers were “internal” or “domestic,” rather than international, human trafficking. For example, key informant interviews in Jamaica revealed that: “some instances involve Jamaican young girls and women who are recruited from rural areas to work as domestic helpers or to ‘live in’ as part of a family [in Jamaica]. In the latter case, promises were made about being sent to school, and being provided with clothes and money. They ended up existing under slave-like conditions.” Informants in Barbados and Guyana also believed that there were some crossover cases of domestic servitude and sexual exploitation. Some domestic workers are forced to perform sexual favours as part of their domestic duties, while others are sexually abused by employers.

### *Human trafficking in children*

Though Caribbean states have varying definitions of what constitutes a “child” this research applied the international definition as the basis; anyone under the age of 18 years old. In the case of human trafficking, “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered ‘trafficking in persons’.”<sup>27</sup> For a case to be considered child trafficking, the “threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception . . .” is not necessary.

For example, if a parent arranges to have their child transported into a situation where they are forced to work (such as begging on the streets), this can be considered human trafficking, even if the child is a willing participant and is returned after a period of time. While the international standard was used as the basis of this report, national laws on child labour in the Caribbean vary greatly between countries and may not comply with the standards established in the Protocol.

Within the Caribbean region, key informants and national survey respondents pointed to common factors that contribute to trafficking in children. Poverty and lack of educational or employment opportunities were common reasons cited by informants in all the participating countries. This included families who sell or send children away for their own survival or in the hope that their child would attain a better life with someone else. The low social and cultural status of women was also cited. This included the disproportionate number of women in poverty, as well as women as single heads of households, and those who are subject to early exposure to sex and using sex as a means of survival. In some situations, poor circumstances led mothers to send their daughters out to find a man to take care

---

27 UNODC, op. cit., 2000.

of them. Lack of education and awareness of risks, a history of sexual abuse of children and parental migration resulting in abandonment were also believed to be contributing factors.

In the literature reviews for this research, cases of children being used for exploitative practices were found in most countries that participated in the *Exploratory Assessment*. A report from International Labour Organization (ILO) on The Bahamas noted that an environment of exploitative child labour practices could “foster trafficking in children, at least on a small scale.”<sup>28</sup> In The Bahamas, sexual exploitation was seen in cases of “sweet-hearting” between girls and older men and in some cases between girls and tourists.<sup>29</sup> Reports included the sexual exploitation of girls less than 16 years of age, with some as young as 12 years old, who were involved in various forms of commercial sexual activity. A publication focusing on Guyana titled *Voices of Children: Experiences with Violence* also described cases of the sexual exploitation of Amerindian girls.<sup>30</sup>

Previous IOM research indicates that child trafficking for sexual exploitation also exists in the Netherlands Antilles.<sup>31</sup> According to the report, clients can approach certain brothel owners to “order a child”. This child, usually an 8 to 12-year-old girl from the Dominican Republic, is then flown to Curaçao where she is handed over to the client for his exclusive use.<sup>32</sup> Research in St Lucia carried out by the Poverty Reduction Fund in 2000 included references to the problem of child exploitation. As one quote described: “They are young, 12-13 years old, even 9, involved in street prostitution. Young boys are being abused in tourist areas (such as in Marina in the North). Many children are sent to Castries and are begging for food.”<sup>33</sup>

The research conducted for this *Exploratory Assessment* identified The Bahamas, St Lucia, Jamaica, Guyana and Suriname as having links to trafficking in children. In Guyana, there was mention of young Amerindian boys being forced to work for a businessman under slave-like conditions. Informants also described girls from rural communities who are recruited with promises of jobs as salesclerks or domestic workers in Georgetown. “Parents are given advances and are told girls would be well taken care of. Girls are taken to Corentyne and are handed over to business people who then tell them the kind of work they have to do... Movements are restricted, no interaction with others but clients; no pay...”<sup>34</sup> In

---

28 Dunn, op. cit., 2002.

29 ILO, op.cit., 2003: 2.

30 Cabral, op. cit., 2004 : 28-29.

31 IOM, op.cit., 2004.

32 Ibid.

33 Poverty Reduction Fund of St Lucia, op. cit., 2000: 81.

34 Key informant interview, Guyana.

The Bahamas, sexual exploitation of children for purposes of prostitution was mentioned as occurring, but the extent was believed to be limited.<sup>35</sup>

Multiple St Lucian informants and survey respondents cited information on child prostitution and pornography in that country, including the involvement of “local school girls” in the “entertainment business” and the recording of pornographic videos. “Young girls are tricked into getting involved for money. [They] may be told that they have to dance or pose, then they have to do very explicit sexual acts or other things.”<sup>36</sup>

Information about child trafficking in Jamaica was also provided by informants in that country. Boys and young men, especially those on the streets, were said to be used as “watchdogs” and couriers for drug dealers and often are sexually exploited. Girls are said to be given to men or sold at the Culloden Sex Trade by their families. There were also reports of girls being bought at Falmouth market for forced labour purposes. Girls were also thought to be recruited from rural areas as domestic helpers: “When the girl child gets to the town expecting to be treated as a family member, they find that they have to start doing chores, washing clothes, looking after baby, etc. Eventually, the male head begins to sexually abuse her and threaten her not to tell anyone. These girls are in the age group 13 to 25 years.”<sup>37</sup> Informants in Suriname also believed that children are being sexually exploited in their country, and as domestic or street workers. Two cases of forced prostitution were described as involving Guyanese girls in Suriname. Sexual exploitation of girls in the gold mines was also mentioned, though no cases were described. In the publication *Schmeitz*, there were documented cases of forced, arranged marriages involving young Surinamese girls who were living in a children’s shelter.<sup>38</sup>

### ***Other contributing factors***

#### *Entertainment work permits*

Concerns have been raised over the misuse of “entertainment” work permits. Many women enter Caribbean countries under the category of “entertainer”, which encompasses work such as dancer, singer or musician. Employers apply for these permits that allow women to enter the country in order to work as a stripper or exotic dancer in their clubs. These permits do not allow for women to be involved in prostitution, only in “adult entertainment.” However, many informants noted that this system is being manipulated to get around regulations related to prostitution in various Caribbean countries. It is believed that many of

---

35 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

36 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

37 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

38 Schmeitz M. op. cit., 2002.

the women entering the country under this work permit category are involved in prostitution. It is feasible that this abused and unmonitored process could be used as a means to move victims of human trafficking within the Caribbean for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

In Curaçao, government-sanctioned and regulated prostitution is only allowed in one zone, known as Campo Alegre, where only non-nationals of the Netherlands Antilles are employed as prostitutes. Under the conditions of the three-month work permits, registered prostitutes are not allowed to travel. Those that leave the island forfeit the right to return under the same permit. It is believed that non-regulated prostitution takes place in clubs outside of this zone. Approximately one third of the prostitutes in Campo Alegre leave before their work permits expire. An estimated 12 percent of those that leave Campo Alegre begin working in illegal prostitution.<sup>39</sup>

Non-regulated prostitution is believed to take place in Curaçao, St Maarten and Bonaire in places such as snacks, bars and dance clubs, strip clubs, brothels, rented rooms or apartments and private residences.<sup>40</sup> Women employed in these places typically come into the Netherlands Antilles on entertainment visas as “dancers” and are not registered in the Netherlands Antilles Aliens Registration System (NAVAS). The government does not keep track of the number of women in Curaçao who are employed as “dancers” annually. Thus, non-regulated prostitution and issued entertainment visas work in tandem to enable a steady supply of women for sexual exploitation.

The connection between entertainment visas and non-regulated prostitution was also mentioned in St Lucia. Informants in that country stated that women who are granted entertainment work visas often overstay their time in the country, and this trend is not tracked. It is believed that some women are forced to remain in sexually exploitative conditions by club owners who are protected from retribution by local officials. In Suriname, the club owners applying for work visas for their new recruits are almost always granted such documentation even though it is suspected that these women will be involved in prostitution. Informants in Suriname believe this activity to take place with official support as the flexible implementation of the legal provisions ruling prostitution leaves most of the visa issuance, the sanitation controls and the enforcement of the Penal Code to the discretion of high-ranking officials. The lack of monitoring or regulation of the work permit process facilitates the continued importation of women without any way of knowing their numbers or the circumstances in which they end up. However, even when such

---

39 United Nations, *Consejo Economico y Social- Comisión de Derechos Humanos*, op. cit., 1997: 30.

40 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

mechanisms of monitoring or regulation exist, they can be abused by authorities and exploited by human traffickers.

### *Sex tourism*

Tourism is a major industry for most Caribbean countries and sex tourism is one category of tourism in the region. Sex tourism can involve male and female clients seeking the services of both sexes. Informants in Jamaica, Barbados, St Lucia, the Netherlands Antilles and The Bahamas believed that there are links between human trafficking and sex tourism in many of the countries. Barbados and Jamaica are well known as having sex tourism; the research for this *Exploratory Assessment* found Internet listings advertising Barbados as a sex tourism destination. Informants believed that the demand for sex tourism has been increasing in many of these countries, in addition to an escalating local demand in Barbados, Jamaica and St Lucia. This is perpetuated by the growth of the regular tourism industry, the entertainment industry and the personal-services industry, with all three being interconnected.

Despite the fact that human trafficking exists within the tourism industry, not every case of sex tourism constitutes human trafficking, which by definition requires at least one element of *activity, means or exploitation*.

### *Corruption and complacency*

In the course of the informant interviews for this *Exploratory Assessment*, corruption was highlighted throughout the region, despite the fact that the extent and level of organization was not known. Police were said to be linked to proprietors of clubs, bars and so forth, resulting in fear and failure to report exploitative practices and possible human trafficking cases. One similarity throughout the Caribbean region is the belief that the human trafficking process functions with the assistance of immigration officers and border officials. In The Bahamas, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles and Suriname, immigration officials were suspected of being involved with either facilitating or ignoring possible cases of human trafficking. In the Netherlands Antilles, informants “had many questions regarding admittance of certain women and the conditions under which they are admitted.” Other officials were accused of corruption in the process of issuing travel or work visas, as in the case of Suriname. In Barbados, law enforcement was accused of being involved in a passport scam that allegedly facilitated the passage of Guyanese citizens into the country. In St Lucia, some informants suspected complacency between law-enforcement officials and perpetrators of human trafficking. It is “difficult to tackle the issue because persons involved are connected to top officials in government

who are then able to silence those who speak out or act against trafficking in persons.”<sup>41</sup>

### *Links with drug trafficking*

The full extent of links between human trafficking and drug trafficking in the participating countries was not known and responses from informants varied from hypothesizing to naming multiple cases linking the two. Many believed that the progression from drug to human trafficking was a natural one. Criminals were expected to expand into lucrative operations based on demand, especially when the mechanisms to satisfy that demand in terms of movement and transportation are already in place. Surveillance in the participating countries is difficult as they are islands, archipelagos or countries with porous or un-patrolled borders; this makes all facets of human or drug trafficking difficult to detect.

Men and women may willingly transport drugs across borders but end up in unexpected circumstances. For example, after the person performs the task of drug courier they may not be released, but held in bondage and exploited, forced into selling drugs and/or prostitution. Criminals use threats of violence against the person and their loved ones as a means of control. Key informants in The Bahamas, Guyana, Jamaica and Suriname believed that human trafficking and drug trafficking are linked. Of the cases cited linking drug and human trafficking, most involved people who turned to drug trafficking as an opportunity and means to escape poverty; such circumstances are potentially vulnerable to human trafficking.

A few cases of people being forced to swallow drugs for transport were also mentioned but these were not thought to be very widespread. Informants in Suriname mentioned the unique situation of Surinamese persons who live in the Netherlands being offered airfare to Suriname to visit family. Once they arrive they are controlled and forced to transport drugs back to the Netherlands.

### *Media*

The media can be an important ally for informing the public about the issue and consequences of human trafficking. The media is also an excellent mechanism for assessing current public perceptions and knowledge about the issue of human trafficking. Stories of migrant smuggling and exploitation have long been covered in local media in the countries participating in this research. Though the issue of human trafficking is just gaining recognition in the Caribbean region, many of the Media reviews undertaken for this report found stories related to human trafficking: the Media review in The Bahamas revealed examples of migrant exploitation

---

41 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.



and abuse. In March 2004, a Bahamian radio station reported that a farm owner severely beat his Haitian employees and withheld their immigration documents as a form of control; local media in St Lucia, such as the *Star* newspaper and the television show “Talk” contributed to bringing human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation into the open. An article by Rick Wayne about a young St Lucian woman suggested that she was trafficked for the purpose of prostitution; coverage in Barbados revealed headlines such as, “Treat them equally: Senator Sir Roy Trotman urges fair deal for migrant workers” and “‘Scams’ luring Guyanese here.”; the issue of human trafficking was also raised in May 2004 in the *Daily Nation* by the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers’ Union:

“We have also made the call because there is the need for the discontinuation of the trafficking of people into the area...and it is not all to do with prostitution. It has to do with poverty, and unemployment.”

In Guyana, the launch of the government campaign to combat human trafficking in April 2004 and the release of the *US State Department Trafficking in Persons Report* in June 2004 brought the issue of human trafficking into the spotlight, along with significant media attention. From mid-April to the end of August 2004, the research team examined 57 press articles relating to human trafficking in four newspapers: the *Stabroek News*, the *Kaieteur News*, the *Guyana Chronicle* and the *Catholic Standard*. Seven reports focused on alleged cases of human trafficking. The articles described the form of exploitation (sexual exploitation in these cases), the recruitment methods (through deception or financial transactions with the victim’s families) and forms of control (no payment, restriction of movement). Each of these articles also provided some information on the economic activity of the human traffickers.

A review of newspaper articles from January 2003 to August 2004 in Curaçao (eight daily newspapers and one weekly publication) and St Maarten (two daily newspapers) revealed that newspapers often publish reports on issues pertaining to immigration. Most of the news items were accounts of irregular immigrants that were arrested and awaiting deportation. In terms of articles on human trafficking, the news media in Curaçao published a story in June 2004 about a couple being accused of child abuse. While investigating the case the police stumbled on the fact that the children in question were not the biological children of the couple, and the couple refused to cooperate with the police concerning their real identity. Some newspapers started calling this a case of trafficking in children.



The Jamaican media reflected an awareness and understanding of human trafficking. Articles were written by staff reporters, regular columnists and guest columnists. They had both a local and international context with features on human trafficking in Jamaica and in other countries. Jamaican media reported characteristics of victims or potential victims, locations of exploitative activities and also put forward “theories” about kidnapped victims falling prey to international human trafficking. Traffickers were described as heads of organized crime, nightclub owners, pimps and parents of child prostitutes.

The above examples reiterate that the media is an important mechanism for raising awareness on the issue of human trafficking. This medium can also be a tool for educating the public as to the differences between migrant smuggling, exploitation, and human trafficking. Moreover, the media can be an effective partner in explaining how human trafficking affects the country and region, and why the public should consider this an important phenomenon within their communities.

### *Conclusion*

Migration is extensive within the Caribbean, including irregular migration. It is difficult to identify human trafficking victims within regular or irregular migration flows within and from the region. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including literature reviews, national surveys and key informant interviews, this research points to some level of human trafficking, whether internal and/or external, in all the participating countries of this *Exploratory Assessment*.

Victims of human trafficking in the Caribbean were found to be men, women, boys and girls; some were from the region and others were from areas external to the region. These victims were found in multiple forms of exploitation including sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude. While women and girls were found to be vulnerable due to gender-based violence, discrimination and sexual exploitation, boys were increasingly found to be at risk. Some boys were already living on the streets and were exposed to drug traffickers, while others were forced into sexual relationships with older men as a means of survival for themselves or their families.

Major push factors across the Caribbean included poverty, socio-economic status and inequality that was often based on gender and/or ethnicity. Push factors are combined with recruitment methods such as newspaper advertisements, Internet sites and radio advertisements to manipulate flows of low-skilled and cheap labour throughout the Caribbean.

While the participating countries did not have widespread human trafficking, exploitative labour conditions, especially of migrant populations, were found to exist in all countries examined in this research. Many informants recognised that migrants come from dire situations and may choose to remain in exploitative situations rather than return home. Some of these migrants were potential victims of human trafficking. Some informants also expressed negative opinions of migrant workers, especially those in the sex trade or entertainment industry. The combination of discrimination and exploitation make migrants even more vulnerable to human trafficking.

The crime of human trafficking is believed to operate in conjunction with other organized criminal activities, such as migrant smuggling or drug trafficking. Though the extent of this link is not yet known, criminals will expand into lucrative operations based on demand, especially when the mechanisms for satisfying that demand in terms of movement and transportation are already in place. Corruption and complacency are concerns throughout the Caribbean region and contribute to the facilitation of human trafficking.

Government and non-governmental organizations are important resources for counter-trafficking efforts. The complexity of human trafficking requires a multi-agency approach to create and strengthen legislation, conduct education and awareness-raising activities and provide services to victims of human trafficking. Adding the media as a public information and education ally can be an effective strategy in combating human trafficking.

This research was primarily a qualitative exercise and was not intended to supply statistics as to the numbers of human trafficking victims within each participating country. The research seeks to provide a starting point for the participating countries to examine the problem of human trafficking within their local context and to encourage dialogue about how to combat this crime within the Caribbean region. Human trafficking exists at some level in all of the countries included in this research. Due to the potential for human trafficking to grow, a strong, proactive approach to addressing the issue in the Caribbean is very important to the region.

### 3. The Bahamas - country report on human trafficking (2004)

#### *Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey*

Neither the government of The Bahamas, international organizations, nor the NGO community has statistics on human trafficking in The Bahamas. Nevertheless, information on migration, tourism, prostitution, economics, labour and human rights is available. When analysed in the context of human trafficking, the intersection of some or all of these areas helps paint a clearer picture of an environment in which human trafficking may exist.

The Bahamian economy is characterized as a service economy, earning the majority of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from the tourism industry, which accounts for roughly 60 percent of GDP, followed by the banking and finance industry, which accounts for 20 percent of GDP.<sup>42</sup> The service and banking sectors have enabled the country to experience significant economic growth over the past three decades with incomes rising from USD1,943 in 1973 to USD16,400 in 2003.<sup>43</sup> Tourism employs approximately two thirds of the population, with much of the tourism coming from the United States.

However, as a developing country, the nation still struggles with a dependence on foreign trade, lack of economic diversification, inefficient institutions and an increasing drift from rural to urban areas. This drift has taken the form of migration between the islands from the rural Family Islands to the urban centres of Nassau or Freeport. Recently, the scale of migration between Caribbean nations has increased significantly as people seek to escape impoverished situations characterized by low employment opportunities, monetary devaluation, gender disparities and lack of institutional accountability.<sup>44</sup> In the supply-and-demand nexus of labour, The Bahamas is on the demand side of cheap labour. On the supply side, cheap labour comes from mainly Haiti, Jamaica and Cuba, often in irregular flows. These are recognised to be poorer countries, with currencies of low value and high unemployment rates compared to The Bahamas.

#### *The link between irregular migration and human trafficking in The Bahamas*

Irregular migrants in The Bahamas willingly sought out smugglers to help them relocate to that country where they could fulfil aspirations of finding a better

42 Higgins, J. Kevin (2004) *The Central Bank of The Bahamas and The Bahamian Economy: An Analysis*, The Counsellors Ltd., Nassau, Available online at: <http://bahamaweb.com/pds/publications.htm>.

43 Ibid.

44 Bahamas Immigration Department (2004).

life. Human smuggling and irregular migration are relevant to human trafficking because the immigration status of migrants makes them more vulnerable, which in turn can be manipulated by traffickers who seek to exploit the migrants. Many irregular migrants working in The Bahamas find employment in the agricultural or construction sectors, and in prostitution as a means of self-employment and/or survival.

The proximity of the northwest and the southeast islands of The Bahamas to Florida, Haiti, Jamaica, and Cuba is a key factor contributing to irregular migration. Statistics indicate that 6,298 irregular Haitian migrants and 954 irregular Jamaican migrants were repatriated in 2001; 5,462 Haitians and 551 Jamaicans in 2002; 3,512 Haitians and 606 Jamaicans in 2003; and 1,747 Haitians and 247 Jamaicans were repatriated during the first 10 months of 2004.<sup>45</sup> These figures exceed, by far, all other quantities of nationalities repatriated from The Bahamas to their countries of origin.

Based on these statistics, Haitians comprise the largest undocumented population in The Bahamas. However, estimates vary on the size of this population in The Bahamas. The Grand Bahama Human Rights Committee estimates that the total size of the Haitian population in The Bahamas is from 40,000 to 75,000.<sup>46</sup> This is based on the perception that Haitians comprise about a quarter of the total Bahamian population of 300,000 people. Research on Haitians in The Bahamas has shown that there are approximately 5,000 registered Haitian migrant workers with 13,000 dependent family members.<sup>47</sup> Thus, a comparison between the official statistics on legal migrants and estimates of the total population result in 20,000–50,000 Haitians living in The Bahamas as undocumented migrants. Haitians and Jamaicans tend to be less transient than Cubans, who often arrive in The Bahamas in transit to the United States.

### ***Irregular migrants and forced labour***

The Bahamian cultural stigma associated with certain types of employment such as agricultural work, domestic work and manual construction has created a demand for “cheap labour”. This gap has been filled by irregular migrants, and in many cases Haitians, in search of paid employment. The popular term “my Haitian,” which refers to Haitians employed as domestic labour in many Bahamian households, exemplifies this pervasive social perception. The risk of exposure leaves irregular migrants extremely vulnerable to unscrupulous employers. This vulnerability

---

45 Ibid.

46 Ferguson, James (2003) *Migration in the Caribbean: Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Beyond*, Minority Rights Group International, July: 24, Available online at: <http://www.minorityrights.org/admin/Download/pdf/MRGC CaribbeanReport.pdf>.

47 Ibid: 24.

opens the door to abuse and exploitation in the form of low wages, long hours and the forced performance of more duties than what was initially agreed upon. Thus, while irregular migrants may come to The Bahamas voluntarily, the vulnerabilities that motivated them to leave their homeland may render them susceptible to exploitation upon arrival in The Bahamas. Often, the Haitian migrant views such circumstances as preferable to returning to the situation they left in Haiti.

### ***Tourism, gender, the sex trade and human trafficking***

Tourism is the main industry in The Bahamas; therefore, it is important to analyse: the labour demands of the industry, including sex work and the association of such work with women and girls; the socio-economic diversity of women in sex tourism; and the relationship between the sex industry and human trafficking. Research conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) indicates that “sweet-hearting” between girls and older men, some of whom are tourists, occurs in The Bahamas.<sup>48</sup> Reports indicated that girls under the age of 16 years old, and some as young as 12 years old, were being involved in various forms of commercial sexual activity. A few cases of sexual exploitation of boys, young men and girls with adults of the same sex as the child were also identified.<sup>49</sup>

The interrelation between tourism and prostitution provides another platform for analysis of the context of human trafficking in The Bahamas. Research indicates that prostitutes are considered to be part of an industry that requires human resources. Many sources note the physical and emotional impact on women working in the sex trade.<sup>50</sup> Also, a deeper understanding is necessary of how both tourism and prostitution intersect and the ramifications of human trafficking in The Bahamas. There is currently a lack of information about this dimension.

### ***Child labour and child trafficking***

The association between child trafficking for forced labour and/or prostitution in The Bahamas is not strongly established in this study. However, research conducted by the ILO indicates that an environment exists of child exploitation for labour, which in turn could foster trafficking in children, at least on a small scale. Research findings of a Rapid Assessment Study conducted by the ILO reveal that in a population of 108,000 people less than 18 years of age, 9,885 teenagers from

---

48 The International Labour Organization (2002) *Child Labour in The Bahamas: Summary of Research Findings based on a Rapid Assessment Study by the International Labour Organization*, Caribbean Office: 2, Available online at: [http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child\\_labour/fact\\_sheets/BahmsFS.pdf](http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child_labour/fact_sheets/BahmsFS.pdf).

49 Ibid: 2.

50 Hughes, Donna (2000) “The ‘Natasha’ Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of Trafficking in Women.” *Journal of International Affairs*. Spring, Available online at: <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/natasha.htm>.

the ages of 15 to 19 years old are economically active in The Bahamas.<sup>51</sup> “Of the 52 reports of children and young persons involved in the worse forms of child labour with locals, 4 were related to ‘slavery/bondage’ (sexual exploitation of children through incestuous relationships), 9 to illicit activities, 4 to hazardous activities, and 35 to commercial sexual activity.”<sup>52</sup> Twenty-eight work activities were linked with tourism.<sup>53</sup>

According to the report, those involved in “hazardous activities” included those that worked late at night (until 1:00 a.m.) as dishwashers in restaurants “and as a result, were exposed to sexual abuse and robbery on their way home.”<sup>54</sup> Vulnerabilities were reported among boys who worked long hours at night in craw fishing and crabbing. Boys between 13 and 17 years old were reportedly involved in illicit activities such as the selling or peddling of drugs, working as a lookout for drug dealers and theft/housebreaking.<sup>55</sup> Of the 52 cases cited, the majority (35 cases) that were associated with the worst forms of child labour included the involvement of these children in commercial sexual activity.

The working children were found to live in communities of lower-than-average incomes and lower standards of living and housing, with higher-than-average levels of unemployment and poverty. Such communities included Bain Town and Grants Town in Nassau. In Grand Bahama, working children were from communities in Eight Mile Rock and Pinders Point, which are low income areas outside of Freeport that are populated by Haitian immigrants or their descendants.<sup>56</sup> Migration statistics show that the majority of persons entering The Bahamas are Haitian children between the ages of 0 to 14 years old, apparently travelling with a parent or relative. Although most of these migrants live in New Providence, the majority of migrants to Abaco are Haitian female children (383 children) and males (365 men), followed by Grand Bahama with more males (351 men) than females (308 women) and Eleuthera which has a majority of female migrants from Haiti.<sup>57</sup>

### *National survey*

When asked to define human trafficking, approximately 83 percent of the respondents correctly addressed at least one element of human trafficking in their responses, with 22 percent naming all the elements correctly. The respondents

51 Dunn, Leith, L. (2002) *The Bahamas, The Situation of Children in the Worst Forms of Child Labour in a Tourism Economy: A Rapid Assessment*, December, Available online at: [http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child\\_labour/rapid\\_assessment/RABahamas.pdf](http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child_labour/rapid_assessment/RABahamas.pdf).

52 ILO, opt. ct., 2002a: 2.

53 Dunn, opt. ct., 2002: 6.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid: 2-3.

57 Bahamas Immigration Department (2004).

were almost evenly split on whether or not they believed human trafficking was a problem in The Bahamas, with approximately 51 percent indicating yes and 43 percent indicating no. Those that responded affirmatively stated that trafficking victims were both men and women between the ages of 18 and 40 years old. Victims were thought to be predominantly in forced labour (23%) and domestic servitude (45%). According to the respondents, most of the victims of human trafficking were from Jamaica and Haiti.

**Chart 7: Percentage of victims of human trafficking in The Bahamas in terms of points of origin according to respondents**

21.6%	Jamaica	5.4%	Caribbean
21.6%	Haiti	8.10%	Cuba
5.4%	China/Asia (including India)	5.4%	Dominican Republic
8.10%	Africa	2.7%	Guyana
8.10%	Central & South America	13.5%	No Response

Source: Key respondent interviews.

A vast majority of the respondents (79%) were unaware of people being trafficked from The Bahamas to another country. The same percentage was not aware of anyone in The Bahamas being accused of human trafficking. Most of the respondents (85%) were unaware of victims speaking with other individuals about the circumstances of their exploitation.

Of the respondents, 55 percent said that The Bahamas had laws to address forced labour, forced prostitution, and child labour. When asked if any government or non-governmental organizations were addressing human trafficking in the country, 48 percent responded affirmatively. Of the government organizations, the Ministry of Labour and Immigration were cited most often, receiving 24 percent of the responses. In terms of how well this response is working, 58 percent of the respondents did not answer the question. This could possibly indicate unfamiliarity with the issue, especially within the government, which accounted for over 88 percent of the respondents.

### ***Main findings: key informant interviews***

The following section presents an analysis of the 40 key informant interviews conducted by the research team. In addition, the researchers interviewed the Representative of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Haitian Ambassador to discuss human trafficking in relation to The Bahamas. Human trafficking indicators obtained in this preliminary study cannot be generalized as the sample was small, unrepresentative and the selection was purposive. The



data collected through the interviews do not provide grounds for assessing the full scale of the problem. Nevertheless, the information obtained and presented in the following paragraphs suggests some human trafficking exists in The Bahamas.

### *General Context of Human Trafficking in The Bahamas*

#### *Types of exploitation*

Key informants indicated that labour exploitation, migrant smuggling and human trafficking all take place in The Bahamas. At times, informants would confuse terminology and refer to a situation as human trafficking when the description was more related to migrant smuggling or labour exploitation. However, over half of the key informants correctly understood human trafficking. While human trafficking was not perceived by key informants as a widespread problem, the collective indication from the interviews confirms that it exists in The Bahamas.

#### *Links to forced labour and domestic servitude*

In New Providence, where approximately half of the key informant interviews were conducted, 50 percent of those informants indicated that they were aware of migrants who had been forced to work in dangerous or poor conditions in The Bahamas. One informant stated that it is “pretty widespread. For example...the squatter’s area was allowed to develop in squalid conditions, but the Haitians were required to work in these areas.”<sup>58</sup> Another informant stated, “This is quite widespread. Sometimes the men in construction [come] here to work for months without any pay.”<sup>59</sup> The informant knew of a particular family who could not “pay their light bill or water bill so they have to live without these utilities. Some women in sex work are beaten and cursed and open to disease.”<sup>60</sup> However, 66.7 percent of the 20 informants said that the problem of people being forced to work in poor conditions was not widespread. One informant who was aware of this situation mentioned that it is “not very widespread. They work in the usual areas like agriculture.”<sup>61</sup>

Eighteen percent of the key informants in New Providence, 22 percent in Abaco, and 50 percent in Eleuthera were aware of forced labour situations. In The Bahamas, trafficked persons for forced labour are thought to be employed mainly for domestic servitude, agricultural and construction purposes. Approximately 32 percent of the key informants from New Providence thought that forced domestic servitude existed. One of these informants indicated: “In a case of another friend [she] was forced to work again for little pay. She lived with the family working

58 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

59 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

60 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

61 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.



for 3 or 4 months now.”<sup>62</sup> An informant that was familiar with human trafficking in The Bahamas believed that trafficked persons endure significant forms of abuse and exploitation and typically receive low wages, work long hours, and are often forced to perform more duties than what was initially agreed.<sup>63</sup> Two other informants believed that the lack of proper documents renders trafficked persons vulnerable to being threatened with deportation.<sup>64</sup>

Many informants believed that human trafficking is linked to the demand for cheap domestic labour.<sup>65</sup> One informant answered: “Yes; definitely. For one-us Bahamians would not work for them under these circumstances, for example, 7 days per week, no day off and paying below the minimum wage. The law does not include domestic workers in their minimum wage category and people (employers) take advantage of this fact.”<sup>66</sup> Another informant stated: “There is a lot of that going on here, exploiting them for cheap labour, for example in construction. They work harder for less pay.”<sup>67</sup>

It is difficult to determine how many of the cases described by the informants actually qualified as human trafficking and how many were labour exploitation. Two informants responded that being overworked, underpaid and having to do more work that was agreed upon is typical for anyone in The Bahamas: “This is the case for most men.”<sup>68</sup>

### *Links to sexual exploitation*

The key informants were less aware of situations involving trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. For example, none of the key informants from Abaco, Eleuthera or Grand Bahama knew of any cases that had been identified as trafficking for sexual exploitation.<sup>69</sup> In New Providence, only 13.6 percent of the key informants affirmatively attested to having knowledge of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation in The Bahamas.

One informant gave the following example:

“Last year three youngsters were brought in ostensibly to visit (18 age average) but were being forced into prostitution. Another was a 14 year old Jamaican girl who ...[was] agreeing to service men and participate

---

62 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

63 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

64 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

65 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

66 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

67 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

68 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

69 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

in [a] sex orgy with the woman and her husband after being brought in ostensibly on a visit. The aunt brought her in and left her and got on to the USA. She was sold by the Aunt.”<sup>70</sup>

Some informants believed that human trafficking and sex tourism were linked.<sup>71</sup> One of these informants responded: “There is a link but [I] don’t know the extent. The street walkers are the least of the problem. It’s a more sophisticated non-visible level of sex tourism such as temporary migration where people are brought in to cater to certain tastes and preferences. The cruise ships[s] play a role in this.”<sup>72</sup>

Two informants described a situation where prostitutes from the United States and Europe had entered The Bahamas legally and voluntarily and offered their services to male tourists.<sup>73</sup> One informant reported that Haitians, Americans and Jamaicans performed sexual favours for Bahamians and tourists in clubs and private homes in Abaco.<sup>74</sup> While this scenario may be indicative of prostitution it is not necessarily trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

### *Elements of Human Trafficking*

#### *Transportation and recruitment*

The responses of the key informants pertaining to transportation seemed to be focused on how immigrants are smuggled into or enter The Bahamas illegally. However, this information can be used to extrapolate the methods by which human trafficking could be taking place. Two informants mentioned networks between Bahamians and Haitians who arrange for Haitians to be brought into the country with the assistance of Bahamian immigration officers.<sup>75</sup> Two key informants also alleged that Haitians who own boats in Haiti offer their fellow countrymen the opportunity to be transported to The Bahamas for a fee. One mentioned the use of an aeroplane to transport Haitians to The Bahamas.<sup>76</sup>

One informant alleged that the American Embassy in Haiti was selling visas, while another stated that the American Embassy and Bahamian immigration officials from the previous government in The Bahamas may be involved in facilitating the movement of persons between the United States and The Bahamas.<sup>77</sup> Another informant noted that American yacht owners have sophisticated navigation

<sup>70</sup> Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

<sup>71</sup> Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

<sup>72</sup> Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

<sup>73</sup> Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

<sup>74</sup> Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

<sup>75</sup> Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

<sup>76</sup> Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

<sup>77</sup> Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

equipment on their boats and some may be involved assisting those who smuggle or traffic persons by navigating the waters around The Bahamas. In another instance, an informant mentioned that some girls, including one who was about 16 years old, were “helped by a white American man,” who allegedly owned a boat, to get to Miami.<sup>78</sup>

*Responses from New Providence Interviews (20 interviews)*

The organization of migrant smuggling and/or human trafficking is believed to exist in many forms, depending on the circumstances. One informant mentioned a process by which a man from the Dominican Republic living in The Bahamas is contacted by cell phone by persons from the Dominican Republic wanting to come to The Bahamas. A charter flight is normally arranged with the full knowledge of the Bahamian Immigration authorities that then receive payment from the man for facilitating their entry. Once these persons have safely entered the country, the smuggled migrants then pay the man from the Dominican Republic. He then adopts a new number and name.

*Responses from Abaco Interviews (11 interviews)*

Captains of boats and aeroplanes are alleged to go to countries such as Haiti and the Dominican Republic to advertise jobs in Nassau on large farms. Boats are often filled beyond capacity; sometimes they sink. The free health-care system in The Bahamas is also promoted as an enticement for people to make the journey.

Most of the informants stated that Bahamians play a lead role in the irregular movement of migrants, although there are many Bahamian/Haitian networks established to facilitate these movements. Many Haitians also own boats and offer to transport Haitian migrants to The Bahamas for a fee; word of mouth in these circles also facilitates the process. Most informants believed that both Bahamians and Haitians benefit from these operations; Bahamian smugglers benefit monetarily and The Bahamas benefits from the work the Haitians do. Haitian smugglers and migrants are also believed to benefit. Smugglers benefit monetarily, while the migrants are able to work in The Bahamas and earn a living.

*Responses from Eleuthera Interviews (8 interviews)*

The informants generally stated that the boat owners benefit most from the process of smuggling migrants into The Bahamas as they receiving large sums of money (USD5,000 per trip). Local Bahamians arrange transport with people in various countries (such as Haiti and the Dominican Republic). Immigrants who have established their residency also arrange transport for people in their home country to come to The Bahamas. Immigration officers in The Bahamas are alleged to

---

78 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

“clear” illegal migrants for a fee in order to earn extra money. One informant said that the employer of the smuggled migrants benefits because they save money by hiring cheap labour and the migrant makes money to send home.

Four key informants mentioned agencies in Haiti that advertise and promote opportunities for work (such as large farms needing workers) that are available to Haitians wishing to travel to The Bahamas. These agencies are alleged to arrange the boat transportation and to make contact with The Bahamian immigration officials to ensure safe entry into the country.<sup>79</sup> Another informant stated that word of mouth in these circles also contributes to the recruiting process.<sup>80</sup>

According to one informant, the Sunday editions of the *Jamaica Gleaner* newspaper provide telephone numbers that a person can call to arrange transportation out of the country. The caller receives a return call and transportation to another country is sold to them via the telephone. Immigration officers were said to be connected to these networks as they are integral in facilitating the trip.<sup>81</sup>

### *Profile of victims*

Some cases in Eleuthera involved trafficked persons who initially worked in domestic labour but subsequently were forced to perform sexual favours. Fifteen key informants believed that domestic workers were promised a salary and received little or no money for their efforts. One informant recounted a case involving a live-in female domestic worker who remained unpaid for several months after being employed with a family. Another informant mentioned a Jamaican live-in domestic worker who remained unpaid and had her passport taken from her by her employer. She was also threatened with being sent to the Detention Centre if she refused to work the long hours demanded of her.

When informants were asked if they were aware of men being exploited in cases of human trafficking, 14 replied in the affirmative.<sup>82</sup> One respondent alleged: “Yes, men are brought over with their wives as couples to work in homes. They are brought over, paid for and work all day, all night. They have to do everything for these families they work for. No time off, no privacy.”<sup>83</sup> One informant knew of “young boys [and] young men - in construction/prostitution” and another informant knew of “possible sexual exploitation.”<sup>84</sup> As many of these men are thought to

---

79 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

80 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

81 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

82 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

83 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

84 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

be irregular migrants, threats of exposure to immigration and extortion were also alleged to be taking place.<sup>85</sup>

### *Profile of human traffickers*

Very little is known about human traffickers in The Bahamas, although four key informants have alluded to the involvement of immigration officers, the police and the fellow citizens of those being trafficked.<sup>86</sup> The trafficking network also includes recruiters and transporters and/or exploiters. Some key informants described the natural overlap with other crimes, whereby the network that traffics drugs or facilitates migrant smuggling is also trafficking persons.

### *Criminal links to drug trafficking*

Nine key informants believed that human trafficking and drug trafficking in The Bahamas are linked.<sup>87</sup> One of these informants believed that there is a “strong connection; people who bring humans also bring drugs. If central government is weak people will do anything to survive.”<sup>88</sup> One key informant suggested that because The Bahamas is implicated in the drug trade human trafficking is a natural progression.<sup>89</sup> There was awareness among informants of trafficking in drugs and of smuggling of all sorts: drugs, humans, exotic plants, animals and arms.<sup>90</sup> The infrastructure for human trafficking in The Bahamas is believed to be similar to the infrastructure for smuggling illicit goods. For example, two key informants indicated the use of boats to transport people from Haiti to The Bahamas. The United States government estimates that some 10 percent to 15 percent of the cocaine that is intercepted en route to the United States arrives in The Bahamas by “go-fast” boats from Jamaica.<sup>91</sup> As an archipelago, surveillance in The Bahamas is difficult, thus facilitating the illegal drug trade. The possibility exists for the same criminal organizations to extend their services and networks to human trafficking which may be more lucrative, less easily detected and less risky.

### *Media review*

The Media review for The Bahamas incorporated interviews with journalists from the two major daily newspapers, *The Nassau Guardian* and *The Tribune*, as well as the daily newspaper, *The Bahama Journal*. Beyond newspapers, the review

---

85 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

86 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

87 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas.

88 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

89 Key informant interview, The Bahamas.

90 Bahamas Drug Information System (2001) *Annual National Report*.

91 Key informant interviews, The Bahamas; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2003) *Illegal Drug Trade in the Caribbean: Trends 2000-2001*, Available online at: [http://www.unodc.org/pdf/barbados/caribbean\\_drug-trends\\_2001-2002.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/barbados/caribbean_drug-trends_2001-2002.pdf).

included Love 97 FM radio station (owned and operated by the same proprietors of *The Bahama Journal* newspaper), Island FM radio station, and ZNS, the government-owned radio and television station. Archives of these organizations were also researched for stories related to human trafficking.

Each reporter interviewed for the Media review had at least three years of work experience. Without exception, the national research team had to explain human trafficking and how it differed from human smuggling. In most cases, the reporter said they had covered nothing on the subject directly, and did not think their employer had either. While some of the journalists that were interviewed suspected cases of migrant exploitation, they all felt it was not a major problem in The Bahamas. If it was a widespread problem, they felt it was very well hidden. Except for several articles on the IOM workshop held in June 2004 at the Nassau Beach Hotel, with support from the Ministry of Social Service and Community Development and the Ministry of Labour and Immigration, there were no stories about human trafficking in the Bahamian media selected for this review.

The most common articles that related to migration throughout the Bahamian media organizations described irregular migrants that had been apprehended while trying to enter The Bahamas illegally. These articles follow the same format in most media:<sup>92</sup>

- number of irregular migrants apprehended;
- country of origin;
- where they were caught;
- the circumstances which led to their departure from their country of origin (other than the usual economic and political reasons).

Most often these stories were presented in the form of a press release issued by the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (marine force) or by the Ministry of Labour and Immigration. When a large number of irregular migrants are apprehended (most often on a vessel), the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF) will often hold a press conference at the dock where the RBDF impounded the vessel used to transport the migrants. At these conferences, the reporters sometimes interview the irregular migrants and those involved in their apprehension, but more often than not the stories are based entirely on a press release that is less than one page in length. If the number of irregular migrants is large (more than 50 persons) or circumstances surrounding their apprehension are unusual (extreme conditions on the boat, many boats captured at the same time, contraband found on board),

---

92 Poitier, Khashan (2002) "Dead person among 41 Haitian illegals found, Overview: A group of illegal Haitian immigrants apprehended by Defence Force," *The Nassau Guardian*, 20 December.

reporters will interview the government or representatives of non-governmental organizations.

The Media review uncovered examples of migrant exploitation and abuse. For example, in March 2004, a Bahamian radio station reported that a farm owner severely beat his Haitian employees and withheld their immigration documents as a form of control. The station visited the farm, but none of the Haitian workers were willing to speak with the journalists.<sup>93</sup> In November 2004, the *Nassau Guardian* published an article related to Haitians in The Bahamas which mentioned the national dependence on Haitian immigrants for domestic work and manual labour. This article was part of a general call for a policy that would end exploitation and abuse.<sup>94</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Overall, the research findings indicate that while there are cases of human trafficking in The Bahamas these findings are few in the strictest sense of the legal definition of human trafficking. For example, although migrants may embark on their trip to The Bahamas voluntarily, the vulnerabilities that motivated them to do so render them susceptible to exploitation in employment and living arrangements upon arrival in The Bahamas. In quantitative and qualitative terms a picture emerges that infers that The Bahamas is fertile for facilitating the criminal activity of human trafficking.

General perceptions of the definition of human trafficking reveal that terms like “victim,” “exploitation” and “coercion” are nuanced and therefore contain values that do not necessarily render the terms to mean the same thing to all persons. For example, some informants suggest that the complicity of persons in being brought illegally to The Bahamas indicate complicity with the process of human trafficking. Some respondents indicate that whatever the irregular immigrants are paid for their labour is far more than would be the case in their homeland. The point being that even if the victim is not remunerated or has to pay a bribe to be able to stay illegally in The Bahamas, they are still better off than were they in their home country. The lack of information on exploitation and human trafficking challenges attempts to raise awareness within The Bahamas about the issue of human trafficking and the ability to combat the problem at the levels of prevention, protection of victims and prosecution of offenders.

---

93 Sawyer, Jerome (2004) “Headline: Haitian Beatings,” Island 102.9 FM, 29 March.

94 Moss, Apostle Cedric (2004) “The Haitian Situation -- Part 2,” *The Nassau Guardian*, 18 March, Available online at: <http://www.thenassauguardian.com/>.

## ***Specific methodology of The Bahamas country report (2004)***

### ***The Bahamas Research Team***

In 2004, IOM commissioned Audrey Ingram Roberts to lead the research team in The Bahamas. The local research team included Cherran O'Brien, who provided technical and administrative support, Apryl Weech and Jason Roberts as field interviewers for the family islands of The Bahamas, attorney Rawiya Hanna, who reviewed relevant legislation and Dominic Duncombe, who contributed as a journalist and Media reviewer.

### ***National Survey***

The standardised national survey was distributed to all participants at a national seminar on human trafficking held by IOM, in partnership with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the OAS and with support from the Bahamian Ministry of Labour and Immigration and the Ministry of Social Services and Community Development. The national seminar took place on 28 June 2004 in Nassau, The Bahamas. Forty-six participants in the seminar completed the self-administered survey. The majority (88%) of those who completed the national survey were government employees.

### ***Key Informant Interviews***

A standardised interview questionnaire was used by The Bahamas research team to conduct 40 key informant interviews. Researchers arranged interviews using their own contacts as well as IOM contacts and a snowballing technique. Ninety-five percent of the interviews were conducted in person and the remainder by telephone and self-administration of the interview questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed as a guide for the interview sessions and therefore, some informants were not asked all items; it was "tailored" to each case. The questionnaire was translated into Spanish for effective interviewing of Spanish-speaking informants. In some cases, two team members conducted an interview session. However, in most cases one-on-one interviews were conducted and notes taken by the interviewer.

In addition to the 40 key informant interviews, the national researcher met with the OAS Representative to discuss the issue of human trafficking in The Bahamas, inclusive of recommendations and proposals for follow-up at the policy level. The national researcher also met with Haiti's Ambassador to The Bahamas to ascertain his recommendations and proposals. These were not interviews conducted with use of the questionnaire, but discussions focused on preventive strategies and institutional partnerships to strengthen policy and legislation.



### ***Location and Description of Key Informants in The Bahamas***

Most of the research conducted in The Bahamas focuses on New Providence and Grand Bahama. The perspectives of the other islands in The Bahamas archipelago are absent. Some of these Family Islands have large migrant populations, predominantly Haitian, which is relevant to this study.<sup>95</sup> New Providence, Abaco, Eleuthera and Grand Bahama were selected for this research study based on the criteria that these islands have consisted of large populations of Haitian migrants over a sustained period of time.<sup>96</sup> Many of those interviewed were second-generation Haitians and first-generation Bahamians who were able to communicate in Creole and Bahamian English.

**Chart 8: Number of interviews in The Bahamas**

	Eleuthera	Abaco	New Providence	Grand Bahama
Number of Interviews	8	11	20	3

### ***Media review***

The Media review included the two major daily newspapers in The Bahamas: *the Nassau Guardian* and *The Tribune*, as well as a newer daily newspaper entitled *The Bahama Journal*. Material presented by national radio stations for the period between 2001 and August 2004 was also reviewed. These radio stations included the channels Love 97 FM (owned and operated by the same proprietors as *The Bahama Journal* newspaper), Island FM radio station and ZNS, the government-owned radio and television station. The journalist who conducted the Media review also organized a focus group with his peers to gauge awareness on the issue among journalists.

### ***Research Limitations***

The Bahamas research team faced some considerable constraints while carrying out their fieldwork on human trafficking. Notably, the statistical review was limited by an overall paucity of country-specific information on human trafficking and related issues. These constraints are representative of the reality common to small-island developing states and more so of an archipelagic environment. In addition, two strong hurricanes hit The Bahamas subsequent to the period that most field interviews were conducted in July and August 2004. These natural disasters

95 The research team tried to avoid stimulating notions of an automatic association between Haitian migrants and human trafficking. As a result, while it was important to select informants with insights into the Haitian migrant situation, a balance had to be reached. In order to extend the research into the Family Islands and have the best access to Haitian communities the islands with the largest Haitian populations were chosen for the research.

96 Treco, Ria N.M. (2002) "The Haitian Diaspora in The Bahamas" Florida International University, Department of International Relations. P. 7, [http://acc.fiu.edu/research-publications/working-papers/working-paper\\_04.pdf](http://acc.fiu.edu/research-publications/working-papers/working-paper_04.pdf)

placed significant strain on the country as a whole, especially on public officials and representatives from international organizations who were targeted as key informants for this research and whose participation may have been limited by the hurricanes and their aftermath. Furthermore, the normally prohibitively high costs of travel and communication within an archipelago nation were exacerbated by the hurricanes, which further hindered efforts to gather primary data. This research was an exploratory exercise designed to gather preliminary information. Evidence obtained in this research process cannot be generalized to any specific population as the sample was small, unrepresentative and the selection was purposive. However, this has been an important step in providing an initial assessment of human trafficking as related to The Bahamas.

#### 4. Barbados - country report on human trafficking (2004)

##### *Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey*

While the extent of human trafficking in Barbados is unclear, it is a destination, source and transit country for migrants. External migration from Barbados continues although the traditional extra-regional outlets to the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom have become less accessible. However in recent years, the United States has been recruiting teachers from the Caribbean and both the United States and the United Kingdom have recruited nurses. Persons taking up these opportunities are usually previously trained and experienced and tend to be women.

Barbados also serves as a transit point for some migrants going to the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom in particular. Some persons seek Barbadian citizenship which makes it easier to qualify for a United States visa and to travel to Canada since Barbadians are required to have a visa to enter these countries. A Barbadian passport scam was uncovered early in 2004 by immigration officials. Authorities suspected that an airport ring was operating at the local airport and an investigation was launched with the questioning of customs officials and airport workers.<sup>97</sup>

Barbados is seen as an attractive destination for migrants and according to the Central Bank of Barbados, “[it] has a demographic profile of a developed country.”<sup>98</sup> The country has a per capita income of USD7,350, a literacy rate of 97.6 percent, and an infant mortality rate of 11 deaths per 10,000 births.<sup>99</sup> The United Nations *Human Development Report 2004* ranks Barbados as number one among developing nations in the Human Poverty Index (HPI) and as number 29 globally on the Human Development Index (HDI).<sup>100</sup> The ranking of Barbados compared to some other Caribbean countries is presented in the following table:

97 *Caribbean Times Live* (2004) “Barbados Airport Scam,” 7 May Available online at: [http://www.caribbeanantimes.co.uk/iframe\\_story.asp?NID=364](http://www.caribbeanantimes.co.uk/iframe_story.asp?NID=364).

98 Central Bank of Barbados, Available online at: <http://www.centralbank.org.bb>.

99 Ibid.

100 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), op. cit., 2004. [http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr04\\_complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr04_complete.pdf)

**Chart 9: Select Caribbean country rankings in Human Poverty Index (HPI) and Human Development Index (HDI)**

Country	HPI	HDI
Barbados	1	29
Guyana	29	104
St Lucia	Not included in 2004 report	71
St Vincent and the Grenadines	Not included in 2004 report	87
The Dominican Republic	26	98
Haiti	68	153

Source: IOM created this comparative chart based on the data from the United Nations Development Programme *Human Development Report 2004*. [http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr04\\_complete.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr04_complete.pdf)

In terms of the quality of life, the following are additional factors that could make Barbados attractive as a destination country for migrants:

- income is more equitably distributed than in most countries;
- highly developed infrastructure of highways, seaport and airport;
- universal availability of electricity, water and telecommunications services;
- a well-developed national security safety net for the disadvantaged;
- a relatively low crime rate;
- a virtual absence of social and political unrest;
- civil and democratic rights, irrespective of religion, ethnicity and gender, are deeply entrenched in Barbadian society.<sup>101</sup>

Despite these positive features, Barbados and other countries in the region are extremely vulnerable due to the small size of their economies and their vulnerability to external forces.

“Across the region, there is hidden poverty even in those countries whose per capita incomes rank them highest among developing countries. More and more, CARICOM<sup>102</sup> [the Caribbean Community] faces the additional disadvantage of small economies in a global market: our market size is too small.”<sup>103</sup>

101 Central Bank of Barbados, op cit.  
102 CARICOM was established in 1973 and comprises 15 member states and five associate members.  
103 Andaiye (2003) “Smoke and Mirrors: The Illusion of CARICOM Women’s Growing Economic Empowerment, Post-Beijing,” in Gemma Tang Nain and Barbara Bailey (Eds.), *Gender Equality in the Caribbean: Reality or Illusion*, CARICOM Secretariat and Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston: 76.

The desperate search for a better life often renders people susceptible to many forms of exploitation, including human trafficking. Women and children are particularly vulnerable, with a regional average of 42 percent of female-headed households in the Commonwealth Caribbean.<sup>104</sup> In addition, “Caribbean economies are experiencing growing vulnerabilities especially in relation to coping with the practices of exclusionary trade regimes, disappearing markets for Caribbean goods, and a much more fragile tourist industry in a Post-September 11<sup>th</sup> world.”<sup>105</sup>

These realities have resulted in an increasing situation of poverty for those responsible for feeding and caring for their families. The relationship between female-headed households and poverty is common in the Caribbean and Barbados is not an exception.<sup>106</sup> In Barbados, for example, there is a high percentage (44%) of female-headed households.<sup>107</sup> A study commissioned by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) found that 17.1 percent of female-headed households in Barbados are poor, whereas poor male-headed households indicate a rate of 9.5 percent.<sup>108</sup> A study in 1998 found that women’s share of earnings in four countries (for which data were available) was far below that of men: 18 percent in Belize; 27 percent in Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago and 40 percent in Barbados.<sup>109</sup> The unemployment rate also continues to be higher among women. During the first six months of 2004, the overall unemployment rate was 10.1 percent; female unemployment was 11.6 percent whereas male unemployment was 8.8 percent.<sup>110</sup> In the Caribbean, women are increasingly employed in the service and offshore sectors. However, these jobs tend to be in areas of high instability, low wages and poor working conditions. Therefore, despite the trend that poor females are very active in the labour market, their job security and job conditions are precarious, with little opportunity for personal growth or improvement. Andaiye notes that: “While male poverty is often linked to unemployment, female poverty can exist even where women work full-time. This is related to the segregation of women into low-waged and/or low level jobs.”<sup>111</sup> With Caribbean governments being less able or willing to cover the cost of social and health services, the burden of care increasingly falls on women’s shoulders, a responsibility which the majority of women find very difficult to manage. Women therefore have to search for alternative

104 Barriteau, Violet Eudine (2003) “Beyond a Backlash: The Frontal Assault on Containing Caribbean Women in the Decade of the 1990s, in G. Tang Nain and B. Bailey (Eds.), *Gender Equality in the Caribbean: Reality or Illusion*: 215.

105 Ibid.

106 Diez de Medina, Rafael (1997) *Poverty and Income Distribution in Barbados 1996*, Report to the Inter-American Development Bank, (Draft).

107 Statistical Department (2000) Barbados Population and Housing Census.

108 Ibid.

109 Quoted in Andaiye (2003) op. cit.: 81.

110 Central Bank of Barbados (2004) *Review of Economy for First 6 Months of 2004*, Available online at: <http://www.centralbank.org.bb/Publications/EconRevJul2004.pdf>.

111 Quoted in Andaiye (2003) op. cit: 80.

and creative ways of survival for themselves and their families, which can result in their becoming increasingly vulnerable to drug trafficking, commercial sex work and/or human trafficking. Men are also vulnerable as a result of the problems being faced by Caribbean economies and they have been experiencing job losses, job insecurity and low wages.

### ***National Survey***

The indications from the national survey about whether human trafficking exists in Barbados are mixed. The respondents were almost equally divided on whether human trafficking is a problem, with slightly more suggesting that it was not.<sup>112</sup> In addition, 20 respondents who filled out the national survey were unaware that human trafficking takes place in Barbados, whereas 14 persons indicated that they were aware of it.<sup>113</sup> Only two persons who completed the national survey stated that they were aware of human trafficking from Barbados to another country.

### ***Main findings: key informant interviews***

The concept of human trafficking in Barbados is a relatively new one; therefore it has not been the focus of attention. The indications about whether elements of human trafficking exist in Barbados are mixed. Only eight key informants indicated familiarity with trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labour in Barbados and six had heard about domestic servitude.<sup>114</sup> Eighty-five percent of key informants interviewed with the standardised interview questionnaire were aware of persons working in circumstances that they did not expect.<sup>115</sup> The circumstances included not getting the jobs they had been promised and being expected to work in other jobs, finding themselves out of work, working in high-stress conditions and being paid lower wages than what they had been promised. Although these circumstances do not necessarily constitute human trafficking, they can still be used to extrapolate information on human trafficking.

### ***Human Trafficking in Barbados***

According to the research and interviews, migrants are exploited for their labour, especially in the construction and garment industries.<sup>116</sup> Fourteen key informants mentioned low wages being paid to migrants and four spoke about migrants being offered false contracts.<sup>117</sup> Key informants also stated that there is exploitation of sex workers involved in prostitution, exotic dancing, massage parlours and other

---

<sup>112</sup> Eighteen persons thought that human trafficking was not a problem; 15 thought it was a problem.

<sup>113</sup> Three key informants did not answer this question.

<sup>114</sup> Key informant interviews, Barbados.

<sup>115</sup> Key informant interviews, Barbados.

<sup>116</sup> Key informant interviews, Barbados.

<sup>117</sup> Key informant interviews, Barbados.

related activities.<sup>118</sup> The information collected from key informants who have interacted with possible trafficked persons indicates that some level of human trafficking exists in the forms of sexual exploitation and domestic servitude.<sup>119</sup> The findings also suggest the possibility of trafficking for the purpose of forced labour.<sup>120</sup>

Some of the key informants were aware of persons leaving Barbados and ending up in unexpected circumstances that could possibly be human trafficking.<sup>121</sup> The examples focused on experiences in the United States and Canada.<sup>122</sup> One key informant had heard about persons who ended up working as nannies, which were not the jobs that they had been promised.<sup>123</sup> Another key informant spoke of persons leaving Barbados to work as babysitters and finding that the conditions were not what they had expected and that they had to pay “a lot of money to somebody.”<sup>124</sup> The key informant was not sure to whom the money was paid.

A third key informant spoke about Barbadian teachers, nurses and domestic helpers whose work conditions were not what they expected.<sup>125</sup> However, a representative of the Ministry of Labour suggested that these were isolated cases where the persons may not have taken all factors into account before they accepted the offers.<sup>126</sup> For example, they may have been attracted by the wages but surprised by the level of violence in the schools in which they were placed.

Although it is often assumed that the majority of trafficked victims are women and children, men are also vulnerable to human trafficking. The situation of men as possible victims of human trafficking surfaced throughout the process of this survey.<sup>127</sup> More in-depth research is needed to explore its extent and to differentiate between labour exploitation and trafficking for the purpose of forced labour.

### *Modes of transportation and legal and illegal entry*

Key informants explained that potential victims of human trafficking enter Barbados primarily through normal legal channels and by air travel in particular.<sup>128</sup>

---

118 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

119 Key informant interviews, Barbados; Liz Kelly states that: “To comply with the Palermo definition, trafficking for sexual exploitation should include: abduction/kidnapping; being sold by family or another person; total deception either through marriage or promises of legitimate work; partial deception, not being told about the prostitution and the debt bondage; being fully informed about the sex work but not aware of the debt bondage and conditions, and deceived about the amount they will earn.”: 50.

120 Key informant interview, Barbados.

121 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

122 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

123 Key informant interview, Barbados.

124 Key informant interview, Barbados.

125 Key informant interview, Barbados.

126 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

127 Key informant interview, Barbados.

128 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

The only Caribbean countries for which a visa is required to enter Barbados are the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The latter country became a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in 2002 and a visa for entry into Barbados should not be required for citizens of that country soon. Visitors from North America and Western Europe do not need a visa. A valid passport and a valid return ticket are required as proof of entry for holiday.

Persons coming to Barbados to work need to have a work permit, for which the prospective employer is supposed to apply. Persons can lose their legal status by overstaying the time allotted to them by immigration officials, by working without a work permit, or by working after their initial work permits have expired.

One key informant from the focus group speculated about migrant smuggling on the same boats used for bringing in illegal drugs or vegetables and fruit to Barbados from neighbouring countries.<sup>129</sup> The informant was aware of a few occasions when the police apprehended irregular migrants and some did not have passports or other travel documents.<sup>130</sup> Another participant in the focus group discussion stated that entry into Barbados occurs by both regular and irregular means: “All sorts of people bring them in and drop them off at various points - you don’t even know when they’re coming in.”<sup>131</sup>

While many migrants come to Barbados for legitimate reasons such as better job opportunities, to join family and friends and better educational opportunities, some immigrate through informal channels.<sup>132</sup> Guyanese nationals were believed to constitute most of the persons entering Barbados with forged passports. However, Barbadian passports, especially those with American visas, have surfaced in various countries in the possession of persons of various nationalities.<sup>133</sup>

### *Profile of potential victims*

There is a strong possibility that many victims of human trafficking may be migrants with irregular immigration status in Barbados. The profile of irregular migrants in terms of age, education and areas of work gathered from the interviews can include the following characteristics:<sup>134</sup>

- Varying ages were cited but the irregular migrants were typically believed to be from ages 18 to 55 years old.<sup>135</sup>

---

129 Key informant interview, Barbados.

130 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

131 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

132 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

133 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

134 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

135 Key informant interviews, Barbados.



- Most of the irregular migrants were thought to have basic schooling at primary and secondary levels with some technical training.<sup>136</sup>
- Those who have no formal training may have developed skills in their areas of work such as housekeeping, masonry and carpentry.<sup>137</sup>

Seventy-five percent of the key informants suggested that Guyana was the country of origin of most of the irregular migrants in Barbados and by extension possible trafficked persons.<sup>138</sup> The other primary countries of origin mentioned by the informants were St Vincent and the Grenadines (5 irregular migrants) and St Lucia (7 irregular migrants).<sup>139</sup> The Honorary Consul of Guyana was contacted for an interview because of the recent increase in Guyanese living and working in Barbados and because of the reports of their exploitation. However, he indicated that the information he would have received from Guyanese persons living in Barbados is confidential, therefore he was unable to grant the interview. However, in the *Sunday Sun* newspaper of 1 August 2004, under the headline “‘Scams’ luring Guyanese here,” the Consul was quoted as saying:

“At every opportunity the consul cautions Guyanese, both here and in Guyana, about being involved [with] unscrupulous middlemen and parasitical elements, including members of the legal fraternity.”<sup>140</sup>

A construction boom has been taking place in Barbados in recent years and coupled with the critical social, economic and political conditions in Guyana, these trends create an influx of male nationals from Guyana who work in the construction sector.<sup>141</sup> Consequently, this trend has increased the possibility of Guyanese men being victims of human trafficking.

Male migrants in Barbados tend to be identified as working in the agricultural and construction sectors.<sup>142</sup> Due to the fact that these sectors are more publically accessible than domestic work, which is often in the home, and because of the ethnic differences of many of the Guyanese, the male migrants are often more visible than the female migrants from Guyana. However, there is no way of knowing by mere observation if most of the Guyanese men are irregular migrants and/or if they are victims of human trafficking.

---

136 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

137 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

138 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

139 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

140 “ ‘Scams’ luring Guyanese here,” *Sunday Sun*, 1 August 2004.

141 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

142 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

Female irregular migrants are thought to be the most common possible victims of human trafficking in Barbados. The primary areas of work identified by the key informants for female irregular migrants are prostitution/commercial sex work, domestic/household work, the service sector, informal trading and the selling items such as food, fruit and jewellery.<sup>143</sup>

Persons who may have been trafficked would fall into all the above categories except informal trading since they are likely to be self-employed. Officials from the Immigration Department also noted a recent increase in Jamaican women who migrate to Barbados to marry Barbadian men, which had been an ongoing trend with Guyanese women for some time.<sup>144</sup>

Countries outside the region, such as the United Kingdom and countries in Europe, were mentioned as other countries of origin of irregular migrants.<sup>145</sup> It was suggested that these persons tended to focus on working in the tourism sector, as translators for example. On the issue of human trafficking, the British High Commission in Barbados indicated that it has received no such complaints from British citizens working in or visiting Barbados.

### *Factors increasing vulnerability*

Human traffickers use a migrant's legal or illegal status to exert more control. Consequently, the status of a migrant can render him or her even more susceptible to the ploys of human traffickers. In addition to immigration status, push and pull factors in places of origin and destination can provide opportunities for human traffickers to victimize migrants.

Guyana was identified as the primary country of origin for male and female potential victims of human trafficking and irregular migrants. Although Guyana is rich in natural resources such as gold, diamonds and land, its level of poverty has reached crisis proportions. This situation is exacerbated by other factors such as high external debt, political uncertainty, ethnic conflict and a high crime rate, all of which have contributed to massive emigration.

“The cruel poverty [of Guyana], compounded by political uncertainty and crimes, creates an environment which understandably is the greatest impetus by Guyanese for survival purposes to seek opportunities for employment outside of Guyana. For many years the countries targeted would understandably be the US, Canada, and Britain. Information suggests that it is no longer easy, if at all possible, for visas to be obtained

---

143 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

144 Key informant interview, Barbados.

145 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

to travel to those countries. And it is in this context that Barbados has become the major attraction for Guyanese...”<sup>146</sup>

This kind of push-factor situation increases the vulnerability of migrants to being exploited and to possibly becoming victims of human trafficking.

### *Possible profiles of human traffickers*

The research findings reveal little concrete information about the characteristics of possible human traffickers. Although this report found no evidence of a large organized human trafficking network in Barbados, there seems to be some level of organization. This organization consists primarily of one or two persons recruiting migrants either on their own behalf or on the behalf of businesses which may then exploit the migrants. However, one key informant suggested that there could be some kind of human trafficking cartel operating in Barbados.<sup>147</sup> The recruiters are reported to be both Barbadians and persons from the countries of origin, working either alone or jointly. The persons or institutions that would benefit from such activities are thought to include the recruiters, employers, brothels, pimps, taxi drivers, restaurants, hotels and home owners. However, some of these would not necessarily be colluders in human trafficking or migrant exploitation.

### *Recruitment, deception and transportation*

The recruitment processes and transportation routes described in this section generally refer to those used to recruit persons to work in Barbados. As such, these mechanisms are not necessarily ones of human trafficking but include strategies that could be used by human traffickers. The mechanisms vary and most of the information related to the recruitment process of Guyanese nationals.

According to some informants, there have been a number of advertisements in Guyanese newspapers promising work in Barbados, such as in bakeries:<sup>148</sup>

“Someone promised my maid’s niece, who was 17 at the time, a big career in a bakery in Barbados. They paid for her travel but when she came, it was to work as a prostitute. Luckily, her aunt was able to get her away.”<sup>149</sup>

The methods for recruitment for the sex trade also include advertisements in the newspapers. The Honorary Consul for Guyana was quoted in reference to the proliferation of advertisements in the newspaper for these purposes.<sup>150</sup> Sometimes

146 DaSilva, Frank (2004) “Barbados-Guyana Situation,” *Sunday Sun* newspaper, 5 September, Available online at: <http://www.nationnews.com/StoryView.cfm?Record=53157>.

147 Key informant interview, Barbados.

148 Key informant interview, Barbados.

149 Key informant interview, Barbados.

150 *Sunday Sun*, op. cit., 1 August 2004.

the advertisements are for girls to perform massages or exotic dancing in nightclubs but subsequently they often find out that they are expected to have sex with the clients.<sup>151</sup> Interviewed government officials reported that many of the prostitutes being deported from Barbados claim that they were promised jobs but when they arrived in Barbados, “it is a totally different picture.”<sup>152</sup>

According to some informants, there are both Guyanese and Barbadian recruiters.

In other reported cases, recruitment is by word of mouth. Family members, neighbours, or friends recruit persons; one girl may be given a good experience so that she can be used to lure other girls.<sup>153</sup>

“I know a woman and man who have Guyanese contacts. The woman would round up [young, pretty] girls who she knows and does not tell them what it is. Tickets are sent for them from Barbados. The girls are collected at the airport by a man or woman who takes them to a guesthouse or their home or other establishment. They keep their documents supposedly to get work permits for them, but they end up as prostitutes. They have to stay at the place and are monitored...”<sup>154</sup>

The recruitment process for males is reportedly similar to that of females in the sex trade.<sup>155</sup> Newspaper advertisements are also used and in some cases the employer or one of the workers goes to the country of origin “and fills up the men’s heads with what they will pay them, where they will put them up, and so on.”<sup>156</sup> Another informant spoke about Barbadian agents with contacts in the countries of origin who were approached for assistance with recruiting migrants.<sup>157</sup> Friends, neighbours and advertisements are also utilised. One informant suggested that in some cases family members force some young men from Guyana, especially those of East Indian origin, “to come to Barbados to make money against their will to send back home to the family.”<sup>158</sup> It is not clear if the families are aware of the conditions under which these men have to live and work.

---

151 Key informant interview, Barbados.

152 Key informant interview, Barbados.

153 Key informant interview, Barbados.

154 Key informant interview, Barbados.

155 Key informant interview, Barbados.

156 Key informant interview, Barbados.

157 Key informant interview, Barbados.

158 Key informant interview, Barbados. The informant did not indicate the method of force used but it may derive from the fact that they are young and because the family in certain cultures exerts a high level of influence or control over children.

The following quotation was printed in a Guyanese newspaper:

“Don’t blame Guyanese workers for flocking to Barbados for jobs and living here illegally. Blame Barbadian companies and individuals who are advertising in Guyana or sending people there to lure Guyanese here with promises of high wages and work permits...Because of this, hundreds of Guyanese are working and living here illegally.”<sup>159</sup>

The newspaper entry went on to state that the problem is so rampant that the Guyanese government, on advice from its consulate in Barbados, “has advised Guyanese desirous of working here not to travel until the company has secured a work permit for them.” In addition, the article noted that some newspapers in Guyana have stopped publishing such “wanted” advertisements.

One key informant summed up the situation as follows:

“When you look at the options people have, people find themselves being seduced by promises, there’s a high level of desperation. Maybe they come from homes with verbal, physical or sexual abuse so why go back home and get it ‘tek way’<sup>160</sup> for free’ when you could sell it. The options that persons perceive themselves as having are limited.”<sup>161</sup>

One of the key informants indicated that some persons begin recruiting migrants through familiarity with particular countries as a result of business visits and subsequently they set up a network of contacts.<sup>162</sup>

### ***Control methods***

The primary methods of control of irregular migrants in Barbados were cited as threats to the individual, withholding of travel documents, debt bondage, violence, false contracts, lower wages and restricted movement.<sup>163</sup> Twelve informants had heard of persons being controlled through threats which consisted primarily of deportation. Such threats were made together with their travel documents being withheld or being forced to work without the required work permits.<sup>164</sup> Ten key informants spoke about travel documents being withheld on arrival in Barbados, sometimes under the pretext that they are needed to apply for a work permit.<sup>165</sup> The

159 *Sunday Sun*, op. cit., 1 August 2004.

160 “Taken away.”

161 Key informant interview, Barbados.

162 Key informant interview, Barbados.

163 Key informant interview, Barbados.

164 Key informant interview, Barbados.

165 Key informant interview, Barbados.

permit process may be started but not completed and then threats about possible deportation can be used to control the worker.

“They are very unscrupulous people who take [the worker’s] passport, would say to the person, ‘start work, I have got the work permit for you.’ The person feels everything is in order. They may work six months [as] it is usually a short-term work permit that they tell them they’ve had.”<sup>166</sup>

One informant noted that passports are sometimes withheld to coerce the person to complete a job by a specific time or to do particular types of tasks.<sup>167</sup> Another informant was told about some foreign prostitutes who had been brought into Barbados for a specific period of time and they had their passports taken away.<sup>168</sup> These prostitutes were kept locked in houses while in Barbados and then taken to the airport when it was time for them to return to their countries; their passports were then returned. Some persons eventually called the immigration authorities to report that their passports and/or other documents had been confiscated. The officials from the Immigration Department indicated that they then called the employer to request that the passports be returned.<sup>169</sup>

Nine key informants spoke about debt bondage to repay the cost of travel and housing.<sup>170</sup> One report was of a Barbadian agent with contacts in Guyana.<sup>171</sup> The agent pays for the cost of the travel to Barbados which is then deducted from the workers’ wages as one way of keeping them in control. The tickets are often bought by the recruiters, the agents or the companies involved.

Employers are expected to pay for work permits. However, there were reports of employees being forced to pay for them. According to one informant who has spoken to workers, they were sometimes forced to pay as much as BDS\$3,000 (USD1,500). These debts and charges are difficult to pay because of the low wages received. This work permit situation would be applicable primarily to employment related to male migrants (namely, the construction sectors). The actual costs for work permits for most workers on construction sites are less than USD100.<sup>172</sup> In Barbados, work permits for housekeeping are not issued, which are positions filled mostly by migrant women. Nor are work permits issued for work in the

---

166 *Sunday Sun*, op. cit., 1 August 2004.

167 Key informant interview, Barbados.

168 Key informant interview, Barbados.

169 Key informant interview, Barbados.

170 Key informant interview, Barbados.

171 Key informant interview, Barbados.

172 Key informant interview and Immigration and Passport Department, Barbados.

sex trade.<sup>173</sup> However, work permits for entertainers can be issued, under which category exotic dancing would fall.

There were also reports of physical, verbal and psychological abuse as a means of control, especially of women in the sex trade.<sup>174</sup> For example, four informants stated that they were aware of violence being used to control women in the sex trade and one person was aware of threats being made to the family or friends of these women.<sup>175</sup> One key informant knew of a woman who had to bring in a certain amount of money each night, otherwise she was physically assaulted.<sup>176</sup>

Four informants spoke about false contracts.<sup>177</sup> They believed that some persons migrate to Barbados for a legitimate opportunity, which may then turn out to be a scam or may not work out in the way expected. Examples of such false contracts include advertisements in Guyanese newspapers for bakers, persons to work in garment factories and young girls who are needed similar jobs. When these recruited girls arrive in Barbados, they often find out that they are expected to work as prostitutes. Some are told that they have to work as prostitutes to pay for their passage back home to Guyana. One key informant spoke about construction workers who are given false promises about the wages they would be receiving and the conditions under which they would be working and living.<sup>178</sup> The Honorary Consul for Guyana also referred to these false promises, as quoted in the previously cited newspaper article.

According to one informant, other migrants are reportedly recruited as “drug mules.” They have their passports and tickets withheld on arrival in Barbados and are forced to work as prostitutes in exchange for their passage back home.<sup>179</sup> In some cases, they are paid part of the promised sum before their departure, with the remainder to be paid upon their return to Guyana after a successful mission to Barbados. The officials from the Immigration Department questioned the validity of this assertion based on the perceived discrepancies between the physical attributes of the “drug mules” and those of prostitutes.<sup>180</sup>

The following excerpt describes one woman’s story, as outlined in a letter to a newspaper in Barbados. This account contains elements of debt bondage, the confiscation of travel documents and restricted movement. The story sheds light

---

173 Ibid.

174 Key informant interview, Barbados

175 Key informant interview, Barbados.

176 Key informant interview, Barbados.

177 Key informant interview, Barbados.

178 Key informant interview, Barbados.

179 Key informant interview, Barbados.

180 Key informant interview, Barbados.

on the struggle of one person trapped in modern-day sexual slavery and the chaos it fosters.

“I met a woman purely by chance...This 22 year old Guyanese woman came to Barbados last week from Guyana. Brought into Barbados under the guise of dodgy intent, forced into the lurid underworld of sexual trade, she recounts her rather painful story... At first there was some hesitance but in no time she opened up and revealed all.

This process was clearly painful for her. She had left Guyana where her family wasn't sure what she was doing. She couldn't tell anyone there... ..Yet, clearly she was trapped. She owed a “pimp” almost a thousand dollars, plus there was the issue of family support back home in Guyana. This “pimp” had paid her passage to Barbados. He was holding her passport. He was shuttling her to and from each rendezvous with her “punters” and clients. She was being paid according to the sexual services she performed.<sup>181</sup>

...Here was another beautiful black mother, sister, daughter tortured by conflicted emotions, bereft and tearful, lamenting the fact that she didn't want to do this, but had to pay money back and at the same time provide for her family.

Hers is sadly not an isolated case by any means. She recounted dozens of horror stories, tragedies and injustices going on daily in this country under the complacent eyes of state authorities, who are indifferent, and, in some cases, complicit in this ignoble trade in human life.”<sup>182</sup>

As the story indicates, there is a strong element of psychological control which causes some victims to feel trapped and find it difficult to break free of the perceived trap. Young girls, some from rural areas, are often targeted. These young girls are likely to be afraid and embarrassed by the circumstances in which they find themselves and have no other way of raising the funds to return home. There are also ethnic and religious dynamics which are used to maintain control over young girls and women. According to one key informant:

“Sometimes the family won't accept them back, especially in the case of Guyanese Indians. They don't enjoy it but they get resigned to it -

---

181 “Punter” is another word for client.

182 Mac Callender, *Sunday Sun* newspaper, 22 August 2004.



initially they might be forced but become resigned to it because of threats, etc., and they get locked into that belief system. If they go out, they are not sure if they are being watched, so they come back.”<sup>183</sup>

Language differences would also be used to control girls and women from non-English speaking countries such as the Dominican Republic, Venezuela and Haiti. They would have difficulty in communicating with officials or other persons.

Traffickers use social attitudes and stigma towards the sex trade to control victims. For example, a number of the key informants thought that females in prostitution know what they are getting into, at least in some cases.<sup>184</sup> One person put it this way:

“In some instances yes, in others, no. Some expect to earn an income and planned to go back but could not. Some turn to the church for counselling. They know that they are coming into prostitution but not that they are going to be involved in violence. Also some who come as exotic dancers might not know that they will be involved in prostitution as well.”<sup>185</sup>

One key informant stated that since some women continue to work in the sex trade even when they find out what they are expected to do suggests that they have no problem with it.<sup>186</sup> In contrast, one informant argued that “you have to look at who they try to attract - abused women with low education. They’re not going to think about calling immigration to find out their rights. They’re going to be scared - just right for trafficking.”<sup>187</sup> The negative social attitudes toward the sex trade could act as a deterrent for victims trafficked for sexual exploitation from coming forward for assistance. This underscores the need for wide-scale public education in Barbados and Guyana on the subject of human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

### *Domestic servitude*

Six key informants indicated that they were familiar with cases of human trafficking for domestic servitude.<sup>188</sup> Some of the methods of control are similar to those noted above. The cases were primarily of young migrant domestic helpers who were forced to work long hours and were threatened with violence and being reported to the Immigration Department. They were allowed only a limited social life, they were locked in the house and either paid low or “starvation” wages, or remunerated through a barter system which consisted of the provision of housing

183 Key informant interview, Barbados.

184 See Appendix B, Question 16.

185 Key informant interview, Barbados.

186 Key informant interview, Barbados.

187 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

188 Key informant interview, Barbados.

and food.<sup>189</sup> One representative of the focus group discussion with the Ministry of Labour had heard of domestic helpers being paid USD12.50 per week, or USD.75 cents an hour.<sup>190</sup> One person also reported that some householders offer the use of their non-Barbadian domestic helpers to their friends for USD2.50 per day.<sup>191</sup>

The Labour Department reported situations “where persons living in ‘big’ houses bring in people as housekeepers and pay them little or no wages; they’re almost locked in; they don’t go anywhere or know anything.”<sup>192</sup> The Department can inspect business places to ensure that they are not contravening any labour-related laws and are maintaining the required occupational safety and health standards. However, the Department does not have the right to enter and inspect private homes. Domestic helpers are unlikely to approach the Department for assistance. Although some domestic helpers may not be physically locked in the house, a participant in the focus group discussion suggested that their circumstances make it difficult for them to leave the situation.<sup>193</sup>

“Stella was only 19 years old. She was brought into Barbados from Jamaica by a professional couple to look after their children. She was not allowed to leave the house by herself and when the family left home, they would lock her in the house. She was paid no wages because they said that they would provide for her. Her passport was also taken away. Eventually she got away.”<sup>194</sup>

### ***Working conditions***

Working conditions for exploited migrants include being paid low or no wages and having to work long hours.<sup>195</sup> Some individuals are collected by vehicle to go to construction sites or farms early in the morning and are brought back late in the evening.<sup>196</sup> In some cases, they are made to take food with them so that a lunch break is not necessary. One key informant noted that some of the work sites have no toilet facilities, no place to eat lunch and no shelter from the sun or rain.<sup>197</sup> Workers are expected to spray crops without safety equipment and to work on construction sites without helmets. These conditions are contrary to the verbal contracts or promises that employees would have been given prior to arrival in Barbados; workers are not given written contracts.<sup>198</sup>

---

189 Key informant interview, Barbados.

190 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

191 Key informant interview, Barbados.

192 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

193 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

194 Key informant interview, Barbados.

195 Key informant interview, Barbados.

196 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

197 Key informant interview, Barbados.

198 Key informant interview, Barbados.

Some employers do not register workers with the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) although money is deducted from their wages for this.<sup>199</sup> The total NIS contribution rate is 19.25 percent of earnings, with the employer contributing 10.25 percent and the employee 9 percent. Even if the workers want to register with the NIS on their own behalf, they are unable to do so because they do not have work permits. As a result, they cannot claim any unemployment or sickness benefits under the scheme. In some other cases, the employer brings them into Barbados under a legitimate work permit, but when it expires, the employer informs the workers that they are now self-employed and the employer ceases to pay their contribution to NIS, though they are still working for the employer. Some of the workers pay to have their own work permits extended and start to pay the full contribution to NIS (such as that paid by self-employed persons) and others continue to work illegally.<sup>200</sup>

One key informant suggested that the migrant workers are being used by Barbadian employers to undermine wage labour and to force down wages to the benefit of employers and the detriment of the local employees.<sup>201</sup> This is contrary to the ILO Migration for Employment Convention that Barbados ratified in 1967. This Convention includes measures to facilitate and control migration and calls for the equality of treatment of migrant workers.

Two key informants reported that persons in the sex trade have to pay a percentage of their earnings to the persons who are controlling them.<sup>202</sup> One of the key informants stated that a “pimp” who operated from a hotel was identified.<sup>203</sup> The informant received reports alleging that the pimp employs European women to smuggle drugs into Barbados and then work as prostitutes for two to three months before returning to Europe. There was also the belief that women from the Dominican Republic also have pimps. Another key informant who has access to women in the sex trade noted that they also have to pay a percentage of their earnings to the brothel while they are in Barbados.<sup>204</sup> They are also expected to work even if they are ill. However, one key informant stated that preliminary information from a project about the sex trade that is being conducted by the Ministry of Health suggests that most of the prostitutes are self-employed and do not work through an agent or pimp.<sup>205</sup> Further investigation is needed to understand this situation and its links to human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

---

199 Key informant interview, Barbados.

200 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

201 Key informant interview, Barbados.

202 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

203 Key informant interview, Barbados.

204 Key informant interview, Barbados.

205 Key informant interview, Barbados.

*Living conditions*

Some migrant workers are forced into squalor and cramped living conditions. This situation was noted by some of the key informants and has been highlighted in the media and raised by various persons on call-in radio programmes. The following are some examples of the reported living conditions:

“Twenty agricultural workers who were forced to live in a former chicken coop for which they have to pay rent. If they complained, threats were made to send them back home.”<sup>206</sup>

Senator Sir Roy Trotman, the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers’ Union, has spoken about some migrants being made to “live in 20 foot and 40 foot containers and forced to work for less than reasonable wages. The workers...are packed back home if they did not comply...”<sup>207</sup>

“Mr. X rears animals and cultivates plants. He has about three or four Guyanese working for him. He has a building in the yard and insists that they live there and takes money out of their wages for rent. The building comprises minimum living space and can be described as being ‘unliveable’. They cannot live anywhere else - if they move, he has threatened to call the immigration authorities for them.”<sup>208</sup>

In terms of their daily lives, the movement of the migrant worker is often restricted. One key informant revealed that some persons in the sex trade report that they are not allowed to go into town, others report spending their days walking through town but returning to their main location at night to work.<sup>209</sup> There are other reports about cases where food, groceries and toiletries are brought in to the place of work for the prostitutes, who are usually young girls in their late teens to early 20s.<sup>210</sup>

“I know of a young girl who was sent here at 11 to live with a couple in Nelson Street [red light district] and to go to school. She ended up being abused by a man she lived with and was also made to have sex with his friends. They live upstairs a shop. She is now 18 and has left school. When she used to go to school, if she didn’t get home by a certain time she would get beaten. She has tried to do short courses and has a boyfriend -

---

206 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

207 “Treat them equally: Senator Sir Roy Trotman urges fair deal for migrant workers,” *Barbados Advocate* 22 July 2004.

208 Key informant interview, Barbados.

209 Key informant interview, Barbados.

210 Key informant interview, Barbados.

we only hear from her when she's desperate. She has no contact with her family and does not understand why they sent her here."<sup>211</sup>

Some participants in the focus group discussion also alleged that the movements of some agricultural workers are also restricted. One Union representative spoke of a case where workers were reportedly locked into the compound at night.<sup>212</sup>

### ***Physical health, injuries, disease***

Workers on construction sites and farms are exposed to injury through lack of safety equipment such as helmets or masks. Mental health is also affected.

One key informant stated that he had spoken to many irregular female migrants who are willing to do anything to stay in Barbados.<sup>213</sup> He said he saw them as emotionally abused and unaware that they are in exploitative situations.<sup>214</sup>

Persons in the sex trade are exposed to diseases such as HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). These persons are also exposed to abuse from the clients of the sex trade. The Ministry of Health was conducting a project that targeted sex trade workers which seeks to help them operate under the safest and healthiest conditions as possible.<sup>215</sup> This support can be extended through the provision of contraceptives and recommendations about their living conditions and working situation.

### ***Private sector and demand side of human trafficking***

The desire for cheap labour by the private sector has been presented as one of the factors fuelling the exploitation of migrant workers and human trafficking. Key informants suggested that this is the case in the construction, garment, agricultural, hospitality and household sectors.<sup>216</sup> Participants in the focus group discussion mentioned that the response to the relatively high labour costs in Barbados was to pay lower wages to migrant workers.<sup>217</sup> The trade unions argue that the employers want to undermine wage labour and force down wages.<sup>218</sup> However, one key informant argued that though migrants may be willing to accept low wages just to start working and cover their initial bills, this situation would not continue for a long time.<sup>219</sup> He suggested that, although there may be a direct correlation

---

211 Key informant interview, Barbados.

212 Key informant interview, Barbados.

213 Key informant interview, Barbados.

214 Key informant interview, Barbados.

215 At the time this research was conducted, the project was in the process of making contact and conducting interviews with sex workers.

216 Key informant interviews, Barbados.

217 Focus group discussion and key informant interview, Barbados.

218 Key informant interview, Barbados.

219 Key informant interview, Barbados.

between the importation of labour and exploitation, the case may also be that Barbadian labour costs are too high.

The tourism industry, which is one of the major industries in Barbados, and local demand have also fuelled the demand for the sex trade. According to one key informant, Barbados is listed by unofficial sources on the Internet as a sex destination: “It therefore attracts persons coming for sex to exploit males and females.”<sup>220</sup> Key informants from the focus group suggested that European women partake in sex tourism through seeking the services of Barbadian men.<sup>221</sup> They also mentioned that the market for female sex workers seems to have a strong local element as well as a foreign component.<sup>222</sup>

### *Media review*

There is a high level of media coverage and public discussion in Barbados about the perceived proliferation of foreign workers, in the construction sector in particular. Over the last decade, there has been a construction boom in Barbados and there are both local and foreign companies responding to the demand. There are a number of foreign workers on these projects from both within and outside of the Caribbean, including workers from as far away as China and the Philippines. However, male Guyanese workers fuelled the most discussion in the newspapers and on the call-in radio programmes. Although there are also a number of female Guyanese migrants working in households, in the hospitality and garment sectors and in the sex trade as well as male migrants working in other sectors, migrants on construction sites tend to be more visible.

Some of the local newspaper headlines include:

- “Sir Roy wants registry to safeguard local workers” - *Daily Nation*, 18 May 2004;
- “BEC against registry: Director says migrant labour must not displace Bajans” - *Sunday Sun*, 6 June 2004;
- “Need for protocol on regional workers” - *Barbados Advocate*, 9 July 2004;
- “Treat them equally: Senator Sir Roy Trotman urges fair deal for migrant workers” - *Barbados Advocate*, 22 July 2004;
- “Home drums must beat first and loudly” - *Barbados Advocate*, 22 July 2004;
- “Sir Roy: Weed out bad employees” - *Daily Nation*, 22 July 2004;
- “‘Scams’ luring Guyanese here” - *Sunday Sun*, 1 August 2004;

---

220 Key informant interview, Barbados.

221 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

222 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

- “Nassar knocks CSME: Guyanese migrants must be controlled” - *Daily Nation*, 16 August 2004;
- “Unfit homes: Probe into non-nationals housing” - *Weekend Nation*, 27 August 2004.

Human trafficking has not generally been considered an issue relevant to Barbados and therefore it is not a focus of public discussion. In 2004, there were only two media articles on the issue, one covering the seminar hosted by IOM in June 2004 with the headline “Call for unity to fight trafficking”. The issue was also raised in May 2004 by the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers’ Union as he addressed the problem of migrant workers displacing Barbadians. He indicated that the union was not against migrant workers and would also represent their interests.

“We have also made the call because there is the need for the discontinuation of the trafficking of people into the area...and it is not all to do with prostitution. It has to do with poverty, and unemployment.”<sup>223</sup>

However, the exploitation of migrant workers in terms of working and living conditions has surfaced in Barbados. The primary concern remains the perception of large numbers of both regular and irregular migrant workers and the possibility that these workers would displace Barbadian workers. There was also the concern that a large influx of migrant workers could place a strain on social services and the economic well-being of the population of Barbados.<sup>224</sup> Consequently, there are constant calls for this type of migration to be controlled.

Public opinion varies about whether migrant workers are being exploited and what should be done about it if it is taking place. Some of the statements by the key informants in response to the existence of exploitation and possible human trafficking of migrant workers include:

- “If someone took my passport, I would go to Immigration. If they’re staying, they must want to be here.”
- “They come expecting the poor conditions - they just seem to accept it; they’re not forced.”
- “I don’t see it as a problem.”
- “They like it.”
- “Some...come here in search of a better life but the circumstances under which they are forced to live and work are less than humane.”

<sup>223</sup> Quoted in *Daily Nation*, 18 May 2004.

<sup>224</sup> Democratic Labour Party, *Barbados Advocate* Newspaper, 9 July 2004.

There was heated debate about prostitution during the last quarter of 2003. This debate was sparked by comments in October 2003 by the Attorney General and Deputy Prime Minister Mia Mottley, that the decriminalization of prostitution and homosexuality needed to be placed on the “front burner”. She felt this was necessary to remove the “cancer of discrimination” which prevented segments of the population that are highly at-risk from benefiting from HIV/AIDS prevention programmes.

However, there are different opinions among the focus group about whether prostitution should be considered a criminal act in Barbados. These mixed views were reflected in the comments of the key informants when asked about their opinion of female prostitutes; there were more positive responses than negative ones. One person argued that the sex trade is an inherently exploitative situation. Another informant felt that prostitutes make themselves victims and should not be involved in prostitution.<sup>225</sup> A third informant considered the repercussions in terms of the transmission of STDs, the breakdown of family life and the effect on the country’s morale.<sup>226</sup> However, this informant considered that the women are often those who have been abused and that they have low self-esteem, are poorly educated, are responsible for many children and may not be able to access alternatives. Two informants stated that although they did not condone prostitution and considered it to be immoral, they would not want to impose their morality on others since one does not know what they are experiencing.<sup>227</sup>

Although the key informants did not have an overwhelmingly negative response, the strong negative reactions to the Attorney General’s comments suggest the need for extensive public education about the sex trade in Barbados, if action is to be taken to combat it.

### *Conclusion*

This study represents the first effort to research human trafficking in Barbados. The findings point to some level of human trafficking in the areas of sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. These situations consist of mostly female migrants who are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking because of traditional and ongoing gender inequalities and the high level of female-headed households in the Caribbean. However, male migrant workers are also susceptible to human trafficking. Evidence of labour and other exploitation was revealed and this situation extends into forced labour in some cases, which is one manifestation of human trafficking.

---

225 Key informant interview, Barbados.

226 Key informant interview, Barbados.

227 Key informant interviews, Barbados.



Some of members of the focus group expressed discomfort with the idea of providing assistance to victims of human trafficking, as opposed to deporting them.<sup>228</sup> They suggested that persons may pretend to be victims if they become aware that such assistance is available. The key informants raised other areas of contention, including:

- The need to distinguish between human trafficking and exploitation;
- If a person does not like the conditions under which they are working and living but is willing to accept them, is that person really a victim?
- How does an agency deal with a situation it identifies as human trafficking if the victim is willing to remain in the situation?
- If the victim is gaining in some way from the relationship, can it be called human trafficking?<sup>229</sup>

These kinds of questions indicate the need for more discussion and awareness-raising through education and information-sharing that instils victim sensitivity towards human trafficking and the exploitation of migrant workers.

Although it was not feasible to determine the full extent of human trafficking in Barbados, the possibility that it exists and the potential for it to increase as the economies of the Caribbean fluctuate are areas of concern. The essence of human trafficking is exploitation and as one key informant concluded:

“...A society where you can ...find these practices is one that should recognise that there is a lot of work to do and it is not as sophisticated as it would like to think. When we treat people like that or are aware that it goes on, we’re all the poorer for it.”<sup>230</sup>

### ***Specific methodology for the Barbados country report (2004)***

#### ***The Barbados Research Team***

The Barbados research team was supervised and led by Diane Cummins. The project was commissioned by IOM, which provided technical and other support to the national researchers based in Barbados. Ms. Cummins is an independent social development consultant with DITA Development Services in Barbados. Fay Armstrong-Lawrence assisted Ms. Cummins in conducting key informant interviews.

228 Focus group discussion, Barbados.

229 One key informant argued that if the person is benefiting in some way, it is not human trafficking - for example, the person may have had their passport taken away, but may be paid a fair wage. The employer may also be protecting him/herself from the employee leaving the job prematurely.

230 Key informant interview, Barbados.

### ***National Survey***

The standardised national survey was distributed to all participants at a national seminar on human trafficking held by IOM, in partnership with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the OAS, and with support from Bureau of Gender Affairs. The seminar was held in Bridgetown, Barbados on 11 June 2004 and was completed by 37 Barbados-based individuals.

### ***Key Informant Interviews***

A standardised interview questionnaire was used to conduct semi-structured interviews with 20 key informants selected on the basis of a purposive sample. The key informants included social service representatives, government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations, health workers, immigration officials and legal personnel.

In addition to the key informant interviews, the national researcher organized one focus group discussion which was held at the Ministry of Labour and Social Security on the 6 June 2004. There were 10 participants, including the Permanent Secretary and Deputy Permanent Secretary, administrative officers, a labour officer and an economist, as well as representatives of the National Insurance Scheme, Labour Department, Vocational Training Board and the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council.

### ***Media review***

Media coverage of human trafficking and related issues was reviewed and relevant newspaper articles were researched. The Media review spanned a period from 2003 to August 2004 and focused on five major sources: *The Barbados Advocate*; *The Daily Nation*; *The Sunday Sun*; and *The Weekend Nation*.

### ***Research Limitations***

A number of constraints were experienced in conducting this study in Barbados. The main difficulty was in contacting and setting up interviews with some of the key informants, in particular some government officials. In some cases, numerous telephone calls and messages were not returned. Letters were also sent by IOM to assist in securing interviews with two government departments but this was successful in one case only. The research took place during the period from June to August 2004, when a large number of persons traditionally take their holidays, which also presented difficulties. In addition, it was not possible to interview three key informants who had been contacted and had agreed to the interview. This included representatives of the Barbados Police Force, the Ministry of Health and two NGOs.

Although interviewing victims of human trafficking was not one of the requirements of the study, a planned visit to a construction site to speak to potential victims was postponed. Unfortunately, it was not possible to reschedule this visit before the completion of the study. The need for more clarity on the definition of human trafficking was also recognized, especially in terms of differentiating between human trafficking and other forms of exploitation of migrant workers.

## 5. Guyana - country report on human trafficking (2004)

### *Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey*

Literature pertaining to human trafficking in Guyana has been produced mainly by non-governmental and specialized international organizations and recently by the local media. A broader literature review also provided substantial background information on a range of elements considered to be push factors in the context of human trafficking in Guyana.

#### *The socio-economic context*

As reported by Andaiye, the ban on the commercial importation of staple foods into Guyana in 1982 precipitated a large-scale informalization of the economy.<sup>231</sup> The introduction of the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) some years later had strong social repercussions as reported in the Government 2003 Report on Progress towards the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals: “In the early stages, the severity of the structural adjustment programme measures had a negative effect on employment and incomes. In particular, the downsizing of the public sector and the concomitant loss of jobs, the privatization of State enterprises, coupled with the virtually jobless growth in the private sector, reduced opportunities [...]”<sup>232</sup> The social effects of the ERP severely impacted the public sector in particular, such as by downsizing state ownership. These social effects also impacted the small merchants whose socio-economic situation was already precarious and who mainly consisted of female petty dealers.

In an article published in 1998, a direct link was established between the restructuring of the Guyanese economy in the 1990s and the increase in women working in the sex trade.<sup>233</sup>

Despite a decade of sound economic recovery, Guyana is still classified as a low-income country with a per capita income close to USD1,000 in 2000, USD1,167 in 2005 and USD1,435 in 2007.<sup>234</sup>

231 Andaiye (1993) ‘You Got to Get Good Heart’: Stories by Guyanese Women Traders, Trinidad & Tobago Review, Vol 15, # 8-9, 1993 (Special Issue on Enterprise in the West Indies).

232 Government of Guyana (2003) “Report on Progress towards the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals,” Georgetown: 29.

233 Red Thread Women’s Development Programme (1998) “‘Givin’ Lil’ Bit fuh Lil’ Bit: Women and Sex Work in Guyana,” in Kamala Kempadoo (Ed.), *Sun, Sex and Gold: Tourism and Sex Work in the Caribbean*, Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., Lanham: 263-290.

234 Gross domestic product per capita data from: <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Guyana>

### ***Poverty and social inequality***

The high social inequality in Guyana means that prosperity fails to benefit many segments of the society. For example, a brief issued by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) states that 92 percent of the population in rural areas, including various indigenous populations, lives in poverty.<sup>235</sup>

The manifestation of poverty not only pertains to low income but is also reflected in inadequate access to the resources that shape overall opportunities, such as literacy, proper nutrition and protection from child labour. For example, according to the Education for All-Fast Track Initiative Country Proposals of 2002, 33 percent of Guyanese children are graduating from primary school without acquiring basic literacy skills. According to Jennings Zellyne, this high rate of illiteracy among out-of-school youth and the alarming level of dropouts are particularly significant to the primary schools and community high schools which provide secondary school education and are designed for students from poorer households.<sup>236</sup>

*The NGO Report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child 2003* cites the lack of job opportunities for young Amerindian girls in their communities and limited formal education as direct reasons for the vulnerabilities which lead to these girls being lured out of their communities by non-Amerindians to work as domestic servants, waitresses and bar attendants.<sup>237</sup> Guyana's report to the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1998-2002* refers to "the practice of employment of young hinterland Amerindian girls in coastal locations, particularly in urban centres, many of whom have no documentation to verify their age. Many of the girls are subject to abuse from employers and their clients and have little recourse in environments to which they are often unaccustomed."<sup>238</sup>

In a rapid assessment on the worst forms of child labour in Guyana, the International Labour Organization (ILO) describes child labour as "pervasive, ubiquitous but largely unrecognized", involving children from all ethnic groups - East Indian, black, mixed race and Amerindian - who are driven "by culture, parental neglect, family breakdown and economic necessity to work for their own upkeep or that of their family and relatives. They farm, fish, engage in vending, work as labourers, loggers, miners, domestics, sales clerks, apprentices, machine operators, guards or

235 International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2004) *Guyana Country Brief*, updated in July 2004.

236 These are secondary level classes located in primary schools. Zellyne, Jennings, et al. (1995) *Functional Literacy Survey of Out-of School Youth*, in collaboration with UNICEF, Guyana Ministry of Education, Georgetown.

237 Red Thread Women's Development Programme (2003) *Guyana NGO Report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child*, Georgetown: 26.

238 Government of Guyana (2002) *Report of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana under Article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women 1998-2002*: 28.

watchmen and as prostitutes.”<sup>239</sup> This report underscores the link between child labour and poverty when describing the worst forms of child labour (primarily affecting street children and children from remote Amerindian villages).

In the *Voices of Children: Experiences with Violence*, Dr. Christie Cabral, in collaboration with UNICEF, Red Thread and the Ministry of Labour, Human Services, and Social Security, reported in June 2004:

“Reports were received from health workers, teachers, and some older children in certain areas of Region 2 & 3 of internal trafficking of girls, particularly Amerindian girls, for prostitution. All the accounts were second-hand... however the secondary accounts all described similar circumstances. Individuals went into remote rural villages, where the population was primarily Amerindian and offered work for young girls as domestic workers in homes or as waitress or cleaners in restaurants. These girls would go with the person to take up these jobs but would subsequently find themselves drawn into prostitution. Some remained in shops around the build up areas along the coast and some were subsequently taken to mining camps in remote hinterland locations.”<sup>240</sup>

Finally, gender inequality also needs to be taken into account. An article published in the late 1990s warned that an increasing number of women appeared to be engaging in the sex trade, with some groups, such as Amerindians and schoolgirls, appearing particularly vulnerable to deception and coercion.<sup>241</sup> More generally, women in Guyana earn less than men in both lower level and professional occupations, as indicated by the following data provided by the Bureau of Statistics.<sup>242</sup>

239 Dannels, Georges K. Ph.D (2002) *Guyana, the Situation of Children in the Worst Forms of Child Labor*, a Rapid Assessment, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, Port of Spain, Trinidad, October : 1.

240 Cabral, Christie (2004) *Voices of Children: Experiences with Violence*, in collaboration with MLHSSS, RTWDP, and UNICEF-Guyana, Georgetown, June: 28-29.

241 Red Thread, op. cit., 1998: 263-290.

242 Government of Guyana (2001) *Report of Guyana Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey*, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Regional Tables for Guyana, Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Available online at: <http://www.childinfo.org>.

**Chart 10: Lower level occupations of persons with Gross Income below GY\$30,000 per month**

Major Occupation	Females	Males
Clerks	90%	69%
Services/Sales	95%	87%
Elementary Workers	94%	73%
Agricultural Workers	97%	87%

Source: Guyana Bureau of Statistics, 2001.

**Chart 11: Professional occupations of persons with Gross Income below GY\$30,000 per month**

Major Occupation	Females	Males
Managers	60%	47%
Professional	77%	42%
Technician	91%	65%

Source: Guyana Bureau of Statistics, 2001.

### ***Weakened rule of law***

The security situation in Guyana has deteriorated recently and according to sources that include the police, this violence is directly related to the drug trade.<sup>243</sup> Guyana is emerging as a major transshipment point for illegal drugs and migrant smuggling, colloquially called “back-tracking”.

The country shares many miles of border with Brazil, Venezuela, Suriname and the Atlantic Ocean. These borders are largely un-patrolled and provide almost unlimited access to both inland and seashore areas. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), these geographical features and the proximity of major cocaine producing countries renders Guyana vulnerable to drug shipments into and out of the country. These shipments benefit those within Guyana who serve as middlemen. While the literature review does not conclude a direct relationship between human trafficking and drug trafficking in Guyana, examples from other countries show that the instigators of illegal businesses are often involved in a range of “multi-purpose” lucrative criminal activities, often using common financial and communication networks. An overall increase of criminality and a climate of impunity can feed money laundering, corruption and violence.

243 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2002) *Annual National Report, Guyana Drug Information System 2002*.

### ***The challenges of the life in the hinterland***

Life in the hinterland of Guyana is challenging; the topography is difficult, the communications are limited and the populations live in dispersed settlement patterns. The Amerindian communities lack a number of skills, which impacts their ability to attract jobs. According to the IMF, nearly 80 percent of Guyanese Amerindians live below the poverty line. Hence, *The Guyana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* lists the following development priorities for Amerindian groups: employment generation; assistance in developing home-based enterprises; access to potable water; improved roads; technical assistance to increase agriculture productivity; access to basic health services; and primary education.<sup>244</sup> The need to improve governance and public-sector accountability, particularly at the local level, are also seen as other essential factors to reduce poverty. All these developmental issues can be considered as push-pull factors which can contribute to the occurrence of human trafficking.

### ***Patterns of high economic mobility***

Guyana has a strong tradition of internal movements driven by work and settlement opportunities. Internal movements have traditionally been from rural to urban areas and from coastal to hinterland areas. International migration patterns flow towards Caribbean territories, including the Atlantic coast of Central America, the United Kingdom and North America. Since the 1980s there has been a substantial increase in temporary movements across borders with the development of petty trading. In general, the Guyanese population views migration and mobility positively, leading to better living conditions or opportunities. Traditionally, Amerindian communities send their children to the coast (to church institutions or private persons) for education or employment purposes, in the hope of enhancing their opportunities.

### ***Human trafficking in Guyana***

The 2004 *Trafficking in Persons Report*, published by the United States State Department, identifies Guyana as a country of origin, transit and destination for human trafficking, primarily for sexual exploitation.

“Much of the trafficking takes place in the interior of the country, where observers indicate that likely over 100 persons are engaged in forced prostitution in isolated settlements. Victims are also found in prostitution centres in Georgetown and New Amsterdam. Guyanese victims originate mainly from Amerindian communities; some come from coastal urban

<sup>244</sup> The World Bank Group's International Development Association (IDA) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2004) "Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper a Joint Assessment," *The Guyana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, 28 August.



centres. Most foreign victims are trafficked from Northern Brazil; some may also come from Venezuela.”<sup>245</sup>

### ***Statistical data***

Specific data on human trafficking are not available in Guyana. The numbers of alleged victims are anecdotal. In the course of a participatory needs assessment of workers in the sex trade, Red Thread identified several victims of human trafficking in 2001. These young women had been deceived into prostitution and domestic servitude. In 2000, The Guyana Human Rights Association (GHRA) reported the cases of two female minors trafficked between the border towns of Corriverton and Nickeri, which are located across the Corentyne River in the Republic of Suriname.<sup>246</sup>

Currently, very little data exists on the number of human traffickers arrested or convicted. When asked if they were aware of any convictions related to human trafficking, out of the 58 national survey respondents, 15 answered positively, 24 negatively and 19 did not respond. Of those respondents who were aware of an arrest, only two cases were mentioned. The first case concerns an alleged human trafficker operating together with his wife in Crab Wood Creek and in Corentyne. His arrest led to the rescue of a young girl (13 years of age) from a bar. The rescue was conducted by the Ministry of Human Services in August 2004. The second case concerns a businessman who was allegedly trafficking girls from Guyana into Suriname.

### ***Main findings: key informant interviews***

The following section presents an analysis of the findings of 34 key informant interviews conducted by the research team in 2004. The information obtained from these interviews suggests that human trafficking exists in Guyana, primarily for purposes of sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude. They also draw a profile of alleged victims and offer some scenarios of the human trafficking process. While outlining the general consequences of human trafficking, these interviews also provided a platform to express rising concerns and hopefully will serve as a basis for designing more specific interventions.

---

245 U.S. State Department (2004) *Trafficking in Persons Report*, June, Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2004/>.

246 Guyanese Human Rights Association (2000) *Concerns over the Vulnerability of Minors at Corriverton Border*, February.

***Awareness about the forms of human trafficking in Guyana***

The key informants were asked about their awareness of forced prostitution, forced labour and domestic servitude in Guyana. Their lack of awareness of these issues was also noted. The responses indicated that:

- 74 percent knew about human trafficking for forms of sexual exploitation;
- 35 percent knew about human trafficking for forced labour;
- 20 percent about human trafficking for domestic servitude;
- 18 percent were unaware of these issues or did not answer;
- 41 percent were aware of human trafficking involving male victims.

***General Context of Human Trafficking in Guyana***

Human trafficking of Guyanese women and girls is reported to occur within the country primarily for purposes of sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. Cases involving men and women for purposes of forced labour have also been reported in the course of this research.

***Links to forced labour***

Out of the 12 examples cited by the key informants to illustrate forced labour, nine referred directly to cases of domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, or a combination of the two.<sup>247</sup>

Key informants said that trafficking of both sexes for forced labour is reported, but primarily affects men and boys (often Amerindian men and boys) who leave the interior of the country.

“Six Amerindian boys aged 14-20 yrs old were brought out from their village to work with this business man. These boys have to do all the fetching and packing of things, clean yard, wash concrete, clean shop. This man works these boys like slaves; they have to do all the dirty work. Meals are provided; they live in a tent at the back of the yard. They are not being paid so they can’t go back home. These boys don’t have clothes; they can’t mix with other people because they are very untidy. They don’t have clean clothes. These boys are being beaten by the man’s 17 yr old son and abused verbally. He would curse them and tell them they are lazy. He would hardly give them food. When they have the chance they would steal biscuits from the shop to eat. One of them got caught and he was badly beaten. Lack of education has a lot to do with this situation.”<sup>248</sup>

---

<sup>247</sup> Key informant interviews, Guyana.

<sup>248</sup> Key informant interview, Guyana.

In the above example, the circumstances pertaining to the males less than 18 years of age qualify as child trafficking for forced labour. Clearly the circumstances that pertain to the male adults (18 years and over) qualify as labour exploitation, but more information about the means that lead to these circumstances, such as coercion, deception or fraud, etc. (as the Protocol defines) is needed to determine whether the adult males were victims of human trafficking.<sup>249</sup>

Men, women and at times families, are recruited and taken from their communities by land-grant owners to work on farms, where they live in “logies.”<sup>250</sup> Sometimes, these logies are reported to not even contain beds. Informants alleged that these farm workers are not paid, instead they are given credit at shops owned by the land-grant owners and they sink into debt bondage. They are unable to return home since they have no money and no job in their community of origin. In other human trafficking cases, key informants noted that sawmill owners recruit Amerindian men. They work very long hours and are paid with food rations, on a survival mode, and have no means to return home.

Another example provided during the interviews reflected more specifically on the labour exploitation that affects Amerindians. This example is recounted below:

“Amerindian women and men are recruited from their settlements to work on grants in the Homeroom River- the men in the farm and the women in the owner’s yard digging coconuts. Women work from very early in the morning until evening. The women have to do 1000 or more coconuts for \$350 - \$400 (Guyana dollars). They are not paid any money. The owners have shops and the people are allowed limited amount of credit per week; they always end up owing. They can’t afford proper meals or clothes. They can’t leave to go home because they owe their boss and there is nothing to go home to. They can’t go out of the area without boss’ permission. Logies are built at the back of the owners’ yard for workers to live in.”<sup>251</sup>

In this example too, more information is necessary about the means of exploitation in order to determine if this case is an example of human trafficking for forced labour.

### *Links to forms of sexual exploitation*

The key informants are aware of a few cases in which young women and men have been trafficked outside of the country, such as cases where three young women were trafficked to Barbados, young men were trafficked to gay clubs in

249 To read about the definition of human trafficking of adults and children, see Part I of this publication.

250 Logies are old plantation shacks.

251 Key informant interview, Guyana.

Trinidad, four girls were taken to Suriname, a nurse was tricked to go to Trinidad and two sisters were lured to Barbados. However, the key informants consider that the majority of the related cases concern Guyanese women exploited within the country.<sup>252</sup>

According to the 24 key informants that recognized cases as human trafficking for sexual exploitation, the majority of victims were thought to be girls from all ethnic groups in North Western Guyana and the Homeroom Region. Most of the female victims are stated to be young (from early teens to early 20s) who live in remote or interior areas. The key informants consider them to have been deceived by human traffickers by being offered work as waitresses in small establishments on the coast. After a few days of their arrival on the coast, they are told that they have to provide sex to customers. They are prevented from leaving through various forms of control. Most of these cases were believed to involve Amerindian females, however, the human trafficking for sexual exploitation of Guyanese females of all races to neighbouring countries, as well as Guyanese females of all races from coastal areas to mining locations in the hinterland, was thought to occur as well.

Recruiters were reported in the interviews to be or to work for “club owners” mainly. They were reputed to make friends in a given community and then have these friends recruit young women and girls for jobs that pay well, such as salesclerk, waitress or maid.<sup>253</sup> At times, these intermediaries will seek parental approval and will provide the parents with a cash advance.<sup>254</sup>

The women and girls are then coerced into exploitative situations and confined to their places of work. Their living conditions are reported to be precarious. They sleep on mattresses, makeshift beds, or several persons to a single bed, for which they are charged a fee. Also, they are often made to work as domestic workers and/or waitresses and they experience multiple forms of exploitation.

Most means of control described by key informants involved debt bondage, restricted movement (including being locked up), withholding of payment or insufficient pay, threats (including death threats) and physical violence from employers and clients.

The following case is representative of the human trafficking methods of recruitment and control used by perpetrators in Guyana:

---

252 Key informant interviews, Guyana.

253. Key informant interviews, Guyana.

254 Key informant interviews, Guyana.

“Bar owners in Coenzyme are paying people to bring young girls from rural communities. They trick the girls into coming, fool them that they are going to Georgetown to work as salesclerks and domestics and their salary would be big. Parents are given advances and are told girls would be well taken care of. Girls are taken to Coenzyme and are handed over to business people who then tell them the kind of work they have to do. In two business places I know of... the proprietors work these girls like slaves. Movements are restricted, no interaction with others but clients; no pay, work from one morning to another, given rooms attached to the back of the house with bed. Girls are padlocked in those rooms after work; they get free food and are taken to market by boss to buy clothing, if sick boss pays bills. These girls are abused verbally and physically by their bosses. Sometimes the owner of... goes to Charity and brings girls, some for her business and some to sell to other businesses.”<sup>255</sup>

Some key informants also described scenarios involving Guyanese females who had been trafficked for sexual exploitation to other countries such as Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela, Suriname, the Netherlands Antilles and French Guiana.<sup>256</sup>

“In one case two sisters in their mid twenties were recruited by a friend of their uncle to go to Barbados as waitresses. After showing them around for two days they were then told they had to do sex work. Their passports were held and they were subjected to threats and verbal abuse.”<sup>257</sup>

### *Links to domestic servitude*

In the eight cases identified by the key informants, victims of human trafficking for domestic servitude were young girls taken from their places of residence. These key informants listed mainly women and girls as being recruited as maids and taken from their communities to coastal areas. The victims consented to this recruitment process, unaware of their ultimate living and working conditions.<sup>258</sup> Their working conditions are believed to be poor; they are expected to work for extensive hours for very low wages or no salary at all. They face fairly poor living conditions, and in most cases they are made to live inside their “master’s home”, often having to share rooms and sleep on mattresses.

Control methods mainly comprise the withholding of wages, threats of losing employment and restriction of movement. The following example is illustrative of such control methods:

---

255 Key informant interview, Guyana.

256. Key informant interviews, Guyana.

257 Key informant interview, Guyana.

258 As described in Part I, consent is irrelevant if means of coercion, deception, fraud, etc., were used.

“A large percentage of people moving from one area to the next to do whatever work most people refuse to do in that area. They work 12 or 14 hrs, for example, 7am-10pm, they are paid little or no money, stay in the same home with the owners. Money deducted for meals and lodging. They can’t go back home. There are threats of not getting their jobs back. They have nothing to do at home, they are in mental bondage.”<sup>259</sup>

The key informants were not aware of cases of women lured overseas that resulted in domestic servitude, except for one case in St Lucia.<sup>260</sup>

### ***Debt bondage***

As previously mentioned, debts or debt bondage are often used to control victims of human trafficking. Such debt or debt bondage often leads to servitude.

The following example is taken from an additional interview conducted by the research team with a former government official.<sup>261</sup> The interview underlines:

- a demand for cheap labour in certain parts of the Guyanese economy, (the timber industry in particular);
- the mode of recruitment and deception in terms of wages;
- the cycle of debts.

“Now in a previous work life I know of people with money requiring cheap labour - cheap labour in the wide sense that they were looking for naïve people, people who are less independent and who if moved out of their environment will feel bonded to their recruiters and therefore could be held in some form of subjugation or bondage; and the sole purpose for recruiting these people is exploitative in nature. There is no equality of opportunity - it is for sheer exploitation.

That exploitation could be in a number of ways, not only for sexual gratification or sexual purposes; it is for these people to provide a cheap form of labour. I could refer to one instance where that is very obvious, and that is in the timber industry... the more and more forest-based operations are removed from the coastland and as you penetrate further and further into the hinterlands to conduct logging activities there is need for labour. And in many instances, because the areas in which they penetrate are to all intents and purposes virgin areas and there was no plan for accessing or developing

---

259 Key informant interview, Guyana.

260 Key informant interview, Guyana.

261 Reported in document A.

this area say ten years ago or 15 years ago, you find there is a mad scramble to find human resources to provide services for whatever form of activities are to be taken up. In many instances those who born and grow on the coastland are not very favourably disposed to go and work in those areas for the type of salary or wages that are being offered. And so recruiters go in to local and indigenous communities and they recruit people for work.

Now when these people see the call and turn up in these locations they are to most intents and purposes offered very poor accommodation facilities. They are strangers to the area that they go to and they do not know how to get out if anything happens and they are at the mercy of their recruiters or employers. And that is a form of trafficking in persons. These people are tied to that location, they have to report for work as directed and they only end work when they are told to do so; although they may be paid a wage it may not be the wage that is promised them and that wage is tied to certain conditions.

If they go to the provision store to buy rations, they buy the rations at whatever price the owner of the operation demands and he deducts the cost of the rations from their meagre salaries or meagre wages and therefore it is a kind of chattel or bonded system and in many instances they have to pay back the cost of being moved from their locations to the operations. They pay exorbitant prices for everything and in many instances because of no opportunity to socialise other than what is offered to them by the operator, they are also tied to what he charges them for recreation and when I speak of recreation I am speaking about imbibing alcohol and once you are imbibing alcohol, then you don't use reason on how much you spend - whatever he charges you, you pay or he deducts it from your salary.

So in many instances most of these people work for weeks, months on end, and when they ask to settle their accounts because they want to go home, either they are refused permission to leave the camp or they leave with virtually nothing - and probably after their families have not seen them for some time, six months, a year, they go home with little or nothing at all. That happens in the timber industry and it happens on a very large scale.”<sup>262</sup>

### ***Push and pull factors of human trafficking in Guyana***

Key informants in Guyana believed human trafficking in that country to be economically driven and is not reported or even associated with international migration patterns (either in the Caribbean or farther abroad), but rather exists within internal mobility patterns.

According to the majority of the key informants, human trafficking for sexual exploitation and forced labour (including domestic work) is occurring in Guyana. Analysis of the research information attributes this form of human trafficking to be in response to the demand for sex workers and cheap labour. Key informants cited poor economic situations as major factors that hinder economic mobility within Guyana and in some cases lead to subsequent entrapment in exploitation. An overwhelming majority (68%) replied affirmatively that human trafficking is linked to a demand for cheap domestic labour, while 26 percent did not know and 2 percent replied negatively.

The key informants were all in agreement that business people collaborated with go-betweens in communities and were benefiting by exploiting poor people. The most frequent example was of business women and men entering communities to recruit young girls (and in fewer cases young boys), or they were using an intermediary in the village who would tell them who to contact. These statements are similar to the information reported in the press that refer to the perpetrators as “liquor restaurant,” restaurant holders or “brothel owners.” For example, the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2004 edition of the *Stabroek News* stated that “18 years old ‘Susan’ was recruited two years ago from the North West District by the owners of a liquor restaurant in Mohican and hired with three other girls to work there. She was told that she would sell at the counter, however...”<sup>263</sup>

Of the key informants, 47 percent (16 informants out of 34) believed that human trafficking in Guyana is linked to the drug trade. The same percentage disagrees with the statement and six percent did not respond.

### ***Key informant concerns***

This section reports on the concerns raised by the 58 informants who participated to this research study (including 34 key informant interviews and 24 informants who filled in the national survey form).

An overwhelming number of informants (44 informants out of 58) are of the impression that human trafficking constitutes a problem in Guyana (while they admit not knowing its extent), pointing to scarce economic opportunities as a

---

263 *Stabroek News*, Berbice special edition, 1 July 2004.



root cause.<sup>264</sup> This means that without general amelioration, human trafficking is likely to continue, or to grow. While acknowledging that human trafficking affects all ethnic groups, the informants agree that it targets mainly young girls from the interior and the Amerindian communities. The research team is under the impression that answers to the question on domestic servitude do not strongly relate to human trafficking for the use of domestic labour. Participants tended to talk about the abuse of domestic workers who are forced to work for a pittance. Hence, the extent to which participants associate these activities with human trafficking is uncertain.

The informants are under the impression that little is done to address the phenomenon of human trafficking in Guyana, and that the efficiency of the actions undertaken remains to be proven over the course of the months following this study. When requested to express their opinion on the current measures and actions that address human trafficking in Guyana, 50 percent of the informants (29 informants out of 58) gave no response, while only 3 out of 58 thought they had results. Scarce financial resources were identified as weaknesses in combating human trafficking, which directly resulted in inadequate assistance provided compared to the needs expressed. The key informants were of the opinion that the current efforts undertaken by the authorities to tackle human trafficking are perhaps externally driven, in that they come as a response to the *US Trafficking in Persons Report*, and that the seriousness of human trafficking as a crime may not be fully recognized by some government officials. This opinion is well illustrated by the tone of certain articles in the local media.

Also, corruption was highlighted in the course of some interviews. Such a response was specific in only one occurrence: "...people do not report to the police, because the police go back to the proprietors and tell them what they were told and from whom. People are afraid so they do not report."<sup>265</sup>

### *Media review*

The Guyanese government launched a campaign to combat human trafficking in April 2004. This campaign, and the release of the US State Department *Trafficking in Persons Report* in June 2004, placed the issue of human trafficking in Guyana in the spotlight. The issue received significant media attention, however, the researchers did not find significant coverage or investigation of the issue of human trafficking in Guyana in the media prior April 2004.

---

<sup>264</sup> This is a combined statistic from the national survey and key informant interview results. There may have been some overlap of persons who filled out the survey and those who were interviewed.

<sup>265</sup> Key informant interview, Guyana.

From mid-April to the end of August 2004, the research team reviewed 57 press articles relating to human trafficking in four newspapers: the *Stabroek News*, the *Kaieteur News*, the *Guyana Chronicle* and the *Catholic Standard*. These articles included seven reports that focused on alleged cases of human trafficking.

An analysis of these press articles revealed that human trafficking was not a new topic, but that the issue had quite a low profile.

“In a report on the Pomeroon-Supenaam Region published over six years ago, evidence was produced to show that proprietors of rum shops, discos and hotels were recruiting girls as young as fourteen years of age from Akawini, Moruka, St. Monica’s as well as from other locations as ‘waitresses.’ These innocents were turned into sex-slaves and forced by their unscrupulous employers to provide unprotected, and sometimes gratuitous sexual services to their customers.

Girls were paid low wages, lived in sub-standard accommodation, and were simply sent back to their settlements when they became pregnant or too sick to work. The evidence suggests, too, that young women were taken to timber grants and mining camps and abused in a similar manner.”<sup>266</sup>

“The exploitation and abuse of Amerindian women and young girls by some unscrupulous businessmen has been going on for years, seemingly without any major intervention by the authorities to curb the practice. Young Amerindian women and girls - many of school age - have been lured by the owners of restaurants, hotels, bars and other places to the city and coast with promises of gorgeous lifestyles and high salaries. However, on arrival they find themselves as virtual slaves of their employers, working in some instances as sex slaves under the guise of being domestics or employed as waitresses at hotels and bars to attract customers. Far from the gorgeous lifestyles and lucrative salaries promised them, most end-up as drunks and prostitutes because of the environmental and societal conditions under which they leave. In the process they are subjected to all forms of abuse and human degradation, including rape and other forms of physical abuse. The slightest show of dissent most times results in harsh measures by their employers, including being thrown out on the streets in the wee hours of the morning.”<sup>267</sup>

---

266 “Trafficking in Amerindian girls is not new,” *Stabroek News*, Editorial, 15 June 2004.

267 “The exploitation must be addressed.” *Guyana Chronicle*, Editorial, 18 June 2004.

Also, the Berbice Special edition of the *Stabroek News* featured some “street interviews” on the issue of human trafficking in Guyana. Out of eight respondents, four spoke with some knowledge about human trafficking, which demonstrated a significant level of public awareness in the Berbice Region, as illustrated below:

- A “community worker” spoke of shop owners in West Berbice using girls to attract customers. These girls were underpaid and had been tricked into coming to West Berbice from the interior.
- A “store owner” said that human trafficking had long been a feature throughout Guyana, especially in Berbice. This respondent described a process whereby people go to Amerindian areas to trick the local girls into coming to work in Berbice and then threaten them and have them comply with demands.
- Another “shop owner” said that human trafficking was occurring under “one of these shops”. He spoke of Amerindian girls being lured by promise of profitable jobs and then being taken advantage of, and used for prostitution.
- A “disk jockey” spoke of businessmen going into Amerindian areas and recruiting Amerindian females in order to make money from them, paying them little or nothing. He also spoke of one Amerindian girl who told him that if she is paid GY\$1,000 for sex, she has to give the businessman GY\$700. She also said that she is paid GY\$2,000<sup>268</sup> to work as a waitress. The girl said that men take advantage of them and treat them cruelly.<sup>269</sup>

The seven articles directly relating to alleged human trafficking cases describe the form of exploitation (forced prostitution in these cases), the recruitment methods (through deception or financial transaction with the victim’s families) and forms of control (no payment, restriction of movement). Each of these articles also provides some information on the economic activity of the human traffickers.

## *Conclusion*

The context of human trafficking in Guyana includes trafficking within the country, some trafficking to Guyana and some out of Guyana. Victim profiles consist of males and females, adults and children. Trafficking for sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude are the primary forms of human trafficking in Guyana.

In general, the key informants believed that victims of human trafficking in Guyana are lured into situations of exploitation and are unaware of the ultimate conditions and real locations of their work. They are also exploited for sexual purposes or

<sup>268</sup> At the time of the 2004 research GY\$1,000 equalled USD\$5.60, GY\$700 equalled USD\$3.92, and GY\$2,000 equalled USD\$11.20.

<sup>269</sup> “The Exploitation of Amerindian girls,” *Stabroek News*, 31 July 2004.

domestic servitude. In cases of recruitment involving girls and boys under the age of majority (as defined by Guyanese law), the family often gives consent and receives some cash advance in exchange for their compliance. According to international standards, children less than 18 years of age cannot give valid consent and any recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation is a form of human trafficking regardless of the means used.

Some victims are said to be forced to work for little or no wages due to inflated debts (such as transportation costs, especially in the hinterland) and end up in servitude-type conditions. While sexual exploitation and domestic servitude are mainly driven by the informal and the private service sectors, forced labour and servitude appear to be driven by the agricultural and industrial sectors (mining and forestry). The extent of such exploitation in these industries remains largely unknown. Key informants rarely provide data on these types of exploitation and most of the exploitation allegedly takes place in the hinterland.

The examples that substantiate the information provided by the key informants indicate that exploitation occurs outside of the victim's area of origin (either their community or place of residence). This means of exploitation contributes to their vulnerability and isolation.

The interviews with the key informants were conducted exclusively along coastal areas, leaving almost 90 percent of the territory of Guyana unexamined. This limitation does not allow for general conclusions about the scale of human trafficking in Guyana, but provides only a preliminary assessment.

### ***Specific methodology of the Guyana Country report (2004)***

#### ***Research team***

IOM commissioned the research on human trafficking in Guyana in 2004 and provided technical and other support to a team of researchers based in Guyana. The national research was supervised and led by Karen de Souza who was assisted by Nicola Marcus, Halima Khan, Andaiye, Linda Peake of Red Thread, Guyana, with the support of Cora Belle, Joycelyn Bacchus, Wintress White, Vanessa Ross and Margaret Inniss, also of Red Thread, Guyana.

**Research tools**

Researchers obtained information using survey and questionnaire tools. A standardised national survey (for conceptual information) was administered to all participants at a national seminar on human trafficking that was held by IOM in partnership with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the OAS and with support from the Ministry of Labour, Human Services, and Social Security. The seminar was held on 16 June 2004. The seminar included government officials, community representatives, NGOs and local media. The surveys were self-administered and 24 forms were completed and collected. They were then analysed by the national researcher and the information used in the research findings.

In addition, a standardised interview questionnaire was used to conduct 34 face-to-face key informant interviews.<sup>270</sup> Key informants were selected based on information developed during previous work conducted by Red Thread and on leads from other organizations. The interviews were conducted between July and August 2004 by two female members of Red Thread and included taxi drivers, sex workers, social workers, teachers, librarians, police officers, market vendors, sales clerks, hotel and bar owners, public servants and NGO representatives.

The interviews were conducted at a range of sites (such as bars, private accommodations, public markets and offices, as well as in police stations) which were in various locations: in the capital city, the Essequibo coast and lake communities, and the coastal communities in Berbice and the Corentyne. In each location, informants were contacted using a snowballing technique. These locations were chosen by the research team for their suspected exposure to human trafficking and are considered to be source, recruiting and destination areas. These areas are also highly accessible

The interview questionnaire was used to explore the full range of issues around human trafficking. Some of those issues included: what persons knew about human trafficking; how much persons were willing to reveal; what persons could tell about traffickers and victims; insight into the forms of human trafficking occurring in Guyana (if any); and the capacity of key informants to counteract human trafficking at various levels, including legislative, policy and programme levels. The interview questionnaire was designed as a guide for the interview sessions and some informants were not asked all items; it was “tailored” to each case. Each interview has been sourced to a questionnaire code (such as Q.1, Q.2, etc.).

---

270 This is a combined statistic from the national survey and key informant interview results. There may have been some overlap of persons who filled out the survey and those who were interviewed.

**Chart 12: Characteristics of respondents**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Female (22 respondents)</b>	<b>Male (12 respondents)</b>
<b>Union status</b>		
Married/Live-in	12	11
Single	7	0
Separated/Divorced/Widowed	3	1
<b>Age group</b>		
18-25	1	0
26-40	11	2
41-55	8	8
56-65	2	1
66+	0	1
<b>Education</b>		
Primary	7	1
Secondary	5	7
Advanced	10	4
<b>Type of employment</b>		
Government agency	15	8
NGO	2	1
Private sector	1	0
Self employed	4	3
Retired	0	0
Other	0	0

Most of these informants provided information on the exploitation of Amerindian women and girls. As a result, the research team attempted to gather additional information on Indo-Guyanese and Afro-Guyanese populations that could also be at risk of being trafficked. The research team also contacted additional informants whose knowledge would be specific to these populations. The research team attempted to gather information on other populations in order to provide an overall assessment and not focus only on the predominant forms of exploitation. As a result, the research team interviewed a retired, high-ranking official, workers in the sex trade and alleged victims of human trafficking, inserting the findings within the overall analysis.

The research team also conducted a Media review, analysing newspaper coverage of human trafficking in Guyana from 23 April 2004, when the Government of Guyana announced a campaign to combat human trafficking in Guyana, to 31 August 2004. During this period, 57 separate items of newspaper coverage were reviewed, almost all of them articles (see appendix). Prior to the launch of the

campaign, the issue of human trafficking was not covered by the Guyanese media; only one article on human trafficking that pre-dated April 2004 was sourced during a spot check of newspapers for the previous year. No newspaper coverage on human trafficking was published between January 2004 and the start of the campaign. The four newspapers in which articles or other coverage of human trafficking were identified for the period from 23 April 2004 to 30 August 2004 were *Kaiteur News*, *Guyana Chronicle*, *Stabroek News*, and *Catholic Standard*.

The electronic media were not monitored in a similar manner; a video of one programme that featured coverage of a visit by the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security (MLHSSS) to two interior communities (Moruka and Port Kaituma) was examined but yielded nothing relevant to this report.

Three sources of secondary data were identified and constituted reports on the implementation of Conventions to which Guyana is signatory and information from NGOs and international agencies. Among these reports was a participatory needs assessment of female sex-trade workers conducted by Red Thread in 2001 in Guyana.<sup>271</sup> From experience and observation, the research team deduced that the Guyana Human Rights Association (GHRA) and the Amerindian non-governmental organizations would be potential sources of useful information on the context of human trafficking in Guyana. The research team also considered that any prior knowledge of human trafficking in Guyana other than what was provided by the Amerindian NGOs would most likely be revealed in reports submitted to international bodies and completed by international bodies.

### ***Research Limitations***

The collection of data on human trafficking in Guyana is difficult due to the underground nature of the crime. This difficulty is exacerbated by the scarce number of organizations addressing the issue within Guyana. These organizations consist of the Guyana Human Rights Association (GHRA), the Amerindian People's Association and Red Thread.

The launch of the government campaign to combat human trafficking, which was managed by the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security (MLHSSS), emphasized the illegality and consequences of human trafficking and coincided with the start of the research. The publicity around human trafficking reduced the number of individuals who were willing to be interviewed and to

<sup>271</sup> The needs assessment was conducted in several communities in each of five regions - Regions 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10. The communities were: Region 4 - Georgetown; Region 6 - Albion, Crabwood Creek and Skeldon; Region 7 - Bartica, Arimou, Mazaruni River; Region 8 - Cambelltown, Mahdia, El Paso, Tumatumari, Amatuk and Micobie; and Region 10 - Kwakwani. The group's sources were girls and women in bars, hotels and mining camps in the interior and on street corners, proprietors of the establishments and a public official in the Corentyne.

discuss the phenomenon, as many feared that their identity would not be kept confidential. According to the research team, the tone of the government campaign, which warned human traffickers and facilitators of the possibility of arrest and severe punishment, restrained potential informants from speaking. These informants feared penal sanctions for their knowledge of human trafficking in Guyana, or retaliation from human traffickers.

Also, alleged victims of human trafficking and other informants that previously agreed to be interviewed were concerned that information would leak out to the media. They then refused to be interviewed, fearing their identity would be disclosed. They also feared retaliation. Some that had initially agreed to be interviewed later backed out.

In relation to privacy, every effort was made to ensure that the interview could not be overheard. Even during some interviews conducted in public places, a degree of privacy was ensured as being seen with the research team automatically alerted onlookers to the fact that an interview about human trafficking was in progress. The interviews conducted in the markets faced an additional problem when interviews with vendors were interrupted so that they could attend to customers. Some public officials had to break off interviews because of their duties and reschedule to continue later. Other informants required several visits and persuasion before they agreed to do the interviews.

Some of the informants did not want the standardised questionnaire used during the interview. In these cases, a conversation was conducted in which pertinent questions were asked on the issue that ensured that all the information from the questionnaire was included.

The standardised national survey administered to participants at the national seminar held by the IOM provided less information than anticipated. Key informant interviews were mostly conducted in coastal areas; therefore more than 90 percent of the territory of Guyana was not included.

The research team was concerned that key informants did not have a common understanding of the internationally-recognized definition of human trafficking.<sup>272</sup> While there was no general agreement among respondents on what activities constitute human trafficking, the vast majority of respondents in the national survey and key informants in the interviews phrased their definition of human trafficking in terms of movement of persons for the purpose of exploitation.

---

272 As provided in the *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, and used to set forth the general framework of this research.



## 6. Jamaica - country report on human trafficking (2004)

### *Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and national survey*

Continued economic decline in Jamaica has placed severe pressure on the country and its people. Poverty levels increased from 16.9 percent in 2001 to 19.7 percent in 2002, with rural areas continuing to show the highest levels of poverty.<sup>273</sup> While official data confirm that rural poverty levels have declined less rapidly than urban poverty, poor inner-city areas of Jamaica as well as poor rural areas face acute problems.

Data from the *Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions* (JSLC) 2002 continue to reflect growing inequality in income earnings and distribution. The majority of the poor are unemployed or earn low wages. In 2002, the male unemployment rate was estimated at 9.7 percent while the female rate was estimated at 17.6 percent. Around 65 percent of the unemployed are women. Poverty is also concentrated among the young and the elderly. Young people, aged between 14 and 25 years old, with poor education and few marketable skills, account for almost half of the unemployed. The most current data show that 47.8 percent of the poor are children (from 0 to 18 years old) although they represent only 38.9 percent of the population. Some 23.6 percent of Jamaican children are poor, with a slightly higher incidence of 25.4 percent among boys; approximately 21.7 percent of the group are girls.<sup>274</sup>

There is evidence of a connection between poverty and education. In the 2003-2004 budget, the Jamaican government allocated 8.8 percent (\$23.1 billion) to education with 96 percent directed towards recurrent expenditures. Of this amount, 73 percent of the funds were paid out as salaries. The major share of the overall budget (35.2%) went to secondary education, 34.4 percent to primary education, 17.3 percent to the tertiary level and 5.3 percent to the early childhood level.<sup>275</sup> The quality of education continues to be compromised by factors such as: high pupil-to-teacher ratio; external factors such as the home and community environments; poor parenting practices; the poor quality of social support systems available to students; violence in schools and within communities; and inadequate and out-of-date learning and teaching resources.

---

273 Planning Institute of Jamaica and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (2002) *Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions*, published by Planning Institute and Statistical Institute of Jamaica.

274 Planning Institute of Jamaica (2003) *Economic and Social Survey of Jamaica (ESSJ)*, Planning Institute of Jamaica, Kingston: 25.10.

275 Ibid: 22.2.

### ***Migration context***

In 2003, Jamaica was listed among the top 20 countries accounting for immigrants to the United States. In 2003, 74.4 percent of immigrants to the United States were Jamaicans. Jamaican immigrants to the United Kingdom totalled 479 that same year, with the largest portion aged between 11 and 20 years old.<sup>276</sup> Available data indicate family reunification as the main purpose for migrating. Mainstream migration from Jamaica to Canada declined from 2,447 migrants in 2002 to 1,980 migrants in 2003. Approximately 55 percent of those migrating to Canada were between 18 and 45 years old, and were migrating primarily for family reunification and education.

Female migrants accounted for 50.9 percent of all migrants from Jamaica to Canada in 2003, indicating no significant sex selectivity. However, there was an increase of 30.7 percent of the total proportion of migrants aged 17 years and under.<sup>277</sup> This increase is officially justified as an increase in the number of minors who emigrated from Jamaica to join their parents in Canada, including those who emigrated as students. In the case of the United Kingdom, available data indicate that in 2003 Jamaican immigrants comprised mainly husbands (42.6%), wives (24.6%) and children (12.1%) who were migrating for family reunification. As a proportion of the total, the number of wives increased by 5.2 percentage points.<sup>278</sup> Recent data by country, disaggregated by sex, is unavailable for the United States.

### ***Human Trafficking in Jamaica***

The 2004 *Trafficking in Persons Report*, published by the United States State Department, identifies Jamaica as a country of origin and transit primarily for sexual exploitation:

“Victims often travel from rural areas to urban and tourist centres where they are trafficked into prostitution. Child pornography involving trafficking victims is a concern on the island. The ILO estimated in 2001 that several hundred minors are involved in Jamaica’s sex trade. Jamaica is also a transit country for illegal migrants moving to the U.S. and Canada; some of these migrants are believed to be trafficking victims.”<sup>279</sup>

### ***Poverty***

Poverty is an ideal condition for human traffickers to use as an opportunity to traffic a person. The absence of sustainable income sources (economic poverty) and culturally accepted social support systems (social poverty) create strong push

---

276 Planning Institute of Jamaica, op. cit., 2003: 20.4.

277 Ibid: 20.5.

278 Ibid.

279 United States State Department, op. cit., 2004: 240.

factors for persons to seek new opportunities to provide for themselves and their families. This situation is especially relevant to young girls and women. Internal and international migration for better opportunities is accepted as a viable option by some of these women. This highlights a risk where human traffickers could take advantage of the more vulnerable members of the population.

### ***Weakened family structures***

The absence of appropriate caregivers and the inadequate supervision of children by responsible adults are common elements of Jamaican households, especially among those living below the poverty line. As previously mentioned, 65 percent of those unemployed are women. In addition, approximately 45 percent of all households in Jamaica are female-headed. With such a high number of Jamaican households being headed by females (especially for households in poverty), women who are the sole breadwinners find it challenging to provide the economic support needed for nurturing and caring for the family.

### ***Early exposure to sexual activities***

Another condition that could predispose young girls to human trafficking is the early exposure to sexual activity. Young girls are encouraged and sometimes forced to exchange sexual favours with men to earn money in the hope that their quality of life will eventually be improved. One study notes that for those who were forced into sexual activity, acts included rape (often within the home), molestation, incest and other forms of sexual abuse. There have also been reports of financial transactions where girls were offered to men who claimed them soon after graduation from secondary school.<sup>280</sup>

Early exposure to sexual activity is compounded by the violence and exploitation reflected in local dance hall music, which implies some disregard for the female body and female sexuality.<sup>281</sup> Coupled with the absence of a healthy family structure and education, a culture of this nature could influence already vulnerable young girls to view their bodies as tools to be used in exchange for personal gain. As many of these girls have low self-esteem, are poorly educated and unemployed, they become potential targets for human traffickers and others who seek to exploit them.

### ***Cultural norms***

There are cultural norms in Jamaica that could also facilitate vulnerability to human trafficking. One such norm is a culture of silence and secrecy which has permeated all levels of Jamaican society. In the Jamaican context, males who

---

280 Dunn, Leith L. (2001) *Situation of Children in Prostitution: A Rapid Assessment, Jamaica*, International Labour Organization (ILO): 51. More information available in the key informant section of the main findings.

281 A line from a song by one of Jamaica's dance hall artistes: "gal a call mi fi bruise dat now..." A reference to violence and sexual intercourse.

are victims of rape or other forms of exploitation do not readily or freely talk about their experiences as doing so seriously compromises their masculinity and in a highly male-dominated society strong emphasis is placed on “saving face”. Compounding this problem is the fact that homosexuality is considered a crime in Jamaica and is not socially or culturally tolerated. Therefore, cases of sexual exploitation of boys go unreported and undocumented. The issue is of further concern as these boys are targets for exploitation because of factors such as unemployment and poverty.

### ***National Survey Results***

A total of 27 interview questionnaires were completed at the IOM national seminar on human trafficking held on 23 June 2004 in Jamaica. Of the total number of respondents, 87.5 percent were female, with the majority of respondents indicating that they were employed at a government agency (55%) or an NGO (33%). Among those who were government employees, 46 percent worked at the administrative level and 29 percent worked at the policy and planning level.

### ***Awareness of human trafficking in Jamaica***

Of the respondents who answered the question “do you think trafficking in persons is a problem in your country?” 75 percent answered in the affirmative. From this group, 54 percent indicated some awareness about possible victims, 29 percent thought that victims were mostly women and 10 percent believed that they were mostly girls. None of the respondents was aware of men as victims of human trafficking, but 4 percent indicated an awareness of boys as victims. Respondents also reported that the majority of the victims were aged between 13 and 40 years old. Thirteen percent of the respondents believed that victims were between 13 and 17 years old, 21 percent believed that victims were between 18 and 25 years old, and 16 percent believed that victims were between 26 and 40 years old. In terms of the different forms of exploitation, most of the respondents (29%) indicated trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

Sixty-two percent of respondents indicated an unawareness of human trafficking cases from Jamaica to other countries. Among the 25 percent who responded in the affirmative, the explanation given was that human trafficking took place within the context of drug trafficking. Victims were recruited to serve as drug couriers, mainly to the United Kingdom and the United States, and were forced into prostitution and selling of drugs.<sup>282</sup> Mention was also made of Jamaicans going to The Bahamas as household helpers and shop assistants.<sup>283</sup>

---

282 Key informant interviews, Jamaica.

283 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

Responses varied in terms of explaining and describing cases of human trafficking in Jamaica, with no specific trend. Mention was made of the fact that Jamaica is a transitional economy and that this situation poses a risk which human traffickers could use to their advantage.<sup>284</sup> Poor supervision of children and the cultural practice of giving children away to more privileged families were also cited as factors which facilitate human trafficking.<sup>285</sup> In describing the incidents of human trafficking, respondents demonstrated awareness of victims who were from Jamaica as well as victims who were not Jamaican. The Dominican Republic, China and Russia were among the countries mentioned from which victims of human trafficking were recruited and brought to Jamaica. Five of the respondents reported awareness of someone being accused of human trafficking in Jamaica. Of the five, none reported a conviction, although one reported an arrest.<sup>286</sup> Two of the five persons reported a connection between human trafficking and drug trafficking.<sup>287</sup>

### ***Main findings: key informant interviews***

#### ***General Context of Human Trafficking in Jamaica***

The analysis of the findings of the survey interviews suggests some human trafficking trends in Jamaica. However, human trafficking indicators obtained in this preliminary study cannot be generalized as the sample was small, unrepresentative and the selection was purposive. Nevertheless, the information obtained outlines a profile of alleged victims and offers some scenarios of the human trafficking process. The research indicates that some human trafficking is occurring in Jamaica, primarily for sexual exploitation. In addition, some cases of domestic servitude and forced labour were reported, as well as cases that have been connected with drug trafficking. This research also found incidents of human trafficking that occur both internally and across borders, with persons being trafficked to the United Kingdom, Russia and some Caribbean islands. Internally, persons are trafficked from one area of the island to another. As far as reporting is considered, the general view is that such activities are not reported to the police for fear of reprisal and danger to the family.

#### ***Links to forms of sexual exploitation***

Some of the key informants indicated that sex tourism is thriving in Jamaica and that Jamaica is seen as a destination for sex tourism.<sup>288</sup> The sex trade in Jamaica is linked to the traditional tourism industry, the entertainment industry and the

---

284 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

285 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

286 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

287 Key informant interviews, Jamaica.

288 Key informant interviews, Jamaica.

personal services industry, with all three being inter-connected. “There is a sex tourism industry. There are tourists who come to Jamaica for sex.”<sup>289</sup> Some of the girls and women who work as masseuses are used in escort services which provide sexual entertainment for tourists and local clients.<sup>290</sup> While not conclusive, the information from this interview suggested that clients include expatriates and other visitors, both male and female, who are in Jamaica for protracted periods of time.

Information gained mainly from NGOs indicates that many of the girls who have been victims of sexual exploitation, especially prostitution, started their sexual encounters at a very young age.<sup>291</sup> There were reports of transactions of girls who were offered to men who claimed them soon after graduation from secondary school.<sup>292</sup> Transactions also take place at the “Culloden Sex Trade.” The Culloden Sex Trade is an event where females of all ages are taken to an area in the parish of Westmoreland and recruited as go-go dancers, masseuses and so forth. The event initially started in Savanna-la-mar in the same parish but was discovered by authorities. Operators went underground for some time and then re-surfaced in Culloden. The Culloden Sex Trade is described as a location where people go to recruit persons for various sex-related activities. According to some informants, this activity has gained popularity with some persons living in poverty who believe that taking their daughters to this event for recruitment into the sex trade is a way to earn money for the family. One informant told of an interaction she had with a mother who took her teenage daughter (about 14 to 15 years old) to be recruited. When asked why she was doing so, she replied, “lady you don’t know what it is to be hungry.”<sup>293</sup>

Over the past ten years, there has been a steady growth in the number of escort services, go-go clubs and massage parlours in urban centres of parishes located in the tourism belt (Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, and Negril) and in Kingston and St. Andrew. Girls and women (many reportedly under 18 years old) are recruited as dancers, barmaids and masseuses, and coerced into other activities such as lap dancing and prostitution.<sup>294</sup> Three key informants discussed situations where young females accepted employment as masseuses, barmaids and dancers but were forced into prostitution.<sup>295</sup> In one interview, the respondent reported that

289 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

290 Sexual entertainment includes: live lesbian acts, oral sex, sexual acts involving several women to one man and masochistic activities. Key informant interview, Jamaica.

291 Key informant interviews, Jamaica.

292 Dunn’s study made reference to this situation. A key informant confirmed the occurrence of circumstances of this nature.

293 Follow-up interview with key informant.

294 Go-Go is the Jamaican term for exotic dancers.

295 Key informant interviews, Jamaica.

an employer insisted that “the customer comes first” and whatever the customer wants should be provided.<sup>296</sup>

This trend not only increases the revenue to the operator but also increases the vulnerability of the girls and women who work in the sex trade as they are often the victims of violent acts and are at risk of contracting infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Once infected, they may pass on infections and diseases to clients. Though there is little information on the consequences of human trafficking on public health, HIV/AIDS is a growing health and development concern for Jamaica and studies conducted at the global level have shown direct linkages between this epidemic and activities such as human trafficking.

Human trafficking in the context of sexual exploitation is not limited to female victims. There were also reports of boys as young as nine years old, who mainly live and work on the streets in Kingston and Montego Bay, who were trafficked for sexual exploitation by older men.

“One informant knew of an incident of a group of boys who had been missing from the area for three months or so. They reappeared looking well dressed with expensive shoes and clothes and cellular phones...man who told them he was taking them to be cadets...instead they were taken to a resort town and introduced to prostitution (with male clients).”<sup>297</sup>

### ***Links between human trafficking and forms of sexual exploitation and drug trafficking***

Some key informants indicated that boys and young men, mainly those who live on the streets, are used as “watchdogs” and couriers for illegal operations (such as firearms dealing, but mainly drug dealing) and are often sexually exploited by older men.<sup>298</sup> They are recruited and transported to various locations across the island where they “protect” drug operations and are coerced into other illicit activities.

“Men recruit boys who are vulnerable by offering to take care of their needs.” In some instances street boys are picked up by men who use them for sex and discard them when they are finished.<sup>299</sup>

“Street boys are lured or forced into activities such as...selling drugs (mainly marijuana), carrying guns, and being the ‘look out’ for illegal

---

296 Follow-up interview with key informant.

297 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

298 Key informant interviews, Jamaica.

299 Key informant interview, Jamaica.



activities. They are transported from parish to parish to undertake some of these activities. They range from ages 12 - 19.”<sup>300</sup>

“Children, including boys, are involved...knew of a boy about 12 years who was being used as a courier for drugs from one point in the community to another. The man who was his ‘employer’ has been known to take the boy and other boys ‘up town’ where it is suspected they were used for sex.”<sup>301</sup>

Situations of poverty and few viable alternatives for earning a living are conditions which have made the trafficking of drugs an attractive alternative for both men and women in Jamaica. As one person reported, “(human) trafficking is an inherent spin-off activity of the drug trade.”<sup>302</sup> Information gathered through some key informant interviews during this research reveal that young girls and women are special targets. There were reported cases of those who voluntarily agreed to traffic drugs overseas, but on reaching the destination country some were held in bondage and exploited. There was one report of a young male being trafficked in this manner. Although it was an isolated case, the incident warrants reporting as the male victim of human trafficking is less visible.<sup>303</sup>

“One informant knew of women who have transported drugs to other countries with the expectation of being paid 3,000 to 5,000 pounds. When they pass the drugs, however, they are not paid as expected but instead are forced to peddle the drugs on the streets or prostitute themselves. They are threatened as well as the lives of their family members. They are kept under these conditions until new, younger girls arrive. They are sent home after months of stay with only 500 to 800 pounds.”<sup>304</sup>

### *Links to domestic servitude*

According to key informant interviews, human trafficking for domestic servitude is also occurring in Jamaica. Some instances involve young girls and women who are recruited from rural areas to work as domestic helpers or to live in the home of the recruiter as part of a family. In the latter case, promises were made about being sent to school, and being provided with clothes and money. They ended up existing under slave-like conditions. In some cases, reports indicate that they were fearful of reporting their situation to any official authority because of threats against them by their employers/captors.

---

300 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

301 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

302 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

303 Key informant interviews, Jamaica.

304 Key informant interview, Jamaica.



“Low income persons from rural areas are offered jobs in Kingston as domestic helpers. They are sometimes told they will be part of the family and taken care of. However, when the girl child gets to the town expecting to be treated as a family member, they find that they have to start doing chores, washing clothes, looking after baby, etc. Eventually, the male head begins to sexually abuse her and threaten her not to tell anyone. These girls are in the age group 13 to 25 years.”<sup>305</sup>

### *Links to forced labour*

There is little information on human trafficking for forced labour in Jamaica, but there are some indications that it does exist. This form of human trafficking involves young girls who mainly belong to state-run children’s homes and girls from families in rural communities that are willing to “give away” their children. One key informant reported that some of these children endure forced labour, sexual exploitation and physical abuse.<sup>306</sup>

The information suggests that “higglers” in the Falmouth market recruit and force young girls to sell goods for them.<sup>307</sup> Some of the girls are taken to work in the homes of these higglers. Some are also “purchased,” as reported by one informant who explained that she had heard of people being able to “buy” a girl in the Falmouth market for J\$2,000.<sup>308</sup>

“Higglers in the Falmouth market are known to force young people to work in the market for them. They will be given a quota of say, shoes, which they will have to sell off for the day or risk spending the night in the market. Some will be taken to work in their homes.”<sup>309</sup>

There are speculations about the work conditions of Chinese, Sri Lankan, Indian and Pakistani migrants in Jamaica. Cultural and language barriers have resulted in challenges to obtaining details about these communities. One key informant reported that some of these migrants are forced to work long hours, sometimes seven days a week. This situation relates to those who work in wholesale and retail shops and in restaurants in particular.<sup>310</sup> Observations by the researcher indicate that the Chinese workers are picked up and bussed to and from their places of work. Little, if any, interaction is maintained with other persons.

---

305 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

306 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

307 Higglers are petty traders. Falmouth is the capital of Trelawny, a rural parish in Jamaica.

308 The exchange rate at the time of writing is approximately J\$1 to USD61.80.

309 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

310 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

While there is not enough information described in the above labour situations to qualify them as human trafficking, they warrant further investigation, especially in light of the fact that:

- increasingly, migrants from Asia have been receiving the bulk of work permits issued by the Ministry of Labour. In 2003, Asians including persons from China, received 43.5 percent of all permits;
- Jamaica is a known transit point for persons of Asian origin who are on their way to North America;
- In Jamaica, 40 percent of work permits granted in 2003 were to persons in the “Wholesale and Retail” and “Hotels and Restaurants” services. Information from investigations conducted by the Ministry of Labour reveal that some of these businesses do not exist and the persons who received the work permits could not be located after entering the country.

### ***Profile of victims of human trafficking***

Informed estimates from the key informant interviews indicate that young women (aged between 18 and 25 years old) and children (aged between 12 and 17 years old) are the primary victims of human trafficking in Jamaica. They are believed to come from mainly low-income backgrounds and are either functionally illiterate or have achieved low levels of education.<sup>311</sup> Victims of human trafficking and persons susceptible to human trafficking can be profiled as:<sup>312</sup>

- children, women, men, and families that are living in poverty and therefore, face difficult economic challenges;
- young girls who have low self-esteem and who are willing to offer their bodies for material gains;
- young girls who have had early exposure to sex;
- young girls and boys who live in troubled and unstable domestic situations;
- children, women, and men from depressed communities which are largely characterized by slums, poverty, and poor educational levels;
- children who are beggars and who work on the streets.

### ***Profile of human traffickers***

Some insight was gained on the identity of human traffickers in Jamaica. Some key informants suggested that human trafficking in Jamaica is highly organized, with a connection to the drug trade and to community “dons” and influential men in the society.<sup>313</sup> One key informant implicated “dons”, shop owners and nightclub

311 In the first instance, low level of education is indicated by the incompleteness of secondary education, and secondly by the failure to attain three or more passes at CXC level.

312 Information compiled from key informant interviews in Jamaica.

313 Community “dons” are community leaders.

operators as groups that benefit from human trafficking.<sup>314</sup> Another reported that “an organized group of men who are influential in the society, but (who) have madams ‘up-fronting’ for them”, are responsible for human trafficking in Jamaica.<sup>315</sup> Generally, the information tends to be skewed towards men as human traffickers. However, a well-placed informant stated that there are women human traffickers, particularly in the escort services.<sup>316</sup> As noted in the Media review section below, some press coverage implicated parents as human traffickers when they prostitute their child.

### ***Recruitment and deception***

Several methods are used to recruit victims of human trafficking in Jamaica. However, newspaper advertisements, informal channels and dance hall sessions seem to be the preferred methods of recruitment. For prostitution and go-go dancing, newspaper advertisements are used as well as word of mouth. The advertisements often invite persons to apply for jobs as masseuses, cashiers and dancers. Incentives such as accommodation, training and an attractive salary are offered.

However, the conclusion should not be drawn that all of these advertisements are seeking to recruit person for the purpose of human trafficking. Nevertheless, of the six telephone numbers called by the field researcher, only one appeared to be a “legitimate” business. The person was recruiting individuals to sell Herbal Life products. Of the other five, four were women and all were unwilling to divulge details. Instead, they wanted to know who was calling, where the field researcher lived (in which parish) and advised that details about the advertised position would be provided after a meeting had been arranged. No details could be given by telephone or to anyone other than the person interested in the advertised position. In the case of the telephone call that was answered by a male, he was recruiting persons for positions in other islands in the Caribbean (The Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands). However, he had an established place of business and could give an address.

A noticeable trend among these advertisements is that some specifically indicate a preference for females “from the country” or “from the rural area”.<sup>317</sup> Rural-based victims are often controlled with the threat of telling their families and communities about the nature of the activity in which they have “come to town” to be engaged. In Jamaica, prostitution and go-go dancing are generally regarded as disgraceful activities.

---

314 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

315 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

316 Telephone interview with a key informant.

317 “Country” refers to rural areas of the island.

Informal recruitment is most often by word of mouth, whereby persons who are involved in situations of exploitation encourage their friends to do the same. Recruitment methods for domestic servitude and forced labour are often done through advertisements as well. In the case of human trafficking across borders, victims are lured by: the opportunity to travel overseas; the promise of attractive salaries; and a perceived chance to improve their living standards. Radio programmes which assist job seekers and employers could be another means through which recruitment is possible.

Women have also been recruited with the promise of jobs in Germany and other European countries. In some cases, “their passports were taken and their money held in trust so they could not leave.”<sup>318</sup> These women were recruited, and according to one informant:

“... and trafficked for sex work in other countries. I’m aware of at least five cases of girls who were told that they were being sent abroad to do household jobs... one girl being recruited and sent to the Cayman Islands to do exotic dancing. She then encouraged her friends to come. They were sent to Antigua, the Virgin Islands and Cayman. Two were moved to the United States through encounters with foreigners in the clubs in the Cayman Islands... girls involved ranged in age from 14 to 20 years.”<sup>319</sup>

### ***Media review***

An analysis of over 40 print articles was presented for the period from 2000 to 2004. The review evaluated the media’s understanding and coverage of human trafficking in Jamaica and identified the reported issues and trends. The review was limited to the print media (the *Gleaner*, the *Star Newspaper*, the *Jamaica Observer* and reports from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)). This limit was established as a result of the inability of the research team to identify or access any electronic reports on human trafficking. However, the lack of video coverage does not mean that items on human trafficking were not presented on television. Much of the media coverage was generated around the period between 2001 and 2002, when the government committed to the ILO Conventions 182 and Recommendation 190 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Coverage by the media generally reflected an awareness and understanding of human trafficking in Jamaica. Articles were written by staff reporters, regular columnists and guest columnists. They had both a local and international context

---

318 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

319 Key informant interview, Jamaica.

as there were features on human trafficking in Jamaica and human trafficking in other countries of the world. Approximately 22.5 percent of the articles specifically focused on human trafficking, used the term and provided an explanation.

Media reports indicated that persons being trafficked or who were potential victims, were usually underprivileged, were sexually abused as children, have low levels of education and were girls who engaged in early sexual activity. These persons could be found all across the island. They frequent nightclubs, hotels, shipping docks, beaches and streets across the island although the activity is centred around urban and tourist resort areas. The media have also put forward “theories” that kidnapped victims become trafficked internationally. Human traffickers were described as heads of organized crime, nightclub owners, pimps and parents of child prostitutes.

One article, “Crews, Criminality and the Drug Link,” described a victim who had her travel and identification documents seized and she was forced to become a sex slave by the men who controlled the British side of a drug ring.<sup>320</sup> The article described the victim (whom the journalist knew personally) as a 26-year-old, unemployed, decent person, who wanted financial independence. “The Hidden Truth about Massage Parlours” described women who were recruited as masseuses, but upon starting the job, were forced to perform sexual favours for their clients or risk losing the job.<sup>321</sup> One interviewee explained that she had to do whatever the customers wanted. If they wanted sexual acts performed, she was forced to comply.

In an article entitled “Natasha for Sale,” the writer notes that both the supply side and the demand side of human trafficking need careful analysis, as well as “a more complete understanding of trafficking in women by examining the demand for trafficked women in sex industries in receiving countries and the essential role played by organized crime networks.”<sup>322</sup> Coverage included a trade in females in Culloden, Westmoreland (the “Thursday Market”). The girls and women were selected by recruiters who supposedly took them to clubs and hotels across the island, mainly to perform as go-go dancers (which often leads to prostitution) and provide sexual favours for hotel guests. The report on this incident attracted the attention of the BBC, the Child Development Agency and several other organizations. At least one study has substantiated the report and one key informant also confirmed the activity through first-hand investigation.<sup>323</sup>

320 Wignall, Mark (2004) “Crews, Criminality and the Drug Link,” *The Jamaica Observer*, Jamaica Observer Ltd., Kingston, 5 August.

321 Wynter, Stephanie (2000) “The Hidden Truth about Massage Parlours,” *Jamaica Gleaner*, The Gleaner Co. Ltd., Kingston, 10 October.

322 Mian, Zia (2004) “Natasha for Sale,” *The Sunday Gleaner*, The Gleaner Company Ltd., Kingston, 25 January.

323 Dunn, op. cit., 2001.

According to a United States Justice Department media release, a couple in Concord, New Hampshire was convicted in January 2004 for trafficking four Jamaican citizens for forced labour in a tree-cutting business.<sup>324</sup>

“They threatened two of these men with serious harm and physical restraint in coercing labour and services; they confiscated the victims’ passports to keep them from fleeing; and they severely restricted the victims’ freedom of travel... [T]hey denied one of the men medical attention when he was injured on the job; and they forced the men to live in a tool shed and a trailer without adequate heating or plumbing, charging \$50 per week for rent.”<sup>325</sup>

The traffickers were each sentenced to five years and ten months in federal prison and were ordered to pay restitution to the victims.

### ***Conclusion***

As of 2004, there were no statistics about the scale of human trafficking in Jamaica. This exploratory research revealed that the context of human trafficking in Jamaica includes internal and perhaps international flows. The primary forms of human trafficking are for sexual exploitation and domestic servitude, with the possibility of forced labour. There is information linking the human trafficking network to the illicit drug trade. Traffickers’ recruitment methods include advertisements in newspapers and by word of mouth. Deception of is often used to ensnare the potential victim who are thought to be men, women and children from mostly poor backgrounds.

### ***Specific methodology of the Jamaica country report conducted in 2004***

#### ***Research team***

The research project was commissioned by IOM in 2004, which also provided technical and other support to a team of researchers based in Jamaica. The assignment was supervised by Audrey Ingram Roberts, National Researcher and the field team was headed by Sybil Douglas Ricketts, Researcher. The team was completed by Charmaine Nelson, Danielle Nelson, and Kerri-Ann Palmer who served as Research Assistants.

---

324 US Department of Justice (2004) “Timothy Bradley and Kate O’Dell Sentenced to More Than Five Years for Civil Rights and Fraud Crimes,” Available online at: <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nh/pdfreleases/january04/MSZ%20ODell%20Bradley%20sentencing.pdf>.

325 Ibid.

### ***Research tools***

The standardised national survey was distributed to all participants at a national seminar on human trafficking held by IOM in partnership with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the OAS and with support from the Jamaican Bureau of Women's Affairs. The seminar was held on 23 June 2004 in Kingston, Jamaica. The surveys were self-administered and 26 of them were completed and returned to IOM in Washington, D.C. The completed surveys were then forwarded to the researcher for tabulation and analysis. Responses from the national survey were tabulated, using Microsoft Excel. They were then analysed and the information used in the research findings.

A standardised interview questionnaire was used to conduct 22 face-to-face interviews among key informants. The questionnaire was used to explore the full range of issues around human trafficking. Two team members conducted each interview session. There was a note-taker and an interviewer. No tape-recorders were used because of the sensitive nature of the information being gathered. Detailed notes were taken and used to complete the questionnaire. At the end of each session, the interviewer and the note-taker discussed the information collected and ensured that there was a full and mutual understanding of the points made by the informant.

Over 50 individuals were contacted in three parishes - Kingston, St. James and St. Andrew. Of this number, interviews were conducted among personnel from government agencies and ministries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), the legal community, the print media and international organizations. No trafficked victims were included in this sample as attempts to do so were unsuccessful.

Initial contacts for key informant interviews were selected from among those who participated in the national seminar along with others whom the researcher regarded as essential. Individuals were selected based on the nature of their work, their knowledge of human trafficking and the potential role they could play in efforts to combat human trafficking. NGOs and CBOs were specially targeted as they had first-hand information from victims of human trafficking or from victims' relatives. Information gathered from each interview was used to determine other key informants who were to be contacted.

Telephone interviews were also conducted. They were used to collect information from informants who were unable to meet face-to-face. They were also used when further information was needed from individuals who had been previously interviewed. Telephone interviews were also used with individuals who were

key sources of information on specific aspects of human trafficking, for example, methods of recruitment and legislation.

A key component of the research was a determination of the extent to which the media is aware of and reports on human trafficking. A Media review was performed of over 40 articles from *the Jamaica Observer*, the Daily Gleaner and Sunday Gleaner, the Star Newspaper and BBC News. The articles spanned the period from 2000 to 2004. Efforts were also made to analyse coverage by the electronic media.

### ***Research limitations***

One of the challenges in undertaking this research was the absence of information and quantifiable data on the nature and scope of human trafficking in Jamaica. Some work has been presented by international organizations such as IOM and OAS/CIM on human trafficking within Latin America and the Caribbean region, including Jamaica. However, such research reports are generally broad-based and do not provide many country-specific details about human trafficking in Jamaica. Some information is provided through research in other areas which are known to facilitate or act as gateways to human trafficking, for example, prostitution (including child prostitution). Although these reports do not have a strong emphasis on human trafficking, they provide information which has been useful to the investigations performed for this report.<sup>326</sup>

The research was an exploratory exercise. The preliminary information obtained in this research process cannot be generalized to any specific population as the sample was small, unrepresentative and the selection was purposive. Difficulties were encountered in gathering proxy data for possible cases of human trafficking. In a few cases, written requests were made and even then, data was not provided. Additionally, the scheduling of interviews did not go smoothly in many cases. Some had to be re-scheduled and a few had to be cancelled for various reasons. There were also a few cases of non-response to requests for interviews.

---

<sup>326</sup> See Dunn, 2001; Kempadoo, 1999 and Williams, 1999.



## 7. The Netherlands Antilles<sup>327</sup> - Country Report on Human Trafficking (2004)

### *Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey*

#### *Migration overview*

The Netherlands Antilles is seen as an attractive destination for migrants for a number of reasons. It boasts a relatively high level of social, economic, educational, health and technological development. The literacy rate is 96.5 percent and school attendance up to the age of 15 years old is 98 percent; children younger than 16 years old are not allowed to work.<sup>328</sup> Immigrants have a choice of five islands to migrate to, depending on where they are coming from and the connections they have at their disposal.

During the 1980s, the Netherlands Antilles, like many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, faced economic difficulties which turned into a major socio-economic crisis in the late 1990s. As a consequence, the government implemented a structural adjustment programme. The programme cut 2,000 civil-servant positions and many social and medical services. The commercial sector suffered multiple losses and various businesses were forced to close or downsize. As a result, locals migrated in large numbers to the Netherlands during the time span from 2000 to 2003.

**Chart 13: The migration trends of the Netherlands Antilles**

Year	2001	2002	2003
Immigration	7 536	11 489	13 256
Emigration	11 092	8 606	10 297
Net-migration	-3 556	2 883	2 959

Source: Statistics Netherlands (CBS).

While some residents of the Netherlands Antilles migrated to Europe, immigration to the Netherlands Antilles rose. The outflows left a void in the labour market

<sup>327</sup> The Netherlands Antilles (comprised of Curaçao, St Maarten, Saba, St Eustatius, and Bonaire) was dissolved on 10 October 2010. Curaçao and St Maarten are now independent countries, and Saba, St Eustatius, and Bonaire are part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

<sup>328</sup> Martis, Jackie (2004) *The Greenwood Encyclopaedia of Women's Issues*, v. 5, North America and the Caribbean, Greenwood, Westport.

for low-paying jobs which could not be filled with the native work force. Many of the immigrants that came to fill those voids did so through informal channels. Following a report by Amnesty International which revealed human rights abuses of irregular immigrants awaiting deportation from the Netherlands Antilles, the lieutenant governors of Curaçao and St Maarten, in consultation with the Minister of Justice, declared a general amnesty for undocumented immigrants in August 2001 and controlled immigration with the zero-tolerance policy.<sup>329</sup>

Under the amnesty, a person received a two-year work permit. The only individuals explicitly excluded from the right to apply for general amnesty were sex workers.<sup>330</sup> After the permit expired, the immigrant worker was expected to go back to his or her country of origin and reapply for a work permit if they wanted to return to the Netherlands Antilles. It seems reasonable to suspect that many of the immigrants whose permits expired disappeared and again became members of the irregular immigrant population. This amnesty was terminated in December 2001.

### *Prostitution in the Netherlands Antilles*

Following the example of the Netherlands, prostitution is regulated in the Netherlands Antilles. The first brothel was opened in 1949 in Curaçao and in St Maarten in the 1960s. As an English-speaking island that attracts a diverse population from the English-speaking Caribbean and United States, the sex trade in St Maarten tries to offer a wider variety of prostitutes to clients.<sup>331</sup> Saba is the only island of the Netherlands Antilles that does not have a government-sanctioned and government-controlled brothel. Although the individual act of prostitution is legal in the Netherlands Antilles, pimping, procuring and other related third-party involvements are punishable by law under Article 259 of the Criminal Code.<sup>332</sup>

The government designated an official zone where prostitution is allowed in Curaçao, known as Campo Alegre, where only non-Antillean women are allowed to work.<sup>333</sup> Women working at Campo Alegre receive three-month work permits as “employees of Hotel Mirage”.<sup>334</sup> In other clubs, women receive permits as dancers, which are not registered in the Netherlands Antilles Aliens Registration System (NAVAS) and are not to be involved in prostitution.<sup>335</sup> As a result of the lack of registration, the government is unable to determine how many women in Curaçao are employed as “dancers” annually.<sup>336</sup>

329 Redakshon, “10 Illegal detene den Otrobanda,” Extra. Curaçao, 11 March 2003.

330 Ibid.

331 Martis, Jackie (1999) “Tourism and Sex Trade in St Maarten and Curaçao,” in Kamala Kempadoo (Ed.), *Sun, Sex and Gold: Tourism and Sex Work in the Caribbean*, Rowann and Littlefield, Lanham.

332 International Organization for Migration op. cit., 2004. Also, See the Legal Review by Elizabeth Collett.

333 Ibid: 29.

334 Ibid.

335 Ibid: 29-30.

336 Ibid: 29.

The law governing prostitution in the Netherlands Antilles stipulates the procedure that the brothel owners need to follow in order to employ prostitutes and the procedures the prostitutes need to follow in order to gain admittance to work in one of the brothels in the Netherlands Antilles. Women wishing to work these brothels must send their application with photo, medical documents (proving that they are free of disease) and proof of good behaviour (based on police records) to either a government-authorized agency, usually the police, or directly to the brothels. The island councils and the Lieutenant Governors make the final decision on who is issued a permit.

The women who are accepted are issued a permit for three months. Once in the islands, the women are subjected to regular medical exams for sexually transmitted diseases. Those found positive for HIV/AIDS or hepatitis lose their contracts, their files are turned over to the police department and they are deported if they remain on the island.<sup>337</sup> As a result, women who fear they may be infected will avoid Campo Alegre. Upon arrival, prostitutes also have to sign what is known as the “Pink Card”. This card registers them as prostitutes. Registered prostitutes can only return to work as prostitutes in the Netherlands Antilles after a year has passed from their last term of employment. Registered prostitutes are known to travel to work in several of the islands within the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.<sup>338</sup>

Approximately one third of the Campo Alegre sex workers leave before their work permit expires.<sup>339</sup> Conditions under which women work have been decried by the international community and the Netherlands Antilles was openly accused of human trafficking in 1997 in a report by the Social Economic Counsel of the United Nations. This report implicitly referred to the conditions under which women arrived at Campo Alegre to work as prostitutes.<sup>340</sup>

An estimated 12 percent of those that leave Campo Alegre begin working in non-regulated prostitution.<sup>341</sup> Non-regulated prostitutes face difficult working conditions. A 1999 study on prostitution in the Caribbean refers to the living quarters of sex workers in St Maarten as “prison cells”.<sup>342</sup> A study of the link

---

337 Ibid: 29-30.

338 Ibid.

339 Ibid.

340 United Nations (1997) *Consejo Economico y Social- Comisión de Derechos Humanos*. Intensificación de la promoción y el fomento de los Derechos Humanos y las libertades fundamentales, en particular la cuestión del programa y los métodos de trabajo de la comisión; otros criterios y medios que ofrece el sistema de las Naciones Unidas para mejorar el goce efectivo de los Derechos Humanos y las libertades fundamentales; Informe de la Relatora Especial, Sra. Radica Coomaraswamy sobre la violencia contra la mujer, con inclusión de sus causas y consecuencias. Ginebra. Suiza.

341 Ibid: 30.

342 Benoit, Catherine (1999) “Sex, Aids Migration and Prostitution: Human trafficking in the Caribbean,” in *New West Indian Guide* 73 (3&4): 27-42.

between tourism and prostitution in St Maarten and Curaçao carried out in 1997 refers to the fact that the women are constantly threatened by violence:

“...they may be subjected to rape and other forms of violence and cannot escape or leave because they don’t have their passports or any money... In general the owners of bars and brothels hold a lot of power over these women.”<sup>343</sup>

The owners of these clubs can obtain permits from the local authorities for a specified number of women to work as dancers in their clubs.<sup>344</sup> The permit allows the women to work in the clubs as strippers or exotic dancers. The women are not allowed to take off all their clothes and cannot engage in prostitution in these clubs.

Notably, there is disagreement around the term “legal prostitution” in the Netherlands Antilles. While prostitution is not illegal, incitation to prostitution is illegal. Prostitution is restricted to specific government-regulated zones, where only non-Antillean women are allowed to work, therefore some say it cannot be considered legal, but regulated. Please refer to the Legal Review on Trafficking in Persons in the Caribbean (2005) published by IOM for further analysis of the legislative framework of the Netherlands Antilles.

### ***Human trafficking in the Netherlands Antilles***

In 1996, Colombian women who were recruited by a woman in Colombia to work as waitresses in the hotel industry in Curaçao took their employer to court.<sup>345</sup> The women declared in court that they were misled and made to work in a nightclub as waitresses and forced to entertain clients. They lodged a number of complaints:

- They were promised USD700, but received considerably less from the club owners.
- They were forced to hand over their passports (a common and illegal practice on both the islands).
- They were paid Naf1200 (USD110) per month, from which their airfare to Curaçao would be discounted Naf446 (USD246).
- They were given no days off. This was legitimized by the human trafficker by the fact that the women did not have to work most mornings. Working hours were: Monday through Friday from 3:00 P.M. to 11:00 P.M., Saturdays and Sundays 11:00 A.M. to midnight. Some nights they worked until 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning.

---

343 Martis, op. cit., 1999.

344 IOM, op. cit., 2004: 30

345 Martis, op. cit., 1999.

- They only had the right to one meal a day and if they wanted more they had to ask their clients for food.
- In order to get more money, the women had to drink with the nightclub clients and to have sex with the men, using the condoms that the owners sold to them.
- They had to dress provocatively and had to permit the men to touch and fondle them.
- They had to become friends with the men and ask these so-called friends to pay for their tickets back home.
- They were not allowed access to a phone to contact or receive calls from their families.

The case went to court and the women won back-payment of their salaries. However, no case was made against the employer for coercion or any prostitution-related offences.

### *Child trafficking*

Previous IOM research indicates that trafficking in children may take place in Curaçao.<sup>346</sup> According to the report, “one can approach certain brothel owners to ‘order a child’. This child, usually an 8 to 12-year-old girl from the Dominican Republic, is then flown to Curaçao, where she is handed over to the client, for his exclusive use.”<sup>347</sup> The report goes on to explain that the family of the girl cooperates fully and that the girl is returned home after a week. The average cost for this transaction is USD2,200 per child and the sexual abuse is often recorded on video and sold on the black market.<sup>348</sup>

### *National Survey from St Maarten*

A total of 38 national surveys were completed at the IOM national seminar in St Maarten. Of the total number of respondents, 24 were females, 13 males and one respondent gave no answer. The majority of respondents indicated that they were employed by a government agency (25 respondents) or an NGO (10 respondents). Twenty-six of the respondents had completed advanced studies and a majority (24 respondents) fell within the age group between 41 and 55 years old. Numerous questions elicited multiple responses from the participants, therefore the responses are represented as frequencies of the total number of respondents who answered each question.

---

<sup>346</sup> IOM, op. cit., 2004.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid.

### ***Awareness of human trafficking***

Of those who responded to the question “do you think trafficking in persons is a problem in your country,” 32 respondents answered affirmatively. Twenty-three respondents noted that they were aware of human trafficking occurring in their country. From this group, women, men, girls and boys were listed as victims of human trafficking. The bulk of responses suggested that victims were primarily between 18 and 40 years of age. There were 17 indications that victims were between 18 and 25 years of age and nine indications of victims that were between 26 and 40 years old. Where forms of exploitation were concerned, there were 21 indications of sexual exploitation, 15 indications of forced labour and 11 indications of domestic servitude.

Twenty-six of those responding indicated they were unaware of cases of human trafficking from the Netherlands Antilles to other countries. Among the 10 who responded in the affirmative, the explanation given was that human trafficking took place within the context of drug trafficking, forced prostitution and forced labour. When asked if they were aware of someone being accused of human trafficking in their country, 17 responded affirmatively. Of those, there were 15 indications of cases involving human trafficking for forced prostitution, seven for forced labour and six involving domestic servitude. Three respondents indicated that one to three people had been arrested in these cases and two responded that there had been one conviction for human trafficking offences.

The majority of respondents (26 respondents) were aware of numerous laws in the Netherlands Antilles that address practices such as forced labour, forced prostitution and/or child labour. The Immigration and Prosecutors Office, Coast Guard, Police Force, Law Enforcement and the Women’s Desk were all suggested by multiple respondents as organizations that are addressing human trafficking in the Netherlands Antilles.

### ***Main findings: key informant interviews***

#### ***The Netherlands Antilles as a migration source, transit and destination country***

The United States and the Netherlands are major destination countries for residents of the Netherlands Antilles. Many key informants believed that external migration continues to the United States mainly for those pursuing higher education.<sup>349</sup> Residents of the Netherlands Antilles are also able to travel and work in the Netherlands and Aruba due to their legal status in the Netherlands.<sup>350</sup> Some

<sup>349</sup> Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

<sup>350</sup> Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

key informants noted that the primary regional destination for residents of the Netherlands Antilles were Aruba, Venezuela, Costa Rica and within the Netherlands Antilles.<sup>351</sup>

The Netherlands Antilles is also mentioned as a transit point for those migrating to the United States and the Netherlands in particular.<sup>352</sup> The possibility of gaining Dutch citizenship through marriage and residency is believed to be one of the major pull factors for immigrants to the Netherlands Antilles. Some key informants indicated that people may try to obtain citizenship in the Netherlands Antilles, which gives them access to the Netherlands and all of Europe and simplifies travel to the United States.<sup>353</sup> Many key informants suggested that the primary countries of origin of people using the Netherlands Antilles as a transit point are Dominica, Venezuela, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Jamaica, India, China, Lebanon, Cuba, Nigeria, Syria, Pakistan and Suriname.<sup>354</sup>

Six key informants gave as reasons for persons to migrate to the Netherlands Antilles as better job opportunities, joining family and friends and the high rate of unemployment or poverty in their home countries.<sup>355</sup> Other reasons mentioned included seeking better educational opportunities, asylum (mostly persons from Colombia and Cuba) and the risk of war in Colombia.<sup>356</sup> The most common countries of origin of migrants entering the Netherlands Antilles, according to numerous key informants, are the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Colombia, Jamaica and Venezuela, as well as China, Suriname, Peru, India, the Netherlands, the United States, Guyana, South Africa, Canada, Lebanon, Portugal and Cuba.<sup>357</sup> Many informants indicated that foreign labour is most evident in domestic work, construction, prostitution, supermarkets, snacks, agricultural work, gardening, tourism and informal trade.<sup>358</sup>

Key informants mentioned that not all immigrants arrive in the Netherlands Antilles through legal channels. Undocumented immigrants are thought to comprise both men and women and some children, both boys and girls.<sup>359</sup> Eleven of the key

351 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

352 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

353 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

354 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

355 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

356 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

357 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

358 Snacks are small roadside eateries with beer licenses. They are a cultural phenomenon where mostly Spanish-speaking women from the Dominican Republic and Colombia work and anyone can get a snack or something to drink during the day. At night, they become roadside bars mostly frequented by men. In Curaçao the snacks are owned or managed by Chinese and Spanish-speaking women perform the work. In Bonaire snacks are in many instances owned or run by women from the Dominican Republic. Prostitution is known to occur (Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles).

359 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

informant interviews indicated that the source countries of undocumented migrants include Colombia, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Venezuela and India.<sup>360</sup> An interview with one official revealed that the estimated number of irregular immigrants in the islands is around 15,000 persons.<sup>361</sup>

Regarding the general amnesty that was granted to undocumented workers in August 2001, one of the key informants believed that this amnesty caused a “grace-period effect”.<sup>362</sup> He posited that immigrants who had been granted the amnesty previously were now returning to the islands and falling into irregular status in the hopes of another amnesty.

In 2002, a special police team was charged with the task of executing a “zero-tolerance policy” against many types of illegal activities.<sup>363</sup> These activities include control of persons with irregular status in the Netherlands Antilles, the hiring and harbouring of irregular immigrants and violations of different laws and regulations by establishments such as restaurants, bars, snacks and nightclubs. The zero-tolerance team conducts regular, unannounced visits to establishments which are permitted to have entertainment at night, such as dancers. These visits are executed in coordination with other government agencies such as the tax department and the social security services. During these visits the dancers, workers and visitors are checked for proper identification and legal permits. Those who work or are present in these establishments are required to have their permits with them in order to prove that they are on the island legally. If proper documentation cannot be produced at the time of the visit, they are arrested and sent to the police barracks that house irregular immigrants to await deportation. If they can later show proof of legality, they are released.<sup>364</sup>

### *The sex trade in the Netherlands Antilles*

Key informants mentioned both sexual exploitation and legal prostitution as areas where abuses take place against persons in the Netherlands Antilles.<sup>365</sup> Prostitution is thought to occur in different places, either openly or secretly, in Curaçao, St Maarten and Bonaire.

### *State-regulated prostitution*

Ten informants believed that women who come to the Netherlands Antilles voluntarily to work as prostitutes are often confronted with working conditions

---

360 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

361 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

362 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

363 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

364 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

365 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.



they did not expect.<sup>366</sup> The official brothels allow them to go out at certain times and charge them for the room they have to rent, the food they eat, condoms, clothing and incidentals. Some brothels and strip clubs in St Maarten, for example, even charge clients a special fee if they want to take a prostitute out at night.<sup>367</sup> One informant alleged that prostitutes are recruited mostly from the Dominican Republic and Colombia to work in Bonaire, Curaçao and St Eustatius.<sup>368</sup> The flows of prostitutes to St Maarten differ somewhat. Apart from the countries mentioned above, women from other Caribbean countries, such as Jamaica and Guyana, also apply for and are given permits to work in St Maarten.<sup>369</sup>

### *Illegal prostitution*

Some informants indicated that illegal prostitution may take place at snacks, bars and dance clubs, strip clubs, brothels, rented rooms or apartments, and private residences.<sup>370</sup> Informants suggested that women working in the illegal sector of the sex trade are not compelled to have regular medical exams and thus, are thought to be more vulnerable to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). It was indicated that the majority of these women do not have a regularized migration status and come from countries such as Colombia, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica and Venezuela.<sup>371</sup>

### *Sexual exploitation*

Legal dance clubs and strip clubs can apply for permits for dancers. The women who are recruited are referred to as entertainers or artists although some may end up in prostitution.<sup>372</sup> These dancers are brought in to the Netherlands Antilles with a permit to dance and then they may be forced by their employer, or by the circumstances these employers create, to prostitute themselves.<sup>373</sup> In many cases the women are forced to engage in prostitution to earn money for food and to help repay their debts.<sup>374</sup> According to one informant, the women are stripped of their documents and their movements are restricted.<sup>375</sup> Key informants indicated that in many of these snacks, bars, clubs and brothels, the working and living conditions of the women are deplorable.<sup>376</sup> The women are thought to be at the mercy of their employers or clients.<sup>377</sup>

---

366 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

367 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

368 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

369 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

370 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

371 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

372 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

373 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

374 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

375 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

376 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

377 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

### *Links to forced labour and domestic servitude*

The issue of human trafficking in the Netherlands Antilles is relatively new and therefore has not been the focus of much attention. The key informants were divided about whether it is a problem in the Netherlands Antilles. While there was some disagreement about the existence of human trafficking, most key informants indicated knowing or hearing of migrants who had been deceived.<sup>378</sup> The circumstances of this deception included not getting the jobs they had been promised and being expected to work in other jobs, finding themselves out of work and being paid lower wages than what they had been promised.<sup>379</sup>

“... professionals and labourers alike are deceived. The circumstances are not what they had expected, they are different or bad. Also the language is a barrier. They are told lies about the salaries and conditions of work. Their living conditions are also worse than they had expected or are used to.”<sup>380</sup>

Although these circumstances do not necessarily translate into human trafficking, such situations require further investigation. The research findings suggest that there is labour exploitation of migrants, especially in agriculture, construction, domestic servitude and prostitution.<sup>381</sup>

### *Agriculture*

Haitians were mentioned by five key informants as being victims of abuse, especially in the agricultural sector in Curaçao.<sup>382</sup> Although the island is very arid, there are special areas on the island that are reserved for farming. The local small farmers employ mostly Haitians who work for up to 12 hours a day.<sup>383</sup> According to the five informants, some of the methods of control included restricted movement, withholding pay and if they protested, threats of deportation.<sup>384</sup>

### *Construction*

Six of the key informants indicated that construction work is an area prone to abusive practices.<sup>385</sup> The abuses mostly took place on the island of Curaçao and in St Maarten.<sup>386</sup> One informant mentioned that construction workers were not provided with proper equipment to work safely.<sup>387</sup> Another informant cited poor living conditions and referred to situations where the labourers had to live at the

---

378 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

379 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

380 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

381 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

382 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

383 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

384 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

385 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

386 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

387 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

work site.<sup>388</sup> Two informants suggested that employers would refuse to pay them or pay them less than what was agreed, restrict their movement, confiscate their documents, threaten to fire them and force them to work very long hours.<sup>389</sup> In most cases workers were believed to be men who were irregular migrants residing on the islands.

### ***Domestic servitude***

According to nine key informants, a number of immigrant women are in domestic service without official papers, making them particularly vulnerable to abuses by employers.<sup>390</sup> The abuses mentioned included receiving little or no pay, being forced to work long hours without breaks and having movements restricted through the confiscation of passports.<sup>391</sup> Eight key informants also mentioned the prominence of Indian women and some Indian men being abused in the domestic sphere.<sup>392</sup> Indian domestic workers were believed to have legal migration status, but were enduring slave-like situations, which included working very long hours.<sup>393</sup> In St Maarten, for example, mention of excessive work hours and cramped living quarters was made.<sup>394</sup>

### ***Trafficking in children***

None of the key informants had first-hand information of any incidents of human trafficking involving children in the Netherlands Antilles.

### ***Recruitment, deception, transportation and routes***

Six key informants indicated that much of the recruiting through deception takes place within the entertainment industry.<sup>395</sup> Women are recruited to work as bartenders, waitresses, or “dancers”. They are deceived with the promise of a good job, brought to the islands and then forced to work in the sex trade.<sup>396</sup>

The indications are that trafficked persons may be brought into the country using normal legal channels, in particular through immigration at airports.<sup>397</sup> At the time of arrival, documents will be valid and potential victims will not yet know that they have been deceived by a human trafficker. Persons coming to the Netherlands Antilles to work need to have a work permit, for which the prospective employer is supposed to apply. Those persons who eventually become irregular do so by

---

388 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

389 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

390 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

391 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

392 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

393 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

394 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

395 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

396 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

397 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

overstaying the time allotted to them by immigration officials, by working without a work permit, or by working after their initial work permits have expired.<sup>398</sup> The only Caribbean countries for which a visa is required to enter the Netherlands Antilles are the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Haiti. Colombians also need a visa to enter.

One key informant indicated that both men and women from Colombia and Venezuela use boats to reach the Netherlands Antilles and enter without proper documents. According to the informant, they are dropped off on the coast of Curaçao and “someone picks them up and takes them to their destination.”<sup>399</sup> The situation is a bit different for Bonaire. According to another key informant, most of the women in the illegal sex trade are from the Dominican Republic or Colombia, who reside in Curaçao and travel to Bonaire when work is slow in order to make some money. Bonaire does not have direct connections with Colombia and only one flight from the Dominican Republic.<sup>400</sup>

### *Victim profile*

Traffickers often use a person’s irregular migration status to coerce them into an exploitative situation and then as a means of control to keep them in the situation of exploitation. The following comprises a description of irregular migrants in terms of age, education and areas of work. Informants believed that irregular migrants tend to be from the countries of Colombia, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Venezuela and India.<sup>401</sup> Persons from 18 to 50 years of age were mentioned.<sup>402</sup> In terms of educational level, it is suggested that they generally have basic schooling at primary and secondary levels with some technical training.<sup>403</sup> Those who have no formal training may have developed skills in their areas of work such as housekeeping and construction.<sup>404</sup>

The National Researcher interviewed a 19-year-old Jamaican woman in St Maarten who was forced into prostitution by the owner of the club where she worked as a dancer. The following text relays some of the information from the interview:

Cher (not her real name) had finished high school and was looking for something to do. She regularly went to clubs in Negril. One evening, she was approached by a woman who worked in the club. This woman told her of the opportunity to work as a dancer

---

398 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

399 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

400 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

401 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

402 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

403 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

404 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

in St Maarten and convinced her that this was a good thing to do. According to Cher she was very persuasive. Cher knew enough to ask questions about the work she would be doing and told the lady that she would want to go but would only dance. "I told her I would not do any freak shows or business with men." She also told the lady that she was not a professional dancer. She was told that the ticket to St. Martin would be purchased for her in Jamaica, but once in St Maarten she had to pay back the recruiter for the cost of the ticket. She had not signed any contracts and had no proof of what they say she owes them. Her working hours were from 11:00 o'clock at night to 4 o'clock or 6 o'clock in the morning. She did not get a salary for dancing, and had to pay her bills from what she earned from tips. Any tips she earned were taken away from her. Her employer would take her tips and discount the hotel room, USD35, and gave her the rest. At the time of the interview she had USD6 in her possession. It was all she had and she had to buy meals with this money.

She said she was expected to "befriend male clients" and since she did not want to do this the owner of the place was angry at her. He said management did not care and took out his anger on her, because he said she "embarrassed him". The owner also wanted her (and other girls) to take nude pictures on the beach for posters and an internet site; she also refused to do this, which made him angrier.

She then went on to tell me that she was forced by the circumstances to go with clients. She was selective, and did not go with just anyone. If a man wanted to take her out he had to pay USD100 per night to the owner of the club. She also had a "special friend" who would take her out and take care of her.

She wanted to get away but could not do so because management had her passport. She was not making any money and the owner was abusive towards her. One occasion when he roughed her up, she walked to the police station from the club (20-30 minutes away) and wanted to make a complaint. The police did not take her complaint and they took her back to the club. She was left there after the owner told them she owed him money. She denies this. The club had eight Jamaican girls working there at that moment. Some of them where stressed out, but others did good business.

The owner was abusive and violent to other girls too. He would punch walls and threaten murder and told her that he did not care if she went to the police. The police were regular visitors to the club and some were friends with the owner. He had told her he was friends with immigration officials too.<sup>405</sup>

### ***Links between human trafficking and drug trafficking***

Very few key informants expressed knowledge of a link between human trafficking and drug trafficking.<sup>406</sup> Immigration and police officials suspect that there are links.<sup>407</sup> One official gave an example of some cases involving Africans.<sup>408</sup> The Africans were given USD2,500 to travel to Curaçao. They were accommodated in hotels and their money was taken away from them. They were then forced to swallow drugs in packets, then travel back to Africa and hand over the drugs to the recipient on the other end.<sup>409</sup> One key informant mentioned that Nigerians are involved in drug trafficking, but no mention was made of whether or not they were victims of human trafficking.<sup>410</sup> One informant in St Maarten stated that Colombians entered St Maarten to connect with Dominicans<sup>411</sup> for drug trafficking, but the informant did not know if human trafficking was involved.<sup>412</sup> Another informant mentioned that some drug couriers from Eastern Europe have been apprehended, however the informant did not know if any of these couriers were victims of human trafficking.<sup>413</sup>

### ***Government corruption and human trafficking***

Two of the key informants suspected the involvement of immigration officials in human trafficking in the Netherlands Antilles.<sup>414</sup> They had many questions regarding admittance of certain women and the conditions under which they were admitted to the country. The informants suspected that some women are permitted to enter the Netherlands Antilles without official travel or identification documents. The role of immigration personnel and other relevant agents was mentioned, but the informants could not discern whether this role was something structural (well organized) or were acts by individuals.

405 Her name and identifying points have been changed.

406 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

407 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

408 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

409 Persons forced to swallow drugs are referred to as “bolitas;” key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

410 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

411 A Dominicano is a male national of the Dominican Republic.

412 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

413 Key informant interview, the Netherlands Antilles.

414 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

*The absence of services and information for victims of human trafficking*

Ten key informants noted that the Netherlands Antilles has no services intended for victims of human trafficking.<sup>415</sup> One organization in Curaçao, Contrasida, works with women in clandestine prostitution and addresses issues related to HIV/AIDS. They encounter abused women and possible victims of human trafficking. In Curaçao there is a Foundation for Victim's Assistance (Slachtofferhulp) that could be able to help in such cases. The Women's Bureau also gives assistance to immigrant women seeking help for different kinds of problems.<sup>416</sup> In St Maarten, the Women's Desk performs most of the outreach activities directed towards immigrants, especially immigrant women. On both islands, as with the rest of the Netherlands Antilles, there are other social, judicial, legal and therapeutic services and agencies that can be called upon to help assist victims of human trafficking. On the three islands, there are also several immigrant's organizations and consulates of the major immigrant groups living on the islands that are willing to provide assistance.<sup>417</sup>

*Media review*

A review of newspaper articles from January 2003 to August 2004 in Curaçao (eight daily newspapers and one weekly publication) and St Maarten (two daily newspapers) reveal that the newspapers publish reports pertaining to migration issues. Most of the stories are accounts of irregular migrants that were arrested and were awaiting deportation. These migrants are seen frequently in handcuffs and being taken to the barracks where irregular migrants are housed where they will await deportation. The media often photographs scantily clad women who are allegedly prostitutes in a way that reveals their identity. Other migrants made the news when they committed a crime. Most of the newspapers also publish official press releases from government and police about immigration issues.

At the time of this research, Spanish-speaking immigrants in Curaçao were publishing the weekly Spanish-language newspaper *El Popular*. This newspaper is no longer published, but a similar newspaper, *El Periodico*, is now in circulation. The newspaper is published in Spanish and addresses a variety of issues related to immigrants. It also supplies news and information about Curaçao and its culture. The newspaper is involved in social developments and issues that affect the immigrant population in Curaçao. St Maarten also has a newspaper for Spanish-speaking immigrants that tackles general news issues, as well as issues of special interest to immigrants.

---

415 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

416 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

417 Key informant interviews, the Netherlands Antilles.

In June 2004, the news media in Curaçao published a story about a couple that were accused of child abuse. While investigating the case, the police learned that the children in question were not the biological children of the couple and the couple refused to cooperate with the police concerning their real identity. Some newspapers started referring to the case as trafficking in children as the children were from Suriname. However, the case was still under investigation by the police when this research was concluded. The circumstances of the case are not clear nor whether or not the case constitutes child trafficking.

### ***Conclusion***

This study was exploratory and represents one of the first efforts to investigate the issue of human trafficking in the Netherlands Antilles. This research project provides information that confirms that human trafficking exists in the Netherlands Antilles, although the full scale is unknown. One challenge in addressing human trafficking within the Netherlands Antilles is a general lack of clarity, which confuses human trafficking with migrant smuggling and issues of abuse of migrants in the labour market, domestic service and prostitution.

Informants were aware of women in both regulated and illegal prostitution that knew that they were travelling to the Netherlands Antilles to work as prostitutes, but who ended up being exploited by their employers. Informants also discussed women who were brought to the Netherlands Antilles under false pretences. Women who are recruited to work as bartenders, waitresses, or “dancers” are often forced into prostitution through threats or circumstances created by the exploiter. This situation would be considered human trafficking.

The discussion of the abuse suffered by male migrants reveals information that suggests that most migrate to the Netherlands Antilles because they had heard stories of those who have achieved a better life in that country, or someone they knew invited them to come to the country to seek employment. However, these men can be vulnerable to exploitation and some are subjected to serious labour abuses, including trafficking for forced labour.

### ***Specific methodology of the Netherlands Antilles country report (2004)***

#### ***The Netherlands Antilles research team***

In 2004, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) commissioned Jacqueline M. Martis to lead the research project in the Netherlands Antilles.



*National survey*

The standardised national survey was distributed to all participants at a national seminar on human trafficking that was held in Curaçao by IOM, with support from the Directorate of Judicial Affairs. The seminar was held on 11 August 2004. Sixty persons, including representatives of several government agencies and NGOs, completed the survey. The standardised national survey was also distributed at an IOM national seminar on human trafficking held in St Maarten on 28 September 2004. Thirty-eight participants from multiple sectors completed this survey. The results from the St Maarten surveys are in the analysis of this report and have been included in Annex A.

*Key informant interviews*

Semi-structured interviews using the standardised interview questionnaire were conducted with 34 key informants who were selected on the basis of a purposive sample. The key informants included social service representatives, government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations, health workers, immigration officials and legal personnel.

**Chart 14: Geographic distribution of key informant interviews in the Netherlands Antilles**

	Curaçao	St Maarten	Bonaire	St Eustatius
Number of Interviews	17	11	4	2

*Media review*

Media coverage of human trafficking and related issues was reviewed from January 2003 to August 2004 and searches were made for relevant newspaper articles. The review focused on the nine newspapers published in Curaçao (eight daily newspapers and one weekly publication) and two daily newspapers in St Maarten.

*Country-specific research limitations*

Conducting research in the Netherlands Antilles is difficult because the five islands are geographically separated by approximately 900 kilometres. Bonaire and Curaçao are referred to as the Leeward Islands of the archipelago as they lie close to mainland Venezuela. Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten are referred to as the Windward Islands and are situated further north near the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Thus, for time and cost efficiency, research initially concentrated on the larger islands of Curaçao, St Maarten and Bonaire. Notably, the majority of the key informants came from Curaçao. Another major limitation is the fact that the Netherlands Antilles has a central government and each island territory has its

own local government. In general, data from the island and central governments are not centralised and it is difficult to obtain registered and standardised statistics.

## 8. St Lucia - country report on human trafficking (2004)

### *Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey*

This section examines the information that is available on human trafficking in St Lucia, as well as the main findings of the exploratory study. These data include existing background information on a range of elements considered as push-pull factors to human trafficking to, within, or from St Lucia, as well as the availability of public information.

#### *Poverty and unemployment*

Data from the Official Statistics indicated that the unemployment rate in St Lucia in 2000 was 16.5 percent of the active population.<sup>418</sup> Disaggregated data showed that 22 percent of the unemployed were women and 50 percent were youth (between 15 and 25 years of age).<sup>419</sup>

Faced with scarce employment possibilities and assuming that migration will ensure opportunities to earn a higher wage, economic emigration from St Lucia is increasing. These migrants include professionals such as teachers and nurses who are trying to reach destinations such as the United Kingdom, the United States or The Bahamas in search of better employment opportunities and professional development. This growing pattern has a direct impact on the stability of households and on the children who are left behind in particular. This migration of heads of household seeking employment abroad is a factor that increases the vulnerability of children and potentially exposes them to exploitation. An analysis of the situation by the Division of Human Services and Family Affairs of the Ministry of Health indicates that there are an increasing number of school-age children seeking to ensure their survival by becoming involved in a range of economic survival strategies, which sometimes exposes them to illegal activities.<sup>420</sup>

#### *Child labour exploitation*

Based upon the literature review, child labour exploitation or children bonded to labour practices are not known to occur in St Lucia.<sup>421</sup>

418 Government of St Lucia Statistics, Official Website of the Government of St Lucia, Available online at: <http://www.stats.gov.lc>.

419 Organization for Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) (2002) *Human Development Report*: 73.

420 Robinson, Felicia (2001) *St Lucia Report to the Regional Congress on Children Sexual Exploitation*, Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations, November, Available online at: [http://www.iin.oea.org/ST\\_LUCIA\\_ing.PDF](http://www.iin.oea.org/ST_LUCIA_ing.PDF).

421 US Department of State (2003) *Country Reports - St Lucia, Section 6*, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 31 May.

As reported in the US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour 2003 Report, minors are protected legally from economic exploitation by several legislative acts, including the Employment of Women, Young Persons, and Children Act, which provides for a minimum legal working age of 14 years old. The St Lucian government is in the process of updating the Labour Code to set the minimum legal working age at 16 years.

The minimum legal working age for industrial work is 18 years old. Child work existed to some degree in the rural areas, primarily where school-age children helped harvest bananas from family plantations or lots. Children also worked in urban food stalls or sold confectioneries on sidewalks. However, these activities occurred especially on non-school days and during festivals. The Report concludes that there are no formal reports of violations of child labour laws.

### *Child sexual exploitation*

The sexual exploitation of children in the country is reported as a growing problem, but there is very little information available.<sup>422</sup> This problem impacts St Lucian children, families and society and requires increased recognition. Felicia Robinson, the Head of the Human Services and Family Affairs of the Ministry of Health acknowledged in a regional government congress on child sexual exploitation held in Montevideo in November 2001 that “the extent of the problem remains largely under-documented and under-researched”.<sup>423</sup> According to Robinson, the analysis of the problem in St Lucia suggested that there is a “direct relation between structural adjustment in the economy and the impoverishment of families, resulting in increased vulnerability to abuse. Other predisposing factors include a history of sexual abuse, parental migration resulting in abandonment, school drop outs, and development of tourism.”<sup>424</sup>

In a *Social Assessment Study of 2000* carried out by the Poverty Reduction Fund of St Lucia, researchers included the following extracts in reference to child exploitation.

“Girls have affairs for money, mothers may be gone abroad and have left them or they have been abused by the men visiting their mothers” [...]

---

422 US Department of Labor (2005) *Country Reports*, Bureau of International Labour Affairs, 14 January, Available online at: <http://www.dol.gov/ilab>.

423 Robinson, op. cit., 2001.

424 Ibid.

“There are young 12-13 years old, even 9, involved in street prostitution. Young boys are being abused in tourist areas (such as in Marina in the North). Many children are sent to Castries and are begging for food.”<sup>425</sup>

### *Economic discrepancies within neighbouring countries*

In the context of the wider Caribbean region, St Lucia is perceived as a country that enjoys vital economic and political stability. According to the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the general poverty level ranges from 19 percent of the population in St Lucia to a high of 33 percent in St Vincent and the Grenadines.<sup>426</sup> St Lucia is seen as an appealing country within the region and is attracting economic migrants from neighbouring Caribbean countries. The tourism industry is developing in St Lucia, generating employment, which is also attracting economic migrants from the service industry.<sup>427</sup>

### *Statistical data*

Specific data on human trafficking is not available in St Lucia. The numbers of victims are anecdotal and pertain to a few alleged victims who were trafficked for sexual exploitation. Currently, no data exists on the number of traffickers arrested or convicted in St Lucia and the participants to this exploratory study were not aware of any cases.

### *National Survey*

A total of 28 national survey forms were completed at the IOM seminar held in Castries in June 2004. The survey questions aimed to collect conceptual information that could be used to determine the level of awareness.

Of the total respondents, 71 percent were females, with the majority indicating that their place of employment was with a government organization (71%), an NGO (18%), a faith-based organization (0.4%, or one person) or part of the judicial system (0.4%, or one person). Among those who were government employees, 65 percent worked at the administrative level.

Of those who responded to the question “do you think trafficking in persons is a problem in your country,” 43 percent reported that they think it is a problem in St Lucia (noting that it had a limited incidence, but was growing). From this group, 58 percent indicated some awareness of victims in St Lucia, with 71 percent who believed that victims were mostly women, about 15 percent who believed that victims were mostly girls and 15 percent who believed that victims were mostly children. No one was aware of men as victims of human trafficking. Respondents

425 Poverty Reduction Fund of St Lucia (2000) Social Assessment Study 2000: 81.

426 OECS, op. cit., 2002: 34.

427 Government of St Lucia (2001) *Vital Statistics Report*, Department of Statistics.

also reported that the majority of the victims were between 18 and 25 years old. Regarding the type of human trafficking, most of the answers (75%) indicated sexual exploitation, 12.5 percent forced labour and 12.5 percent domestic servitude.

In explaining and describing cases of human trafficking in the country, responses mentioned the search for employment and economic improvements as push factors, but no specific trends were observed. Overall, the respondents seemed to have scarce information on specific cases but reported that alleged victims were foreign women, originating from the Caribbean region, naming Cuba, Trinidad and Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic in particular.

Eighty percent of those responding said that they were unaware of human trafficking cases from St Lucia to other countries. Among the 20 percent who responded affirmatively, the explanation given was that human trafficking took place within the context of the search for improved economic conditions and concerned mainly women lured by false promises.

### ***Main findings: key informant interviews***

#### ***Human trafficking in St Lucia***

The following section presents an analysis of the 21 key informant interviews conducted by the research team in 2004. Human trafficking indicators obtained in this preliminary study cannot be generalized, as the sample was small, unrepresentative and the selection was purposive. The data collected through the interviews do not provide grounds for assessing the full scale of the problem. Nevertheless, the information obtained and presented in the following paragraphs suggests some human trafficking exists in St Lucia. It also outlines a profile of alleged victims and offers some scenarios related to the human trafficking process.

#### ***Awareness about the forms of human trafficking in St Lucia***

When asked about their awareness of sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude, or lack of awareness of any of the above in St Lucia, the informants provided the following answers:

- 57 percent were aware of persons who had come to work in St Lucia and had ended up in circumstances that were not what they had expected (but informants did not make the link with human trafficking).
- 15 percent knew about persons who had been forced to work in dangerous or poor conditions (but informants did not make the link with human trafficking).

- 48 percent knew about forced prostitution or sex work. However, some informants clarified that their answer was based on hearsay and secondary information from a newspaper article that related the story of a woman from Santo Domingo.
- None knew about cases of forced labour or domestic servitude.
- 52 percent were unaware of any of the above situations or did not answer.

Out of 21 key informants, 13 saw a major link between human trafficking and sex tourism.<sup>428</sup> Six informants out of 21 indicated that the increase in adult entertainment and the sex trade in St Lucia in the last two-to-three years was a major push factor for sex tourism and sexual exploitation; this form of tourism and entertainment is said to be patronized by both locals and foreign tourists.<sup>429</sup> Such perception is further accentuated by the development of the tourism industry, the entertainment industry and the personal services industry, with all three being interconnected.

### *Elements of human trafficking for forms of sexual exploitation*

Ten of the 21 informants were aware of forms of sexual exploitation in St Lucia.<sup>430</sup> However, out of the 10 informants who declared having some knowledge about human trafficking, three knew of cases through media reports only.<sup>431</sup>

Victims of sexual exploitation are reported by some key informants to be foreign women who have been promised work in clubs as dancers or waitresses.<sup>432</sup> Upon arrival in St Lucia they are usually told that they have to be involved in prostitution. Three key informants thought that these women come from dire socio-economic backgrounds and are seeking to improve their living conditions and those of their families (children and other dependents).<sup>433</sup> Informants only knew about a few cases, primarily involving women from Santo Domingo (who were offered to work as dancers and whose mother tongue was not English), as well as from Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>434</sup> One victim is also reported to originate from St Vincent.<sup>435</sup>

While the majority of the informants did not believe that men were exploited, six informants could foresee the development of similar exploitation of men, (such as for prostitution, paedophilia or the drug trade).<sup>436</sup>

---

428 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

429 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

430 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

431 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

432 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

433 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

434 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

435 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

436 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

### ***Recruitment and transportation***

The information obtained from the key informant interviews indicated two forms of recruitment. The first method is two-fold and uses agents who are nationals of the Dominican Republic or Trinidad and Tobago who recruit girls in these countries and arrange for their transportation to St Lucia.<sup>437</sup> One key informant also mentioned that agents from St Lucia sometimes go to these countries to recruit girls in person.<sup>438</sup> The second form utilizes the internet through the advertisement of employment opportunities on web portals.<sup>439</sup>

Some key informants indicated that the agents seem to be either receiving a fee per job placement or receive a part of the income generated by the victim.<sup>440</sup> However, no information was obtained in the course of the study about fees or organized cross-border networks. Some key informants listed passage by air and by sea as modes of transport.<sup>441</sup> For air transport, tickets seem to be organized by an agent, the airfare being paid either by the agent or by the recruited women.<sup>442</sup> Two key informants mentioned that local persons in St Lucia wait for new recruits at the airport, facilitating a smooth entry into the country.<sup>443</sup> Among those “local persons”, one interview refers to police officers.<sup>444</sup>

According to three informants, several alleged victims of human trafficking have been granted work permits under the “entertainment” category (that includes dancers, musicians and singers).<sup>445</sup> Usually, a company applied for the permit on behalf of an individual. Two or three applications are introduced at the same time and granted for a period of one month.<sup>446</sup> According to one informant, many of the women under such work permits overstay their permitted time in St Lucia, without indicating whether they were aware of the change in their status (since the application was made by the “employer”).<sup>447</sup> The cost per application is EC\$400 and the renewal about EC\$100.

The informants provided little information on the status of the women employed in the “entertainment industry” and in the strip clubs in particular, therefore their immigration status remains unclear. In the absence of statistics, it is not possible to assess how many worked within club premises without work permits.

---

437 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

438 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

439 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

440 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

441 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

442 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

443 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

444 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

445 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

446 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

447 Key informant interview, St Lucia.



### ***Control methods***

Informants provided little information on the methods of control. Two informants refer to control through passport seizure, which prevents the recruited women from leaving the country legally.<sup>448</sup> The “use of threat” and the “restriction of movement” are mentioned by a third key informant as control methods.<sup>449</sup>

The fact that lodging is arranged by the “employer” and that women are sharing accommodations can be seen as a subtle method of controlling them as a group, while depriving them of privacy.<sup>450</sup> They are also advised against seeking contact with the local population.<sup>451</sup>

Informants also discuss suspicious behaviours they had observed. This behaviour has been retrospectively analysed as possible signs of exploitation. Such behaviour includes groups of four to five foreign young women (women from the Dominican Republic usually have heightened visibility in the community) appearing in public under the watchful eye of a man.<sup>452</sup> Such practices are reported to be particularly noticeable in Gros Islet.<sup>453</sup>

### ***Profile of the human trafficking network***

To date, very little information has been gathered on persons engaged in human trafficking in St Lucia. It is reasonable to conclude that the human trafficking network covers at least two countries because it recruits from another Caribbean country and brings the recruited migrant to St Lucia. Some informants suspect government officials of facilitating or tolerating human trafficking.<sup>454</sup> They also believe that the persons who are benefiting from these activities are persons in the entertainment industry, such as club owners in particular.<sup>455</sup> According to one informant, clubs owners even benefit from the protection of police officers or retired police officers and are advised by lawyers.<sup>456</sup>

### ***Links with St Lucian women possibly trafficked to other Caribbean countries***

Scarce information on human trafficking of St Lucians to other countries was gathered in the course of the interviews and in the absence of hard data it is difficult

---

448 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

449 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

450 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

451 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

452 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

453 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

454 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

455 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

456 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

to substantiate human trafficking patterns. Only two informants knew about cases of St Lucian women allegedly trafficked to Barbados and Martinique.<sup>457</sup>

One of the informants who travelled to Martinique for work on weekends noticed several activities that could suggest exploitative situations. For example, she reported that the tasks to be performed by the women were not defined at the time of recruitment. Similarly, the wages were not substantiated and the employer requested discretion, advising the “employee” not to talk with “strangers.”<sup>458</sup> According to the informant, some women recruited under such settings could end up being exploited in domestic work or in prostitution.

Two additional informants noted that St Lucians, mainly women, increasingly go to Martinique for employment purposes. One of the informants noted that children are also involved in seasonal trips (during the summer period).<sup>459</sup> Legitimate employment opportunities exist in Martinique and transportation between the two countries is facilitated by ferry connections. St Lucian’s do not require visas to enter Martinique.

### *Child trafficking*

Sexual exploitation of children for prostitution or pornography in St Lucia is reported by five informants. Of those informants, three mentioned sexual exploitation (prostitution and pornography); one mentioned the involvement of “local school girls” in the “entertainment business” without being more specific; and one mentioned child trafficking through adoption.<sup>460</sup>

“Lots of school aged children [are] being recruited into prostitution rings. [They] attend school by day and are prostituted by night. Some parents are aware of and condone the practice because of economic reasons.”<sup>461</sup>

“There is also a significant porno ring. Young girls are tricked into getting involved for money. [They] may be told that they have to dance or pose, then they have to do very explicit sexual acts or other things.” The informant stated that she has a list of 65 children involved in pornographic production.”<sup>462</sup>

---

457 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

458 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

459 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

460 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

461 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

462 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

The existence of pornographic video is confirmed by a different informant who saw such a video and indicated that the video involved teenage girls from St Lucia.<sup>463</sup>

In addition, cases involving the trading of children for adoption purposes were briefly discussed by one informant. This issue allegedly involved impoverished families who were living in rural communities.<sup>464</sup> The informant mentioned two cases where parents received money in exchange for their children, who were sent to Canada and the United States purportedly for adoption. However, the informant did not provide specific information about the number of children affected by such practices nor was there information about whether the children were living in an exploitative, slave-like condition after the adoption.

### ***Key informant concerns***

These interviews provided a platform to express rising concerns and can serve as a basis for designing more specific interventions.

Scarce economic opportunities are viewed as a root cause of vulnerability to human trafficking. The lack of adequate and legitimate economic activities in St Lucia results in the perception of prostitution as a lucrative activity. This situation implies that without general measures to address the issue, the sex trade and sexual exploitation are likely to grow. While prostitution is legal in St Lucia (procurement being illegal), the boom in the entertainment industry in the last two to three years, resulting in an increased number of strip clubs in particular, is perceived by some informants to be contributing to an environment which favours the development of sex tourism in St Lucia.<sup>465</sup> Though there are no available disaggregated statistics on the number of work permits issued yearly by the Ministry of Labour, concerns were raised by an informant about a reported increase in the number of applications issued under the “entertainment” category.<sup>466</sup>

Addressing human trafficking requires awareness and training to identify victims and investigate potential cases. Some informants raised concerns about the preparedness of law enforcement in tackling human trafficking. Such informants noted that immigration officers needed specialized training in order to raise their awareness and develop appropriate responses.<sup>467</sup> Another issue related to law enforcement concerns the perception by some informants of a certain amount of collusion between high-ranking officials and perpetrators.<sup>468</sup> It is “difficult to tackle

---

463 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

464 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

465 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

466 Key informant interview, St Lucia.

467 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

468 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

the issue because persons involved are connected to top officials in government who are then able to silence those who speak out or act against trafficking in persons.”<sup>469</sup>

### *Media review*

The researcher conducted a Media review to evaluate the understanding and coverage of human trafficking by the St Lucian media and to identify the reported issues and trends. Local media such as the Star newspaper and the television show Talk seem to have contributed to bringing human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation into the open. The researcher came across two articles and a radio report relative to human trafficking in the course of June 2004.<sup>470</sup> In particular, the St Lucian journalist Rick Wayne wrote an article about a young woman whose situation suggested that she was trafficked for the purpose of prostitution, which appeared to have been an important medium for raising awareness on the issue.

### *Conclusion*

Despite the limited sample of this exploratory study and the anecdotes gathered during the research, the sum of the information contained in both the key informant interviews and the national survey tend to point to the emergence of human trafficking in St Lucia as of 2004.

While the majority of the key informants do not believe that human trafficking is a significant problem in St Lucia, they acknowledged that the crime is a growing concern and has an effect upon under-aged children, public health issues such as HIV/AIDS and is being fuelled by scarce economic opportunities. Furthermore, six of the key informants believed that the recent increase in numbers of nightclubs and strips clubs was creating a demand for sex tourism.<sup>471</sup>

Cases of human trafficking are reported by some key informants as occurring within the country, primarily with foreign women who are brought to St Lucia for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Informants are also aware of anecdotal information concerning the exploitation of children for purposes of prostitution, pornography and irregular adoption. This particular trend is mostly un-documented, though it is evident in the literature review and is also addressed in the interviews. According to international standards, children under 18 years of age cannot consent to sex and any recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for

469 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

470 *Monday Star*, Various articles, Star Publishing Company, 18 June 2004; *Caribbean Online*, “More Calls for Reform in Sex Laws,” Brief-Former minister lends her voice to the calls for change, 29 June 2004, Available online at: <http://www.afwi.com>; and BBC Caribbean Radio, Report aired 28 June 2004.

471 Key informant interviews, St Lucia.

the purpose of exploitation is a form of human trafficking, regardless of the means used.

### ***Specific methodology of the St Lucia country report (2004)***

#### ***Research Team***

The national research was led by Dr. Jennifer Holder Dolly and composed of a two-person research team. The research was facilitated by the Gender Relations Division of the Ministry of Health, notably by Ms. Danielle Elias who was instrumental in arranging the initial contacts with key personnel within Government ministries and departments, as well as with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The researcher was assisted in the key informant interview process by Fadia Andrew, a social worker originating from St Lucia, who addressed issues of language barriers and community trust.

#### ***Research Tools***

The standardised national survey was administered to all participants at a national seminar on human trafficking held by IOM in partnership with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the OAS, with support from the Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs, and Gender Relations. The seminar was held on 21 June 2004. The seminar included government officials, community representatives and NGOs. The surveys were self-administered and 28 forms were completed and collected. They were then analysed and the information used in the research findings.

The standardised interview questionnaire was used to conduct 21 face-to-face interviews with key informants. Approximately half of these informants were identified as participants at the national seminar organized by IOM/CIM/OAS. As the questionnaire was designed as a guide for the interview sessions, some informants were not asked all items; the survey was “tailored” to each case. For example, some questions went unanswered and the questionnaire was abandoned on four occasions (not counted in the total number of informants). Instead, the informants experience was discussed. These interviews were conducted between June and August 2004 by the researcher and research assistant. Each interview has been sourced to a questionnaire code (Q.1, Q.2, etc.).

A Media review was conducted by the research team to evaluate the understanding and coverage of human trafficking by the St Lucian media and to identify the issues and trends that were reported. Apart from the local media, some international media resources were examined.

***Research Limitations***

Within the timeframe of the research, interviews could not be organized with all the persons as originally envisaged.

There is a genuine difficulty in collecting data on human trafficking due to the underground nature of the phenomenon and the fact that the respondents considered the issue to be a new development in St Lucia, remaining largely undocumented and unknown. Some information on the issue was mentioned in the press in May and June 2004, raising some awareness among the population and initiating a debate on the veracity of the information.

Also, the research team found that some respondents were concerned about confidentiality and hesitated to have in-depth discussion about the issue. Some informants seemed conflicted; they wanted to assist in stopping what they perceived to be an undesirable process (possible human trafficking) but did not want to impugn the reputation of their country in any way.

## 9. Suriname - country report on human trafficking (2004)

### *Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and the national survey*

#### *Poverty and social inequality*

According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 53 percent of the Surinamese population lives in poverty.<sup>472</sup> Poverty does not only encompass low income but is also reflected in inadequate access to resources and opportunities, such as literacy, proper nutrition and protection from child labour.

#### *Legal minimum wage*

Suriname does not have a legal, minimum-wage system and wages are fixed after negotiations between the employer and the union. Overall, supply for low and unskilled labour exceeds the demand in the Surinamese labour market.

#### *Domestic work*

Paid domestic work, largely performed by women, is mostly informal, barely visible, undervalued and largely unprotected. It is one of the most hidden forms of work and is undertaken in isolation on private premises. As a result, researchers have not focused on this area. There is no specific law or regulation for domestic workers in Suriname and most do not have employment contracts, rendering them even more vulnerable to exploitation.

#### *Child labour exploitation and child work*

The Labour Law in Suriname states that children under 14 years of age should not work, unless in a family agricultural setting. Children under 15 years of age should not work on fishery boats as mandated by the Sea Fishery Decree. Defined by law, no-one between 14 and 18 years of age should do hazardous work or work night shifts.

In a rapid assessment about children in mining, agriculture and other worst forms of child labour in Suriname, the ILO describes “child labour” as “work that becomes a necessity that deprives of education and social development and harms the child’s safety and health and/or is likely to offend a child’s morality and dignity.”<sup>473</sup> Based on these descriptions, 54 percent of the children interviewed in the course of the study were “child labourers”.<sup>474</sup> The research did not find any

472 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2001) “Sustainable combat against poverty in Suriname,” Paramaribo, March.

473 Schalkwijk, Marteen and Wim van den Berg (2002) *Suriname, the Situation of Children in Mining, Agriculture and the Worst Forms of Child Labour: a Rapid Assessment*, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, Port of Spain, November: 11.

474 In the course of the research, 169 children, 52 parents and 99 key persons were interviewed (320 total).

sustained indications of the use of children in forms of slavery or bondage. The research was not able to verify the report by the Stichting Maxi Linder Associate (SMLA) on the exploitation of children for sexual exploitation. However, the possibility exists that “a further decline of Suriname’s economy may trigger more activities by children in this sector.”<sup>475</sup>

According to the ILO study “*Suriname, the Situation of Children in Mining, Agriculture and the Worst Forms of Child Labour: a Rapid Assessment*”, poverty and the size of households are the leading causes of child labour. While the average household size in Suriname is approximately four persons, the households with working children average almost seven persons. In addition, the ILO research found that 85 percent of working children had repeated a class or dropped out of school.

The ILO study illustrates that child labour encompasses gender, ethnic and geographic biases. Boys are predominantly involved in “visible” child labour practices in gold digging, fisheries or shrimp harvesting, rice production and processing, hustling, construction and boat transport. Girls are more involved in less visible sectors such as domestic work and sexual exploitation. Maroons are over-represented as a proportion of child labourers, comprising 43 percent.<sup>476</sup> Within this ethnic group, which strongly relies on a subsistence economy, it is commonly accepted that children work and contribute to the income of the family. The lack of educational opportunities in the interior districts may result in large groups of illiterate and unemployed persons who migrate to the capital.

There is also a more recent publication that reports that children are being abused as domestic workers and as street workers.<sup>477</sup>

### ***Forced or arranged marriage***<sup>478</sup>

In a recent publication of *Schmeitz*, there were documented cases of forced or arranged marriages involving young Surinamese girls who were living in a shelter: “There was a case of a girl of fifteen who has been sold to a Muslim that has donated a large amount to the parish. There were Muslim and non-Muslim men from the Netherlands who came to pick up a bride, and they donated large amounts to the parish. In 2000, three girls were married under the age of fifteen.”<sup>479</sup>

475 Schalkwijk and van den Berg, op. cit., 2002: 105.

476 Maroons are descendants from those who escaped slavery in Guyana and the West Indies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

477 Bakboord, Carla (2004) *Ook ik heb recht op een veilige plek*, Paramaribo, March.

478 While the legal definition of “child” varies throughout the Caribbean, by the international standards used for this research determine that persons under the age of 18 years old are considered children. See the section on trafficking in children in the Regional Cross-Country Analysis for more information about how children are defined as victims of human trafficking.

479 *Schmeitz*, M. (2002) *Wie staat op voor mijn recht*, Paramaribo, January.



### ***Forms of sexual exploitation in Suriname***

According to the Surinamese Penal Code, prostitution is not a criminal offence, however: “It is the promotion of female indecent behaviour with obvious sexual provocation, which is prohibited by law.” This implies that the street- and club-based sex trade and brothels are prohibited. In reality, the sex trade is tolerated through the regulation and licensing of nightclubs. Rules and ad hoc agreements regarding visas, work permits and regular medical examinations (for STDs) have been established for people employed in clubs as sex workers.

In a recent study on the sex trade in Nickerie, the foundation ProHealth found that 80 percent of women in the community have children and most of these women are involved in the sex trade in order to earn a living.<sup>480</sup>

Clubs that provide sexual services are obliged to register at the Dermatological Service, under the Ministry of Health, which is responsible for the control of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Clubs which do not conform to these guidelines can be closed by the Military Police.

According to a study completed by Maxi Linder (SMLA) in 1999, most clubs are recruiting only foreign women, primarily from the Dominican Republic, Brazil and Guyana. Two clubs also employed women from Colombia and Venezuela. At the time of the study, SMLA recorded 40 registered and licensed nightclubs in Paramaribo. The study highlights a high turn-over among the “employees,” who were rotating every three to six months; the most popular club accounted for nearly 80 women. For some of these women, Suriname is described as a springboard to the Netherlands.

The link between the Surinamese sex trade and foreign women is underlined in a 2004 ProHealth report.<sup>481</sup> It states that in the clubs in Nickerie, the majority of the women are foreigners (93% of the sex workers), of whom 44 percent were Brazilian, 29.5 percent Guyanese and 18.5 percent Dominican. The report shows that 52 clubs were registered in 2002.

The following statistics provided by the National HIV/AIDS programme provides a broad overview of the clubs currently registered in Suriname in 2004:

---

480 Playfair P., J. Terborg, and S. Ramdas (2004) “*HIV/AIDS and Commercial Sex in Nickerie*,” ProHealth, Paramaribo, May: 18.

481 Ibid.

**Chart 15: Overview of commercial sex workers for the period January - December 2004**

Clubs	Number of CSWs	Dominican	Brazilian	Guyanese	Surinamese
Aventura	30	0	29	1	0
Bulldog	28	1	27	0	0
Condor	48	0	48	0	0
Diamond	136	11	125	0	0
Manilla	29	0	29	0	0
Mundial	9	0	9	0	0
Relax	198	166	30	1	1
Stone Bar	13	2	11	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: National Aids Programme, 2004.

In the absence of thorough investigations and outreach to these women in the sex trade, it is impossible to determine how many of these women may fall under the definition of human trafficking as defined by the Protocol. There are strong suspicions that the sex trade and human trafficking are linked and operate in parallel, but the extent of such practices needs to be more thoroughly investigated.

### *The sex trade and human trafficking in the mining areas*

The SMLA and the Anton de Kom University of Suriname conducted research which was published in 2000 that examines the link between gold mining and the sex trade in Suriname.<sup>482</sup> The research indicates that gold mining and the sex trade are closely associated and the association is driven by a high demand for sex services and the scarcity of women in most of the mining areas. The researchers interviewed Surinamese, Guyanese and Brazilian sex workers, including both teenage and adult females.

For the purpose of the study, “sex worker” was classified by where or how the woman provided her services. The study reveals the following categories of sex work: (a) work in a club; (b) providing sex to miners on credit; (c) work in women’s camps; (d) selling sex services as a secondary job; and (e) being a local sex worker in a Maroon village. Human trafficking was alluded to in the article in the second and fourth categories, “providing sex on credit” and “selling sex

482 Antonius-Smits, Christel C.F., et al. (1999) “Gold and Commercial Sex: Exploring the Link between Small-scale Gold Mining and Commercial Sex in the Rainforest of Suriname,” in Kamala Kampadoo (Ed.), *Sun, Sex and Gold, Tourism and Sex Work in the Caribbean*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., Lanham: 237-262.

services as secondary job.” While some women sell sex services willingly as an addition to selling goods or being a cook, others are lured and forced. Foremen at the mines recruit these women to be cooks and to perform household tasks. When they arrive at the camps they learn that sex work is part of their job.

Providing sex work on credit creates slave-like conditions for the sex workers. These women often consisted of Brazilians who were recruited by foremen, who pay their travel costs. These women must perform sex services in order to pay back these costs. Once this was paid back, they earn a meagre salary. Miners do not have to pay women at the time of the service; they are allowed to pay at the end of their contract. This suggests that women are attached to the mines in order to receive money for services and that they are not free to depart.

### ***Main findings: key informant interviews***

#### ***Human trafficking context in Suriname***

The following section presents an analysis of the findings from the 30 key informant interviews. This research was an exploratory exercise designed to gather preliminary information. Human trafficking indications obtained in this study cannot be generalized, as the sample was small, unrepresentative and the selection was purposive. While insisting on the existence of exploitation (all key informants being familiar with some exploitative situations concerning women, children or men) the informants were not necessarily clear on the definition of human trafficking. Nevertheless, the information obtained clearly indicates the existence of human trafficking in Suriname and offers insight into the human trafficking process.

#### ***Awareness about the forms of human trafficking in Suriname***

Human trafficking in Suriname is reported by key informants as occurring within the country and involving foreign women and girls for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Anecdotal cases involving Chinese community members for the purposes of forced labour by means of debt bondage have also been reported.

#### ***Links to irregular migration flows<sup>483</sup>***

Suriname shares many miles of borders with Brazil, Guyana and French Guyana, and has a coastline on the Atlantic Ocean. Many key informants noted that these borders are largely un-patrolled and provide multiple levels of access. Chinese and Guyanese migrants are believed to be the most represented migrants who

---

<sup>483</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2004) “Glossary on Migration,” *International Migration Law*, Geneva. An irregular migrant is defined as “someone who owing to illegal entry or the expiry of his or her visa, lacks legal status in a transit or host country. The term applies to migrants who infringe a country’s admission rules and any other person not authorized to remain in the host country.”

enter Suriname illegally.<sup>484</sup> Brazilian migrants, who are also believed to be well represented, do not need a visa to enter Suriname, therefore they enter the country legally but some overstay the issued time limit which changes their immigration status to illegal.

Additionally, while the involvement of Brazilian women in the sex trade is documented, available information does not focus on the status of these women or on the recruitment process. One key informant stated that hundreds of Brazilian women have been involved in the sex trade in Suriname.<sup>485</sup>

The Department of Working Permits for Foreigners of the Ministry of Labour and Police is responsible for issuing work permits. Each employer who wants to hire a foreign national needs to apply for a work permit on behalf of their employee or face a fine of SRD\$500 (almost USD200). Work permits are issued for a specific type of employment and cannot be used for any other type of work.

According to statistics provided by the Ministry of Labour, the following visas were granted in 2003 to female workers from the following countries: Colombia (one visa); the Dominican Republic (two visas); Brazil (11 visas); and Guyana (60 visas).<sup>486</sup> These scarce numbers are in contradiction with the estimates provided by several activists (from *ProHealth* and Maxi Linder) and the statement that most of the sex workers in Suriname are foreign women. These numbers seem to indicate that a significant number of foreign women do not have legal status while in Suriname; therefore they are much more vulnerable to exploitation. However, there is no automatic link between foreign women applying for a work visa and their involvement in the sex trade.

### *Links to forms of sexual exploitation*

While all key informants were aware of a few cases in which young women have been lured and coerced into sexual exploitation, these cases were believed to concern only foreign women who were attracted by economic opportunities that were more favourable than the opportunities in their own country or region of origin. Of the 30 key informants, five identified the same case of human trafficking for sexual exploitation: the fate of four Dominican women lured to Suriname in the course of the year 2002 and forced to work in the sex trade.<sup>487</sup> A few other

---

484 Reported by all key informants interviewed using the semi-structured questionnaire from Category B, Suriname.

485 Key informant interview, Suriname.

486 Ministry of Labour, Technical Development and Environment (2003) "Statistics on issued working permits segregated by gender over the year 2003," Work Permit Department. Visas are issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and work permits by the Ministry of Labour.

487 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

cases involved women from Guyana and Brazil who were referred to as victims of human trafficking.

The key informants indicated that cases of young people falling victim to human trafficking usually came from large and poor households and had limited educational background (mainly primary education); some were single mothers. Many are driven by poor economic conditions and are seeking to improve their incomes or the incomes of their families by accepting positions abroad. They may have faced exploitative conditions on previous occasions, but after returning to their country or region of origin they will take risks and migrate again, searching for other opportunities to earn income. Extremely precarious living conditions and economic imperatives result in a lack of awareness of the extent of the exploitation they are experiencing, or will influence them to accept their participation in the sex trade or other exploitative activities. As reported in three interviews, young people in the sex trade may have been deceived on previous occasions but because of the lack of any opportunities they continue to stay in the situation of exploitation, going back and forth to the clubs.<sup>488</sup>

### ***Recruitment, deception, debt and other control methods***

According to six informants, most recruiters come from the same countries of origin of the victims and have a link with their families.<sup>489</sup> These families help recruit the victims. They are recruited by people from their community who collaborate with Surinamese “helpers”, club owners, or entrepreneurs.<sup>490</sup> For example, a recruiter from Suriname travels to Brazil Colombia or the Dominican Republic to recruit girls and women for work in Suriname. Once these workers are recruited, their ticket is paid for in Suriname and the club owner in Suriname arranges the visa. Some sex workers help recruit other girls and women by telling them that they will earn a lot of money. The recruiter receives payment per worker they recruit.

According to one informant, there is a specific agency that is allowed to apply for visas for Haitian workers.<sup>491</sup> The agency collaborates with a travel agency to arrange the tickets. This key informant alleged that this process was a result of the policy of the Haitian consulate to Suriname. The belief is that obstacles are created for some groups who apply for visas and because of these obstacles people are forced to apply for visas through middlemen.

---

488 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

489 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

490 Helpers are persons who are involved in the chain of recruiting, transporting and harbouring, accommodating and exploiting.

491 Key informant interview, Suriname.

The recruited migrants are either brought legally into Suriname using documentation, or smuggled through one of the various “backtrack” paths.<sup>492</sup> Those with no legal status are more vulnerable and could be imprisoned, with no access public health services. Some persons argue that such irregular migrants in prison who need medical attention should receive it, regardless of their legal status. In addition, these irregular migrants will have to use the same process to return home and they may not have the resources to organize their return trip on their own, leaving them at the mercy of their recruiters.

The following case information stems from direct interviews conducted by the research team with two victims of human trafficking. These cases involved girls who were offered work in the entertainment industry in Suriname, but who were deceived and told that they would have to engage in sex work. Through various forms of control, they were prevented from leaving the exploitative situation. These case examples are representative of the recruiting methods used in human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

### *Case 1*

This case involves a 16-year-old Guyanese girl who comes from a poor family of eight children, of which she is the seventh child. She briefly attended primary school and has a two-year-old infant. When she lived in Guyana, she helped her mother with cleaning and brought laundry to customers. They were exposed to domestic violence when her father lived with them.

She was recruited by a girlfriend to go work in Suriname. Her friend told her that she would be dancing and singing in a club and would earn lots of money. The transportation was arranged; she travelled by aeroplane. A friend of her girlfriend took them to the airport. She was treated well and was not concerned about her safety. She could not discern whether there was any interaction among the immigration officials as she walked behind the other girls.

Once she arrived in Suriname, circumstances turned out to be different than promised and she was forced to have sex with customers who were mainly men, but sometimes women. According to the girl, the female customers were much nicer and they paid more. She thought she would be sending USD300 home each month. She was told that she would have her own room, but she lives with two other

---

492 “Backtrack” is a colloquial term that means entry into the country illegally via the border with Guyana, typically by foot or by boat.

girls. In the morning, they remain in their room or they go for a walk. They had contact with others. At 8 o'clock in the evening they go to the bar. They also had to go visit the Dermatological Service on occasion. With respect to control, she says: "No one has to beat me or threaten me. I know that my family needs the money, so I know that [I] have to work. Maybe I do not have to work any longer, because a Chinese man that loves me very much wants to marry me."

The club owners paid for their needs but they had to pay off these debts. There were many other things that needed to be paid for, such as the room and food, as well as expensive clothes. As a result, the girl does not earn very much. She thinks that when the debts are paid off she will earn more. Sometimes she was paid less or half of the money owed her, especially when she went to the doctor. According to the girl, she was not being restricted in her freedom of movement. The living circumstances are the same as the first time she travelled to Suriname to work. This is her third trip. The club owners would take her everywhere she wanted to go to as long as it was not far. Her passport was kept in a safety deposit box so that she would not lose it.<sup>493</sup>

### *Case 2*

This case involves a 15-year-old Guyanese girl. She attended primary school until the fourth level. She has no work experience in Guyana. She had seen her uncle or nephew physically abuse their spouses, but not often. She travelled to Suriname with her aunt. Her family told her that living in Suriname with her aunt is better than living in Guyana and that she would be helping her aunt, selling goods. She did not know how much she would earn. The family paid for everything for her and made all the arrangements. They said that she would only have to take care of her aunt's family.

Once in Suriname, she was required to provide sex services and she has no other income than what she receives from these services. She works at two locations where she provides these services (she did not sign a contract) and she helps her aunt take care of the family. The money she earns from providing sex services she has to give to the woman who arranged for her to come to Suriname. The money she earns on the street with her aunt she gives to her aunt's friend.

---

493 Key informant interview, Suriname.

She has no contact with her family in Guyana, but she wants to go back to her grandmother.

She came to Suriname from Guyana through the “backtrack” and did not have a visa. She has no documents and is dependent on the people who brought her to Suriname. If she wants to leave the country, she has to leave in the same way. She was treated well during the trip from Guyana and she was not concerned about her safety as so many people take the “backtrack.” They took public transportation to the Guyanese and then crossed the river that divides the two countries in a private boat and used public transportation once in Suriname.

She is not aware of any interaction among immigration officials regarding her status of entry into Suriname; a woman had made all the necessary arrangements for when she arrived in Paramaribo. As a result, she must work in that woman’s house. In the morning, she is allowed to sleep late but she has to help her aunt with housekeeping. At 7:00 P.M., she has to prostitute herself on the street. She also works in two clubs, providing sex services. She does not have much contact with others. Her aunt tells her that clients do not like it when she knows a lot of people. She has no access to health services; she has only taken one test for HIV/AIDS. She is not being physically abused. She knows that if the police know that she came to Suriname through the “backtrack” she will be imprisoned. She has freedom of movement, but her nephew or her aunt’s friend always escorts her because she does not know Suriname well.<sup>494</sup>

### ***Links to forced labour***

In the course of this research, two forms of labour exploitation regarding migrants were found. The first involves migrants who negotiated a loan to enter Suriname. Upon arrival, they are forced into debt bondage until their debt is paid. The debt is often difficult to pay, as the “bosses” regularly add other costs to the original debt. Once the debt has been paid, they are free to go their own way. This situation is believed to pertain mostly to Chinese nationals. Migrants who are forced to work in Suriname are considered to be in another form of labour exploitation. There is no debt in such cases; the migrants were transported to work only.

---

<sup>494</sup> Key informant interview, Suriname. All researchers were instructed to contact IOM if any victims or possible victims of human trafficking were found in the course of their research in order to ensure an immediate response. IOM was not contacted for assistance in this case.



“Two years ago a recruiter (a hired man) from Thailand recruited a group of Chinese prisoners. The informant did not know how they entered Suriname. They worked in forestry. These men (only men) had to work seven days a week till late in the evening. They did not have one day to rest. They were not allowed to leave the camp and not allowed to speak with anyone outside of the camp. They lived in horrible barracks. They received food and drinks. According to the informant, small aeroplanes landed at the camp in the evening. The respondent never saw what happened but assumed that drugs were smuggled.”<sup>495</sup>

The research team attempted to speak with government officials who worked in the above-mentioned area, but “a source” informed the team that the government officials were afraid to talk. One informant believed that the Chinese nationals are not in Suriname anymore and the company they worked for no longer exists.<sup>496</sup>

According to one key informant, some migrants consider Suriname to be a highly favourable destination.<sup>497</sup> Many informants believed that the Chinese, Haitian, Dominican and some Brazilian migrants are accustomed to working under bad conditions.<sup>498</sup> The informants believed that the circumstances in their home countries are so difficult that some may not identify themselves as being exploited in Suriname. However, when the informants reflected upon personal standards and ethics and considered international treaties and national legislation, they believed the men, women and children in such situations are being exploited.<sup>499</sup> One respondent was of the opinion that one should not expect to see workers being chained, violated and/or threatened with a harpoon.<sup>500</sup>

### ***Recruitment, transportation, legal and illegal modes of entry and control methods***

Two informants mentioned that Chinese nationals enter Suriname through an organized network that provides transportation, documentation (such as a passport to exit the country of origin and a visa to enter Suriname), lodging and employment.<sup>501</sup> All these services have to be repaid through work and these individuals are de facto bonded to their benefactor. In some cases, these debts are difficult to repay as living costs are advanced by the “boss” at prohibitive rates. A knowledgeable informant reports that a typical fee charged by the “boss” to migrants who want to be smuggled into Suriname can amount to USD10,000-

---

495 Key informant interview, Suriname.

496 Key informant interview, Suriname.

497 Key informant interview, Suriname.

498 Key informant interviews, Category B and Category E, Suriname.

499 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

500 Key informant interview, Suriname.

501 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

USD25,000. To be smuggled into Canada, the United States or the United Kingdom a “boss” can charge between USD30,000–USD40,000.<sup>502</sup>

These migrants have to work for some years to repay their initial debt. They receive lodging and food for the duration of this time. Law-enforcement investigations into the accommodation provided for these workers show that they are living in extremely poor conditions; 30 persons sharing one room, one bath and one toilet. They can also face situations whereby a middleman coordinates their work and collects the wages.<sup>503</sup>

Three informants believed that many of the workers do not hold identification documents and all are afraid to speak about their working conditions and the way they entered Suriname.<sup>504</sup> Those temporarily staying in Suriname are thought to have no choice other than to work under these conditions to earn a living.<sup>505</sup>

### *Links to domestic servitude*

Paid domestic work, largely performed by women, is barely visible, undervalued, underpaid and unprotected. It is one of the most hidden forms of work and is undertaken in isolation in personal residences, including unrecognised and unseen labour. Researchers have had relatively little access to this area. In one key informant interview with a historian, the belief is that it has improved considerably from earlier days.<sup>506</sup> Nowadays, for example, a domestic worker can file a complaint about an employer at the Ministry of Labour.

However, there are no specific laws or regulations for domestic workers and most domestic workers do not have an employment contract, making them more vulnerable to exploitation. With respect to the exploitation of domestic workers, one key informant expressed concern for boys and girls from poor families.<sup>507</sup> The research team could not trace any specific cases related to domestic workers. Informants did not relate human trafficking to domestic work.

### *Links between child exploitation and various forms of human trafficking*

According to two key informants, and based on common knowledge and practice in Suriname, children from the rural areas and the hinterland would be raised by families in the capital.<sup>508</sup> The notion behind the practice is that the children would

---

502 Key informant interview, Suriname.

503 Key informant interview, Suriname.

504 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

505 Key informant interview, Suriname.

506 Key informant interview, Suriname.

507 Key informant interview, Suriname.

508 Key informant interviews Category E, Suriname.

have a better life and access to education in the capital. These children were called “kweekjes”. They are typically poor children from rural areas and the hinterland, and children of large, poor families in the city. Nowadays, this kind of migration of children within Suriname is not as common as there are primary schools in the interior and remote districts. When children from these areas want to go to high school, they move in with families or shelters in the city. However, according to the Youth Department of the Police and eight key informants, children are still being abused as domestic workers or as street workers.<sup>509</sup>

Children in vulnerable circumstances are at risk of becoming victims of labour exploitation and human trafficking for various forms of exploitation. According to two key informants, young children are working in the sex trade that services the gold mines.<sup>510</sup> Another informant alleged that there was a case of children living in a shelter that were sold to foreigners by the department of Family Judicial Affairs.<sup>511</sup> According to one informant, children are being sent abroad to be sold. The informant could not substantiate this information.<sup>512</sup>

Some informants noted concerns about the administration of a children’s shelter. Police were conducting an investigation regarding Surinamese children who are being illegally transported to Curaçao. The so-called parents in Curaçao obtain legal status over the children with documentation stating that they are the biological parents. At the time of this research, the investigation was still ongoing. The informants believed that those with knowledge about the case were afraid to talk. The police had to drop the case of contested adoption because of the lack of evidence. Suriname and Curaçao had been cooperating on this case.

### *Links to drug trafficking*

There were a variety of statements regarding drug trafficking. Four informants assumed that there is a link between human trafficking and drug trafficking as Suriname is a transit point for drugs.<sup>513</sup> According to many informants, Surinamese girls and women living in the Netherlands are offered tickets to Suriname to visit their families.<sup>514</sup> Families or boyfriends usually offer the tickets to the girls and women. Once they arrive in Suriname, they are controlled and forced to “bring something back” to the Netherlands. Sometimes, they are aware that the items are illegal drugs and sometimes they are unaware of what they would be transporting. As these victims find themselves in a criminal network, there are multiple forms of threats if they do not cooperate.

---

509 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

510 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

511 Key informant interview, Suriname.

512 Key informant interview, Suriname.

513 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

514 Key informant interviews, Category B, Suriname.

One such example:

“A drug dealer seduces young women and becomes their boyfriend. He invites them to come to his residence, treats them well and tells them that she can bring along her girlfriends and they do lots of nice things. After some functions he gives them a little bit of coke to sniff or to drink something that makes them high. Together with his friends they are having wild perverse sex. In the meantime everything is being recorded on video. The girls are not aware of it. The next time he invites the girls and tells them that they have got to have sex with other men (business associates of the drugs dealer. The girls are part of the deal). When the girls refuse, he shows them the tapes and tells them that he will show it to their parents and to others. As they were high during the sex scenes they did not know what kind of sex they were having. The girls are afraid; they are being forced to have sex with the associates of the drugs dealer.”<sup>515</sup>

According to the one key official, drug trafficking is related to human trafficking, but officials do not have data.<sup>516</sup> The informant believed that it is possible that people are being forced to swallow drugs in order to transport them internationally, though this is not so for the majority of the cases.

### ***Media review***

According to the research team, local media is paying some attention to the issue of human trafficking and migrant smuggling, especially when government officials or a representative of the Maxi Linder provide statements on the issue. The team did not find any articles of investigative journalism on the issue. In general, the media in Suriname does not provide clear definitions of human trafficking or migrant smuggling. The release of the US Department *Trafficking in Persons Report* 2003 gave rise to few articles because Suriname was placed on the “Tier 3 list”, which indicated a high risk of human trafficking.

### ***Conclusion***

The findings of this research revealed that human trafficking trends in Suriname include forced labour, forms of sexual exploitation and perhaps domestic servitude. Males and females, adults and children, are thought to be trafficked, often from neighbouring countries to Suriname. There are networks that help to transport the migrants, mostly through illegal entry mechanisms. The human traffickers use

---

<sup>515</sup> Key informant interview, Suriname.

<sup>516</sup> Key informant interview, Suriname.

control methods such as debt, language barriers, chaperones/escorts, isolation and document confiscation.

Sixty-seven key informants participated in this research study. The researchers observed during the course of the study that the key informants were not able to clearly define human trafficking, migrant smuggling, exploitation, or sex work and that they often did not perceive the differences between these terms.

Corruption is a factor in the context of human trafficking in Suriname. A number of informants admitted that they did not know the extent of human trafficking in Suriname but believed that it benefits directly or indirectly from official support and/or involvement. For example, club owners who apply for visas for their new recruits are almost always granted such documentation even though it is believed that these women will be involved in the sex trade.<sup>517</sup> The flexible implementation of the legal provisions ruling the sex trade leaves most of the visa delivery, the sanitation controls and the enforcement of the Penal Code to the discretion of high-ranking officials. In general, corruption is believed to be occurring in the process of visa issuance.<sup>518</sup> Overall, the social framework of the “trafficking ring” needs to be broad enough to include persons who can arrange or provide for visas, identification documents, modes of transportation (official or unrecognized), finances and other mechanisms essential to human trafficking.

While trafficking in children is undocumented and only reported anecdotally, informants expressed concern about potential cases of human trafficking for illegal adoption or other forms of exploitation. For example, children in institutional care may allegedly be sold to foreigners but the Department of Youth of the Police appears too understaffed to follow up on all allegations. Therefore, cases of potentially trafficked children remain unresolved (such as a boy or girl living in a slave-like existence with their adoptive parents).

The high mobility of the workers in the sex trade raises public health concerns related, in particular, to STDs and HIV/AIDS. These concerns were reported in “Gold and Commercial Sex: Exploring the Link between Small-scale Gold Mining and Commercial Sex in the Rainforest of Suriname.”<sup>519</sup>

Finally, most of the women and girls in the sex trade are believed to be unaware of their exploitation. This fact presumes that they will not seek or request assistance

---

517 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

518 Key informant interviews, Suriname.

519 Antonius-Smits, Christel C.F., et al., op. cit., 1999.

and in the absence of targeted outreach activities, exploitation cases in Suriname will largely remain unrecorded and/or the victims will remain unassisted.

### ***Specific methodology of the Suriname country report (2004)***

#### ***Research team***

The assignment was commissioned by IOM to Carla Bakboord from the non-governmental organization Equality and Equity. Ms. Bakboord acted as the supervisor of the project and was assisted by a research team and by Mrs. Juanita Altneberg in conducting this research.

#### ***Research tools***

The standardised national survey was distributed to all participants at a national seminar on human trafficking held by IOM in partnership with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the OAS and with support from the Ministry of Home Affairs. The seminar was held in Paramaribo, Suriname on 16 July 2004. The survey was self-administered and 12 forms were completed and collected. They were then analysed and the information used in the research findings.

A standardised interview questionnaire was used to conduct 30 key informant interviews. The questionnaire was used to explore the full range of issues around human trafficking. Some of those issues included: what persons knew about human trafficking; how much persons were willing to reveal; what persons could tell about human traffickers and victims; insight into the forms of human trafficking occurring in Suriname (if any); and the capacity of key informants to counteract human trafficking at various levels, including legislative, policy and programme levels. Considerations were made to reflect an assessment that was applied across sectors and among both policy makers and line staff. Key informants included civil servants from various ministries, foreign diplomats based in Paramaribo, social workers, entrepreneurs, NGO representatives as well as two alleged victims. Key informant interviews were conducted to provide a more expansive assessment of the flow of human trafficking into, within and from Suriname. Interviews with the 30 key informants were conducted between July and August 2004 using the standardised questionnaire. They were initially mobilized by telephone and formal letters.

The questionnaire was designed as a guide for the interview sessions and therefore some informants were not asked all items; the survey was “tailored” to each case. Each interview has been sourced to a questionnaire code. For the most part, the interviews were conducted in person; however, some were conducted via telephone conversation. The information received from the key informants was later crosschecked informally by seven individuals who were chosen by the

research team based on their in-depth knowledge of the Surinamese society. Other sources were also mobilized, including eight “street interviews” which were conducted to gain a sense of the general public’s understanding of the language and definitions related to human trafficking.

**Chart 16: Number and breakdown of the various interviews with informants**

<b>Type of Interview</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
A. National survey	12
B. Semi-structured questionnaire (some by telephone)	14
C. Interviews	15
D. Street interviews	8
E. Crosschecking, feedback and historical information (by telephone)	7
F. Interview with NGOs on their capacity (by telephone)	6
G. Interview with international organizations on their capacity (by telephone)	4
<b>Total interviews</b>	<b>66</b>

### ***Research limitations***

Collection of data on human trafficking in Suriname is difficult due to the underground nature of the phenomenon and the scarce attention given to the issue in Suriname. In addition, there is little statistical data available.

The research team originally encountered difficulties in contacting informants. The Ministry of Justice and Police had previously contacted most of the informants to gather information for the next report from the Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This resulted in some confusion among the identified key informants who were not willing to do double interviews.

Most informants were not aware of the definition of human trafficking as established by the Protocol and others were inconsistent in their definitions. Researchers observed that there was a lack of clarity about the differences between human trafficking, migrant smuggling, exploitation and sex work. Key informants were cautious in their statements and very concerned that they may be identified.

While all informants have strong suspicions that Chinese nationals are being exploited in Suriname, the research team had difficulty in identifying informants from this ethnic group. Additionally, information on domestic workers was difficult to obtain due to the private nature of this work.

Finally, the national survey distributed at the IOM seminar to participants were not returned in great numbers and provided less information than anticipated.



## 10. Trinidad and Tobago - country report on human trafficking (2007)

### *Main findings: literature and statistical reviews and national survey*

#### *Overview of the socio-economic context*

Trinidad and Tobago is a twin-island republic with a population of approximately 1.3 million people. Tobago is a well-known tourist destination, offering direct air travel routes to and from Europe.<sup>520</sup> The island, surrounded by white sand beaches and coral reefs, is the centre of the country's tourism industry.<sup>521</sup> Trinidad, the larger of the two islands, lies seven miles from the coast of Venezuela. While its ecological diversity attracts tourism, Trinidad is more industrially active. The island has large reserves of petroleum and natural gas and well-developed industries in iron, steel, methanol, nitrogenous fertilizers and petroleum products.<sup>522</sup> The energy sector produces 72 percent of the country's exports and has positioned Trinidad and Tobago as the most industrialized of the island states in the southern Caribbean.<sup>523</sup> While economic activity may differ from one island to the other, the country as a whole is heavily dependent on oil and natural gas production and its economic fortunes have closely followed the fluctuations in world oil prices.<sup>524</sup> With 10 consecutive years of economic growth, at an average annual rate of 4 percent, the energy sector continues to dominate the economy.

#### *Migration*

Population growth in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the result of the importation of labourers by the colonial powers to work the plantations. This was initially accomplished with African slaves, who were later replaced by indentured servants from India, and to a lesser extent from China, following emancipation. Between 1870 and 1910, an estimated 65,000 workers migrated to Trinidad and Tobago from the British territories, contributing to approximately one third of total population growth. Immigration to Trinidad and Tobago decreased in the twentieth century as indentured servitude ended and other regional economies expanded.

---

520 <http://www.gov.tt/about/>

521 <http://www.investtnt.com/climate/snapshot>

522 <http://visitnt.com/General/about>

523 <http://www.tandtnext.com/>

524 World Development Indicators, World Bank (WDI 2004) (2004)

As a result, population growth slowed during the first third of the twentieth century. Trinidad and Tobago's population in the 1980s illustrated the diverse cultural influences developed during the colonial period, which included descendants of migrants from Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The 1980 census estimated that 17,000 foreign persons had entered Trinidad and Tobago since 1970.

More recently, those migrating from Trinidad and Tobago have primarily chosen North America as their destination. The Central Statistical Office (CSO) reported a total of 52,111 persons migrating from Trinidad and Tobago to destinations abroad between 1980 and 1990. Of that number, 57.5 percent went to the United States and 25.5 percent went to Canada.<sup>525</sup> Current data on "departures" is not available from the CSO, as the Immigration Division no longer processes departure forms. The United Kingdom was the destination point for 6.1 percent of those migrating from Trinidad and Tobago. In view of the historical links between the two countries, this figure may seem surprisingly low. However, the immigration policy of destination countries is an important factor. There has been a growing influence of the United States in the region and the re-orientation of British economic interests from the British Commonwealth to the European Union. As a result, British interests and influence have decreased, with the exception of the energy industry.<sup>526</sup>

Regional migration to and from Trinidad and Tobago is likely to increase significantly given the country's growing economy and the regional launch of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) in 2006, which supports the free movement of selected skilled labour. In the first year of the CSME's launch, Trinidad and Tobago began processing Skills Certificates which allowed the free movement of labour among CARICOM countries, with graduates from university, artists and entertainers, sports persons and media persons among the first groups to be eligible for Skills Certificates.<sup>527</sup> According to a statement in the Senate by Senator the Honourable Arnold Piggott, Minister of Foreign Affairs, given on 3 September 2007, "since 2001, Trinidad and Tobago has issued a total of 1,326 Certificates, with 68.85% of these being issued to non-nationals of Trinidad and Tobago."

Information on irregular migrants in Trinidad and Tobago is limited to those migrants who have been detected by the authorities, or those who have been arrested as part of illegal activity and then referred to the Immigration Division.<sup>528</sup> Reasons

<sup>525</sup> Central Statistical Office, *Migration Report*, 1997

<sup>526</sup> Available online at <http://www.country-studies.com>

<sup>527</sup> The Skills Certificate replaces work permits and allows CARICOM nationals the freedom to work in member states under the Free Movement of Labour clause of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

<sup>528</sup> Immigration data on the detention and repatriation of irregular migrants is centrally collated and collective for both Trinidad and Tobago for the period 2002-2005. See Table A in the Annex for the data which is disaggregated by country of origin, but not separated for Trinidad and Tobago.

for detention and/or deportation were not accessible for this assessment but are recorded in confidential individual case files. It is believed that many migrants with irregular immigration status have arrived legally and then overstayed their allotted time, undertaken work illegally, or become involved in illegal activities (or some combination thereof).

From the available CSO information on detention and repatriation of irregular migrants between 2002 and 2005, those from Guyana represented the majority at 55.5 percent of total repatriations. This was followed by migrants from Colombia and Venezuela, representing 12.8 percent and 12.5 percent of total repatriations respectively. Others included St Vincent and the Grenadines (3.1%), Jamaica (2.4%), Grenada (1.2%), China (2.4%) and the United Kingdom (1.7%).

During the same period, there were a number of nationalities recorded as detained with no recorded repatriations, namely Gambia (2 detainees), Ghana (4 detainees), Haiti (5 detainees), Liberia (11 detainees), Nigeria (7 detainees), Puerto Rico (1 detainee), Rwanda (1 detainee) and Sri Lanka (3 detainees). Although the outdated records and lack of available data may account for this situation, other possible reasons include asylum-seeking and transiting, as explored in the subsequent section on main findings.

The Immigration Division of the Ministry of National Security also collects data on the number of deportees being returned to Trinidad and Tobago, disaggregated by gender, age group and offence. For the period August 2002 to December 2005, 128 females and 1,037 males were deported to Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>529</sup> Drug-related charges accounted for the single largest percentage of deportations at 34 percent of the total number of persons over the period. Illegal stay accounted for 17.2 percent of those deported, while “other charges” and “illegal entry” represented 6.5 percent and 4 percent of the total number of persons deported respectively.<sup>530</sup>

### ***Migration and commercial sexual exploitation***

There are historical labour practices in the Caribbean region that could create situations of vulnerability among migrant populations.

Kempadoo (2004: 142) notes that regional migration and prostitution are often linked, “Guyanese women were involved in sex work in Suriname, Trinidad, and Barbados; Trinidadian women travelled for sex work to Colombia and Barbados. Colombians went for sex work in Curaçao, Aruba, Trinidad and Suriname.”<sup>531</sup>

<sup>529</sup> Data on the number of returning deportees by offence for the period August 2002 to December 2005 is presented Table B in the Annex.

<sup>530</sup> This issue is explored further in the section on main findings from key informant.

<sup>531</sup> Kempadoo, Kamala. *Sexing the Caribbean: Gender, Race and Sexual Labour* (2004) - Routledge p. 142.

Poverty and the Caribbean's history of migration were noted as significant push factors. In the case of Trinidad and Tobago, this trend is noted in a study by the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action, (CAFRA).

The CAFRA study identified 13 segments of sexual exploitation in Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>532</sup> Among these segments, which ranged from street-based prostitution to entertainment houses to domiciled sexual exploitation, the CAFRA study noted five categories that feature some element of foreign nationals in prostitution:

- Escort service: packages involving local and foreign women and school girls;<sup>533</sup>
- Sex tourism: involving foreign women and local beach boys;<sup>534</sup>
- Local and foreign women and local beach boys;
- Local and regional prostitutes and entertainment workers;
- Tertiary level foreign students as prostitutes.

Primary sources in the CAFRA study noted a number of trends including:

- Foreign nationals involved in prostitution were believed to come from mainly Venezuela, Colombia and Guyana;
- The use of foreign nationals in prostitution was well-organized, networked, and operated out of establishments such as hotels or nightclubs.

A difference in fee structure for local and foreign prostitutes was cited in the CAFRA study. Foreign women attract American currency and much higher rates, creating a strong incentive to obtain foreign prostitutes:

“Recruiting was simple. Her fees for locals were \$400(TT) per hour for house calls and \$450(TT) for hotel runs.<sup>535</sup> She had room arrangements with two hotels, which ensured that there were no problems for premises. For foreigners she placed ads in the newspaper and charged as much as USD200.<sup>536</sup> She sent escorts to three of the top hotels in Trinidad.”<sup>537</sup>

Despite the existence of a well-organized and networked pool of foreign prostitutes, researchers from the CAFRA study found it difficult to obtain access to the women:

<sup>532</sup> Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action, Trinidad and Tobago (CAFRA). *Situation Analysis of Commercial Sex Work of Trinidad and Tobago. Support to the National Response to HIV/AIDS. Assessing a vulnerable group in Trinidad and Tobago.* (2004)

<sup>533</sup> If the “school girls” are under the age of 18 years old, this would constitute child trafficking.

<sup>534</sup> “Beach boys” refers to male prostitutes in the Caribbean, typically for female tourist clients. If these males are under the age of 18 years old, then this would be child trafficking.

<sup>535</sup> Approximately \$64-72USD as of February 2008.

<sup>536</sup> Approximately \$1250TT as of February 2008.

<sup>537</sup> CAFRA (2004) p.65

“A field interviewer had done all the background research to find the place where the foreign women were kept. He was told that a network that arranged even their immigration documents brought them in. They spoke little English; when they needed to shop, a male bodyguard accompanied them. A taxi service brought the men to them at this location, or they were taken directly to the client’s home, or to a specific meeting place. When he approached the hotel to attempt the interview he was told by the security that he should go no further.”<sup>538</sup>

While additional screening and investigation would be needed to determine if these women were trafficked, the above elements of control and vulnerability can be considered possible indicators of human trafficking.

### *Youth and exploitation*

In a study commissioned by the ILO in 2002, researchers Hunte and Lewis sought to examine the scale, scope and profile of child workers in scavenging, agriculture, domestic work, prostitution and pornography.<sup>539</sup> The study confirms that these forms of child labour and exploitation exist in Trinidad, with females found mainly in domestic work and sexual exploitation. Poverty, limited access to social services and deficiencies in the education, health, and legal systems can all serve to increase a person’s vulnerability. Such vulnerabilities are naturally exacerbated in the case of children. According to the ILO study, common features among such children included low-income households, only having primary education and coming from single-parent or broken homes. Push factors also included sexual abuse, poor supervision at home, and the need for supplemental household income (particularly among children in agricultural and domestic work). The study also found evidence of street children who were sexually exploited in the form of prostitution.

The aforementioned CAFRA study also noted reports of trafficking of children for sexual exploitation, where girls were actively coerced by parents and/or guardians to solicit clients.

“There is now a practice by elder members of families of taking their children out of school and sending them down to the airport to solicit foreigners. The challenge to the school now is to reverse this trend in

---

<sup>538</sup> CAFRA (2004) p.65

<sup>539</sup> Hunte, Desmond and Cheryl Lewis (2002) *The Situation of Children in Landfill sites and other Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Rapid Assessment* - Trinidad, Available online at [http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/childlabour/library/rapid\\_assessment/ratrinidad.pdf](http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/childlabour/library/rapid_assessment/ratrinidad.pdf)

the short and long term, before the sex trade becomes too ingrained in the young.”<sup>540</sup>

The trend of “transactional sex” or “sex for gain” was also reported in Trinidad and Tobago. This typically concerned teenage girls who were sexually involved with older men in exchange for pocket money, clothing and other goods. There are also noted situations of transactional sex involving foreign women who come to Trinidad and Tobago as students:

“We learned that there are a number of foreign students from Suriname as well as Spanish speaking neighbouring territories. They are attending a tertiary level Business institution along the East-West corridor. They are brought in by a network of businessmen who work in industries in the vicinity of the Institution. Their tuition fees, board and lodging are paid for by the network in exchange for sexual favours. The females are sometimes given B13 cars as well.”<sup>541</sup>

Transactional sex may not necessarily constitute human trafficking; it may be considered statutory rape, depending on the age of the female. However, this tactic can be used to gain a person’s trust and lure them into more dangerous situations. There are reported cases of human trafficking that begin with similar relationships, whereby trust is gained over time and the person is deceived and forced into exploitative conditions, often in the form of sexual exploitation.

Sexual exploitation is not limited to females. In the ILO rapid assessment on Tobago, the research team interviewed five males aged between 16 and 28 years old who were involved in sex tourism.<sup>542</sup> One of them reported having travelled to Italy, Germany and England on trips that were paid for by his clients. All these males entered into prostitution during their teen years and four reported being linked to the “stable” of a European woman who organizes “package tours” for Germans coming to Tobago on “sex holidays.”

### *National Survey*

Of the 25 national survey respondents, 84 percent felt that human trafficking existed in Trinidad and Tobago. In justifying their beliefs, participants identified trends including:

---

<sup>540</sup> CAFRA (2004), p.69, op. cit.

<sup>541</sup> CAFRA (2004), p. 69, op. cit.

<sup>542</sup> For those males under 18 years old, the linked elements of mobilization (recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbour, or receipt) and exploitation constitute child trafficking. See “Part I: Introduction” for the definition of human trafficking.

- Limited law enforcement in this area;
- Guyana, Venezuela and Colombia as main sources of trafficked persons;
- Sexual exploitation of “Latin American” and local girls at nightclubs and bars.

More persons were aware of victims trafficked into Trinidad and Tobago than from the country (60% of respondents as compared to 20% respectively). Among those aware of human trafficking into the country, nine respondents identified brothels and nightclubs as places where trafficked persons could be found. There was also knowledge of rural-to-urban trafficking within Trinidad, as well as human trafficking from countries such as Guyana, Venezuela and Colombia. Only 8 percent of those surveyed were aware of anyone accused of human trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago, citing prostitution as the type of exploitation for which the arrest was made.<sup>543</sup>

Approximately 80 percent of those surveyed believed that the national response to human trafficking was conducted primarily thorough government agencies. Noted areas of focus included: information and awareness raising, research, seminars, criminal investigations and policy and legislation.

When asked about the efficacy of the national response to human trafficking, 32 percent of the respondents provided a number of gaps to be addressed:

- weak laws or laws not properly enforced,
- human trafficking not a government priority (other crimes take focus),
- information on human trafficking not disseminated,
- human trafficking not punishable by law,
- human trafficking not widely understood,
- no organized system for addressing human trafficking.

Concrete recommendations for action to be taken included:

- enacting policy and legislation to address human trafficking as a criminal offence,
- providing public information and raise awareness,
- strengthening border control,
- conducting law-enforcement training,
- researching and identifying the scale of the problem,
- developing social programmes to address needs of vulnerable groups and trafficked persons,

---

<sup>543</sup> As the national survey questionnaire was anonymous, follow-up with specific individual respondents was not possible.

- establishing collaborative networks involving health, law enforcement, media, social services, judiciary and labour organizations.

### *Main findings of key informant interviews*

The following section presents an analysis of the 37 key informant interviews conducted in Trinidad and Tobago between January 2006 and February 2007. The information obtained outlines a profile of possible victims of human trafficking and offers some scenarios of the human trafficking process. Respondents indicated that human trafficking is occurring in Trinidad, and is linked to sexual exploitation mainly. While cases of human trafficking for domestic servitude and forced labour were noted, they were more limited. Additional information also points to perceived linkages between drug and arms trafficking and human trafficking, both in Trinidad and in Tobago. Many informants believed that the issue was one of poor working conditions and exploitation rather than human trafficking, but the implications for labour conditions, human rights violations and vulnerability to human trafficking should be noted. Incidents of migrant smuggling were also observed, often involving the use of similar networks as those used by human traffickers.

When asked about the main reasons people migrate to Trinidad and Tobago, informants cited improvement in quality of life, better job opportunities and more recently, a growing tendency in Trinidad for specific expatriate job opportunities, particularly in the energy sector. Migration to Tobago was believed to be for retirement and a more relaxed quality of life; migrants to Tobago were believed to be from Europe mainly.

Key informants cited the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom as the main destinations for persons migrating from Trinidad and Tobago. Information on persons trafficked from Trinidad and Tobago was insufficient to draw any conclusions, although one possible case from Tobago is described later in this section.

Countries of origin of migrants who are common to both Trinidad and Tobago were identified as Caribbean countries, particularly Guyana, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, the OECS countries and Jamaica. Informants identified migrants from Latin America, Colombia and Venezuela in particular, as significant. Persons from China, Syria and African countries such as Nigeria were also listed as those migrating to Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>544</sup> In Tobago, all informants identified

---

<sup>544</sup> Other countries named included: Brazil, Panama, Barbados, CARICOM neighbours, Uganda, Ivory Coast, Singapore, Thailand, United Kingdom, Haiti, Liberia, Iraq, United States and St Lucia.



Europe as a major source of migrants, in particular those from Germany and the Netherlands who acquire land and settle in Tobago.

On the issue of irregular migration, 25 of the 37 informants (68%) were aware of people living and working illegally in Trinidad and Tobago. Countries of origin included Guyana, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, “other Caribbean countries,” China, Colombia, Venezuela and African countries including Nigeria, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia and Uganda.<sup>545</sup> Generally, key informants described the following migration patterns:

- Guyana - small traders and domestic workers, some agricultural workers, some migrants going to Tobago, and some females in prostitution;
- Other Caribbean countries - small traders, domestic workers, construction workers and other job opportunities;
- China - workers in restaurants, shops and other businesses of the Chinese community, including females potentially trafficked for forced marriage or prostitution;
- Venezuela, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Dominican Republic - mainly women as prostitutes in nightclubs, massage parlours and brothels;
- Nigeria and Syria - mainly men who are taking advantage of a range of work opportunities, such as work in petrol stations, security firms and construction work.

In terms of African nationals, two informants believed that some migrants used asylum-seeking mechanisms to enter or stay in Trinidad and Tobago.

“(there is) a new trend for Nigerians, Senegalese, Ethiopians and persons from Ivory Coast to enter and then seek asylum. There is even recruitment via internet for Nigerians to come by boat, by persons who have successfully sought asylum here. They pay Nigerians who are here seeking asylum for advice on seeking immediate asylum....enter via [deleted], by boat, go to church in [deleted] and are carried over to [deleted]to seek asylum...”<sup>546</sup>

This may account for the trend among immigration data where a number of African nationals are detained but there is no record of repatriation. Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Rwanda are among the countries of origin where this trend was noted.

<sup>545</sup> Many informants simply noted “other Caribbean countries” without being specific. Other countries named included: Peru, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, St Lucia, Grenada, Barbados, Jamaica, Haiti, Syria, Pakistan, India, Panama and Brazil.

<sup>546</sup> Key informant interviews. Specific locations deleted for safety.

The issue of organized facilitation of irregular migrants was also identified by three key informants, who pointed out that irregular migrants are supported and assisted by persons in their community, particularly among the Chinese and Syrian communities:<sup>547</sup>

...undocumented Chinese - pay a high price to become permanent residents....assisted by the local Chinese community/business/churches.<sup>548</sup>

Another key informant made a similar reference, saying that “Venezuelans come under the guise of learning English- end up in small restaurants, even sex work... Venezuelans are well networked (and) link up with others for shelter, etc.”<sup>549</sup>

Another emerging trend in irregular migration is the “pass through” method. Ten key informants explained a trend of entering Trinidad as an “easier border”, and staying illegally to obtain false documents and then moving on to enter the United States and Canada.<sup>550</sup>

“Insider trading” - Guyanese coming to T&T, obtain false T&T birth certificates and with collusion with certain officials....they receive authentic T&T passports at a price.....Hundreds of Guyanese, holding genuine T&T passports were refused entry in the USA and were deported to T&T after which the T&T Immigration Officers discovered that they were not T&T nationals.”<sup>551</sup>

Another key informant knew of many such cases:

Question: How many cases do you know of?

Answer: “20 upwards and when they come in they settle and work. This had stimulated an amnesty program in 1988 in order to regulate. Now there is more influx of persons from Guyana, many not staying, but using Trinidad as a stepping stone...with fraudulent T&T passports to enter the U.S. This has led to the issuance of new passports...”<sup>552</sup>

The “pass through” strategy is by no means exclusive to Guyanese nationals. One key informant describes another case: “(there was) even a case of a Philippine nurse who was here legally through a Government contract, worked for two weeks

<sup>547</sup> Key informant interviews.

<sup>548</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>549</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>550</sup> Key informant interviews.

<sup>551</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>552</sup> Key informant interview.

and then disappeared - fled to the U.S. - using Trinidad as a stepping stone to get to the USA.”<sup>553</sup>

This vulnerability may be more significant given the country’s strong economy and availability of job opportunities, relative to its English-speaking Caribbean neighbours, particularly in low- and/or semi-skilled jobs and the apparent well-established routes and mechanisms for irregular entry. These factors may be used as an incentive by potential human traffickers who would encounter little difficulty obtaining official documents; as one key informant explains: “False job letters, false bank statements, false ID cards are easily available in Trinidad and Tobago at a price.”<sup>554</sup>

Although the above accounts do not automatically point to human trafficking, the trends of facilitated irregular migration may. Indicators such as the “pass through” method, active recruitment and the use of asylum-seeking mechanisms, in some cases for profit, clearly indicate varied and well-established “routes” or options for irregular migration. Given the existence and use of these options, this indicates a vulnerability to trafficking in persons, either to or through Trinidad and Tobago.

### *Types of Exploitation*

#### *Links to sexual exploitation*

Sexual exploitation emerged as the most significant type of exploitation believed to exist in Trinidad and Tobago, involving foreign nationals and local persons. Key informants (65% of the total number of informants) identified the trend of foreign women, particularly from Latin American countries such as Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Panama and Bolivia, and Caribbean countries such as Guyana, the Dominican Republic, Suriname and Belize, who are recruited for sexual exploitation.<sup>555</sup> Informants believed that those who are sexually exploited were:

- denied access to travel documents by human traffickers;
- threatened with arrest and deportation by their exploiters,<sup>556</sup> many are “here illegally and do not want to jeopardize” their stay;<sup>557</sup>
- controlled by the threat of exposure.

There was widespread recognition that small groups, of females mainly, were moved about for sexual exploitation in brothels, night spots and “massage

---

<sup>553</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>554</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>555</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>556</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>557</sup> Key informant interview.

parlours” in Trinidad. Media reports support this observation, with stories of raids on brothels and nightclubs where groups of non-nationals, particularly Latin American females, were caught, charged with prostitution, and deported (this issue is explored further in the Media review). Upon detection, many of these women were reportedly not in possession of their own travel documents, which were found to be held by the brothel/hotel/nightclub owner at the time of the raid. One key informant commented:

“[T]here are female Colombians and Venezuelans being trafficked and kept to work in nightclubs. Some passports are held with the brothel/club proprietor.....they were arrested for prostitution...the proprietor would have been arrested for operating and aiding and abetting.”<sup>558</sup>

Four informants described the organized process and control mechanisms that constitute trafficking for sexual exploitation.

#### *Example 1*

“Come by the dozens, organized, many/all aware of the work to be undertaken. Mainly from Colombia, come by boat, are recruited in Bona Ventura and brought to work in ‘hotels’ and nightclubs in Port-of-Spain, the East and Central/South. Controlled by debt bondage and control of documents. Early 20’s - 22-30... hardly get teenagers. Many of them [are] here to support children at home.”<sup>559</sup>

#### *Example 2*

“Raids on ‘hotels’ and nightclubs in North, East, and Central Trinidad have revealed groups of foreign - mainly Colombian - women, working as prostitutes. Some may say nothing, some say they arrive by sea and are picked up. Many are not in possession of their own documents.”<sup>560</sup>

#### *Example 3*

“Whether voluntarily or involuntarily, all if not most are exploited. Leaving your country to go to any other country to undertake sex work means that there is something wrong with your country of origin... for the destination country i.e. Trinidad and Tobago, it means that there are marked inefficiencies in law enforcement.”<sup>561</sup>

558 Key informant interview.

559 Key informant interview.

560 Key informant interview.

561 Key informant interview.

**Example 4**

“...those who are not aware (of the circumstances in which they will be working)...eventually conform because they have little choice i.e. they are being held under duress against their will and are therefore left (with) no options.”<sup>562</sup>

Two key informants stated that sexual exploitation of socially displaced persons (homeless persons and/or drug addicts) is not uncommon in Trinidad.<sup>563</sup> They believed that many homeless or otherwise socially displaced persons who live in Trinidad are there as irregular migrants. Some homeless are found to be drug addicts and are often without identification, possibly due to fear of detection. Those with irregular status may not attempt to access social services, also due to fear of detection. This predisposes them to a wide range of exploitative situations such as for labour, street hustling, begging, sexual exploitation and any number of other situations, including those that increase their vulnerability to contracting HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases. Apart from numerous street-based locations, Riverside Plaza in Port-of Spain and Court Shamrock in San Fernando are locations known to have a heavy concentration of displaced persons.<sup>564</sup> While there may be no direct links to human trafficking, the trend for a community of persons to live and function “outside” of the loop of social services for fear of detection is significant and noteworthy. If access to these populations is limited, a network that is exploiting their circumstances of vulnerability would be difficult to detect.

While the Trinidadian informants tended to refer to Spanish-speaking prostitutes generically as “Venezuelans”, there are Spanish-speaking nationals from Colombia, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia and even parts of Guyana who live in Trinidad.<sup>565</sup> Informants believed that Peruvian and Bolivian nationals were present in Trinidadian brothels, while Venezuelans are believed to be more involved in transactional sex or high-level escort services, such as call-girls.<sup>566</sup>

Students from Latin America were thought to be involved in prostitution to some degree. One informant noted students usually made contacts within the local Spanish-speaking community to work in bars, clubs or the dance circuit in Trinidad. Prostitution was believed to be offered to these students as an option for raising funds to cover living and tuition expenses in Trinidad. Informants also noted the

---

<sup>562</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>563</sup> Key informant interviews.

<sup>564</sup> Key informant interviews.

<sup>565</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>566</sup> Considered as “independent” persons who prostitute themselves

rising trend of sexual exploitation in Trinidad and Tobago of male nationals from Latin America.<sup>567</sup>

Tobago was not the first point of entry for females thought to be trafficked for sexual exploitation. Entry into Tobago from Trinidad requires basic identification such as national identity cards and driver's permits, both of which can be available at a price. Persons potentially trafficked for prostitution can therefore obtain such documents and travel to Tobago by air or sea ferry, undetected. As one informant noted:

“It is known that Latin American women (exotic dancers) can be requested specifically for parties and nightclubs from Trinidad - they tend not to be resident in Tobago, they frequently come over from Trinidad (Colombians and Venezuelans).”<sup>75</sup>

Another informant described a scenario of exploitation in Tobago which, though not necessarily a case of human trafficking, denotes the ease of using false marriages to gain entry:

“There are others who migrate from Europe who have saved money and attract the attention of needy Tobagonians. They marry a Tobagonian (particularly young men) who is exploited by them and as soon as marriage ‘comes through,’ is discarded and land acquired... “Trafficking in Tobago is totally different from that of Trinidad. We market Tobago as a tourist destination. The wider world accepts that image, so that people in other countries such as Europe may see it as a soft target to perpetrate illegal activities such as trafficking. One known way is to come to Tobago, marry a Tobagonian and take them to Germany. ... Germany is a main destination. Many are trafficked as male prostitutes with friends.”<sup>568</sup>

The potential for human trafficking to or from Tobago may be influenced by the fact that Tobago is noted for direct air routes from Europe, in keeping with its well-developed tourism sector. There are six international air carriers that operate direct flights to Tobago each week from England, Germany, the Netherlands and Austria. While air routes are not the sole method used by human traffickers, this situation provides some insight into possible transportation trends and profiles of human traffickers and victims.

Among the informants, little information was obtained about those from Trinidad and Tobago who were trafficked to other countries. However, one informant did know of local females who were being recruited for domestic servitude and then

---

567 Key informant interview.

568 Key informant interview.

sexually exploited outside of Trinidad and Tobago. “They are recruited locally and then shipped to Barbados and Tortuga as prostitutes.”<sup>569</sup>

### *Links to domestic servitude*

Exploitation is believed to occur to some degree for domestic servitude. Three key informants noted one case in Trinidad and two accounts in Tobago.<sup>570</sup> Thirty-seven percent of informants cited domestic servitude among Guyanese nationals in particular. Notably, two of the three identified cases believed to be human trafficking involved Guyanese nationals. Four informants mentioned a shortage of local domestic workers. Additionally, there is a growing demand for domestic workers among the expatriate community. Informants also referred to the creation of “soft employment” initiatives for citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, generated by the State to alleviate unemployment, such as Community-Based Environmental Protection & Enhancement Programme (Cepep).<sup>571</sup> These initiatives reportedly offer more pay compared to that typically earned from domestic work, with limited hours and tasks.<sup>572</sup>

Informants felt that local women and men are less willing to undertake domestic work. Therefore, Caribbean nationals, who are believed to be irregular migrants mostly, are filling this employment demand. On the linkage between human trafficking and domestic servitude, one informant offered this explanation: “There is a network of persons from the Caribbean who are already here and who offer settlement and protection and therefore are not easily detected. Among these, (it is) difficult to tell whether they have stayed against their will.”<sup>573</sup>

Another informant offered this account of a Guyanese national who was believed to be trafficked for domestic servitude: “(there is) some linkage with domestic servitude: a lot of exploitation, mostly Guyanese women. Some cases they are not free to leave, especially Guyanese from the interior...one specific case of a Guyanese who was resident in Trinidad who brought a Guyanese woman from the interior...she was completely enslaved and never allowed to go out or home.”<sup>574</sup>

A third informant offered information on a case in Tobago: “a Guyanese young woman over 18 is working for a family (in Tobago) and her passport is being held.

<sup>569</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>570</sup> Key informant interviews.

<sup>571</sup> Community-Based Environmental Protection & Enhancement Programme (Cepep) is a state-run “soft employment” initiative as part of a wider programme to address the burden of unemployment. Cepep workers are identified as originating from the communities in which Cepep activities take place and who are engaged in a range of jobs including roadside maintenance and environmental beautification.

<sup>572</sup> Key informant interviews.

<sup>573</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>574</sup> Key informant interviews.

She is free to move around but her documents (Passport) are being held so she cannot leave.”<sup>575</sup>

The following scenario was provided by an informant in Tobago:

“...a young woman used to work on a hotel (in Tobago) and XXX guests, owners of a XXX company, promised her a brighter future working in a travel agency. They paid for her travel, she entered on her own documents and was subsequently locked indoors, only eating the family scraps after the family ate, with her documents kept. She conversed through a window with a Caribbean woman and to escape eventually jumped through the window and went to the Consulate who assisted in repatriating/returning her.”<sup>576</sup>

Two informants also indicated the incidence of possible trafficking for domestic servitude related to a Nigerian girl who ran away from the High Commission for Nigeria in Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>577</sup> In this instance, the girl was housed in a shelter, she claimed she was abused and was eventually returned to her family in Nigeria.

### *Links to forced labour*

Although reference to forced labour was limited in scope and source, perceived trends are still worthy of note. Key informants did not know of many specific cases. One informant noted that forced labour may be recruited via advertisements, word of mouth and schools. Migrants are believed to enter Trinidad and Tobago through irregular methods, with false documents, or are coerced into believing that they will be studying or getting married once they arrive.

“Their passports are held, they are constantly told they could be reported or deported. They are told they can be arrested and spend time in prison here. They are kept in debt. They are promised a better life eventually. They move around a lot and are very uncertain of what can happen next.”<sup>578</sup>

There was mention of migrant labour used for agricultural purposes that was described as “prohibitive if not forced.”<sup>579</sup> Irregular migrants are believed to be exploited and paid below minimum wage and “housed in a room of someone’s house and required to pay rent and other charges, always keeping them in debt.”<sup>580</sup>

---

<sup>575</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>576</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>577</sup> Key informant interviews.

<sup>578</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>579</sup> Key informant interviews.

<sup>580</sup> Key informant interview.



There were several informants who also mentioned the growth in the Chinese population for construction work in Trinidad. Several key informants noted that Chinese construction workers often live in very poor facilities, with little or no sanitation and seem to work very long hours. There was also mention that they are not paid directly but through bank accounts in China. The workers are said to be provided with only small sums of pocket money for basic necessities. While not necessarily a case of human trafficking, the potential for exploitation does exist and such situations should be investigated and/or monitored.

### *Elements of Human Trafficking*

#### *Recruitment and transportation*

According to some key informants, mechanisms for recruitment included: (i) direct contact or “advertising” opportunities for potential migrants (such as advertisements in newspapers); (ii) contact and facilitation of entry via an established network of nationals, as with the scenarios described for Venezuelan, Chinese and Syrian nationals; and (iii) travel abroad for selection and recruitment of prostitutes.<sup>581</sup>

With reference to trafficking for prostitution, one informant stated that prostitutes typically arrive by boat, particularly when coming from Latin America. All modes of transport, including sea and subsequent land transportation, are believed to be well organized. In terms of the choice of transport methods, one informant noted that while taxi services are part of the movement of prostitutes and clients to locations where high-level prostitution activities are carried out, seafaring vessels remain the main means of transporting irregular migrants into Trinidad and Tobago.<sup>582</sup>

A full profile of the factors affecting fishing communities and their involvement in human trafficking or migrants smuggling was not possible. However, this issue appears to be a key element to further the understanding of the characteristics of human trafficking trends in Trinidad and Tobago and elsewhere in the Caribbean. One informant believed that mechanisms for human trafficking were linked to drug and arms trading, as persons who organize the transportation of arms and drugs are also centrally linked to the practice of the migrant smuggling and potentially human trafficking.<sup>583</sup>

The use of boats for transportation was supported by several informants who deemed the coastlines of Trinidad and Tobago as “porous borders” with “weak

---

581 Key informant interviews.

582 Key informant interview.

583 Key informant interview.

border controls,” therefore they are easily accessed by small boats.<sup>584</sup> As another informant mentions: “(They) come by the dozens, organized, many/all aware of the work to be undertaken. Mainly from Colombia, come by boat ... [They] hardly come by aeroplane, come in on unmonitored coast by night, vehicle pick up in the morning, taking them straight to the hotel.”<sup>585</sup>

However, some individuals involved in the sex trade may gain entry by air, such as nationals of Guyana, who use their own travel documents. Some of these Guyanese nationals are reported to engage in prostitution. While one informant expressed concern as to the possible presence of prostitutes from Eastern Europe in Trinidad and Tobago, another informant confirmed that Eastern European women are already in the country (Russian and Ukrainian nationals).<sup>586</sup> The informant believes that European women travel through Holland to Dutch territories, such as St Maarten, and may circulate throughout the Caribbean islands. According to the informant, these women are transported to islands such as Barbados, St Maarten, Cayman Islands, The Bahamas and Trinidad and Tobago. These Caribbean areas are considered to have relatively strong currencies and a high demand for prostitutes. In the case of the European women, human trafficking may be related to persons who initially gave consent, but are subsequently exploited against their will. The high cost of transatlantic travel is usually used against these individuals and may constitute debt bondage to ensure further exploitation by human traffickers.<sup>587</sup>

One informant believed that similar transport systems operate with Asian women, though in some cases, the women may be smuggled migrants. Women are transported into Trinidad and Tobago in groups of three or four and kept out of public view. While relatively little is known about the status and welfare of such Asian women, one informant recounted witnessing Asian women being intercepted after attempting to run away late at night in downtown Port-of-Spain.<sup>588</sup>

Newspaper advertisements may also be a method of recruitment for persons from Trinidad and Tobago. Although this issue is explored further in the Media review, there was one case of a young woman who was deported from the United States on drug-trafficking charges. She was travelling to the United States with the expectation that she would be providing geriatric care to an American citizen. She was recruited through an advertisement in a reputable daily newspaper.

---

584 Key informant interview.

585 Key informant interview.

586 Key informant interview.

587 Key informant interview.

588 Key informant interview.

*Profiles of victims and human traffickers*

Information on the profile of victims and human traffickers in Trinidad and Tobago is limited, but a significant number of informants (72% of the total number of informants) referred to the linkage between human trafficking and prostitution and those who detail specific cases of trafficking for prostitution cite an influx of irregular female migrants from Colombia, Venezuela and parts of the Caribbean region, particularly Guyana.

Informants thought that some females involved in the sex trade were aware of the type of activities they would be involved in, but then became victims of human trafficking following their arrival in Trinidad.<sup>589</sup> Testimony was received from one informant following their contact with a victim of human trafficking:

“I spoke to a girl on Saturday who came to this country illegally a week ago. She was brought in by boat with 6 other girls. She came in at 2am at an undisclosed point and shuttled to her new bosses business place; which to her was undisclosed as well. She arrived and was told that the trip to Trinidad cost 2800 TTD and she would have to work that off first as agreed.<sup>590</sup> She came from South America [possibly Venezuela] with the other girls and speaks very little English.

She was told she is illegal and that she needs to listen to everything her boss tells her to stay in the country and make money...which includes being called out at any hour to see men wanting sexual intercourse who will pay her in cash. She still does not know where she lives and what her arrangement is, all she knows is she has to do what the boss says or she will be sent back home or turned in as an illegal immigrant. She says this is the only way she knows to come to Trinidad and make money.”<sup>591</sup>

One informant said that club owners find it more economical to bring in their own “girls” from abroad rather than recruit girls and women from Trinidad. Those brought in are usually kept working in the sex trade for a period of three to six months before being replaced.<sup>592</sup>

Two informants mentioned that male as well as female nationals from Latin America were involved in prostitution in Trinidad and Tobago, though these male migrants are not believed to be trafficked. This trend was attributed to the

---

589 Key informant interview.

590 Approximately USD446 at the time of review.

591 Key informant interview.

592 Key informant interview.

relatively small size of the market for men who have sex with men and the relative autonomy of those involved in same-sex prostitution.<sup>593</sup>

In general, migrants involved in the sex trade were not characterized as “experienced,” but rather as persons whose intention was to spend no more than one year in the sex trade. One informant estimated that the proportion of long-term prostitutes to temporary prostitutes operating in Trinidad was 30:70.<sup>594</sup> Temporary prostitutes normally operate for three months to one year before returning home, but may return to the trade depending on their economic situations.<sup>595</sup>

In the case of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, informants refer to human traffickers as “hotel” or “nightclub” owners in particular as those who actively go abroad to recruit foreign women, or who have recruited foreign women to provide sex services at their establishments.<sup>596</sup>

“...brothel owners actively recruit and bring them (in)...(also) recruit locally and ‘ship’ to Barbados and Tortuga as prostitutes.”<sup>597</sup>

To a lesser extent, other persons are believed to be involved in the recruitment of cheap, illegal labour for the construction industry, in order to reduce labour costs. Whether this constitutes cases of human trafficking is inconclusive from this research.<sup>598</sup> However, repeated reference by key informants to the construction industry as a source of income for irregular immigrants warrants closer examination.

Informants refer to specific cases where other persons collude with human traffickers to facilitate movement of recruits and/or avoid detection.<sup>599</sup> Therefore, references to an “underground network” or “underworld” broaden the definition and profile of human traffickers. Informant comments refer to: “...transport into (sea) and land transport all organized...sometimes law enforcement officials who turn a blind eye.”<sup>600</sup>

References to well-organized recruitment and transportation mechanisms point to the involvement of a wide range of individuals, as expressed by one key informant, “local businessmen, politicians, police all involved” and by another informant, “extremely well-organized, even courts and law enforcement - files disappearing

---

593 Key informant interviews.

594 Key informant interview.

595 Key informant interviews.

596 Key informant interview.

597 Key informant interview.

598 Key informant interview.

599 Key informant interview.

600 Key informant interview.

at the time you are trying to prosecute and cases are dropped as a result - this occurs frequently...organization from recruitment to transport, from visas to law enforcement to courts,” and yet another, “...many benefiting, even travel agents who seem to get back money if they (migrants) do not travel.”<sup>601</sup>

*Links between vulnerable children and child trafficking*

Children, in particular those from Trinidad and Tobago, were believed to be vulnerable to human trafficking in a number of ways. Group discussions included mention of street children, children from single-parent or dysfunctional homes and children exposed to domestic violence, sexual abuse (including incest), and drug abuse in the family. One informant associated the trafficking of children with internal rather than cross-border human trafficking.<sup>602</sup> There was also one informant who reported the recruitment of minors for domestic work and prostitution in houses maintained by local gangs.<sup>603</sup>

Two other informants discussed their impression that local youth are being forced into prostitution by parents in Trinidad and Tobago; this exploitation appeared to exist primarily within homes or in communities.<sup>604</sup>

“(There are) parents in Trinidad (single mothers), who force their daughters into prostitution. More often than not, they conduct business where they live and clients come home. These are minors: as young as 11 years of age and there are no options for leaving.”<sup>605</sup>

One of these key informants reported that “there are street children, but not many who live on the streets. Many are sent out to the streets by relatives or parents to beg and ‘hustle’.”<sup>606</sup> Orphaned children, displaced children, and wards of the state under the age of 18 years old are housed in a number of state-run and state-assisted institutions. There are limitations on available spaces; those over 18 years of age (16 years of age in the case of some homes) can no longer be housed in these institutions. These children are extremely vulnerable to sexual exploitation and other forms of exploitation, as well as those who are of young adult age and are no longer provided for in the system.

---

601 Key informant interviews.

602 Key informant interview.

603 Key informant interview.

604 Key informant interviews.

605 Key informant interview.

606 Key informant interview.

As one informant commented: “There are a few homes (i.e. state institutions) that take them until age 16 and 18, but after this, many have nowhere to go and then end up on the street in prostitution or other situations where they are exploited.”<sup>607</sup>

Informants pointed to a marked increase in child homelessness in Port-of-Spain, as well as emerging crises in other urban areas such as Arima.<sup>608</sup> One informant referred to the existence of sexual molestation and transactional sex in shelters for homeless children, noting that the boys were generally not monitored and the admission of such activities would require additional expenses by homes for surveillance.<sup>609</sup> While one informant referred to such activities within assisted-living institutions for children as prostitution, other informants were hesitant to qualify sexual activity in this context as such, using terms such as “transactional sex” or “trading sex for favours” instead.<sup>610</sup>

As such, the issue of “street children” may present some direct linkage to human trafficking. Three key informant accounts of children who are out of school and who beg and/or act as petty traders denote vulnerability to exploitation in all its forms.<sup>611</sup> In addition to this vulnerability, one informant suggests that young male street children should be considered as a particularly vulnerable group. This is due to the “shame element” and stigma related to their experience with sexual exploitation, which primarily involves sexual intercourse with older males for money. The informant also believed that such boys are prone to drug abuse which exposes them even more to exploitation.<sup>612</sup>

Another informant gave an account of sexual exploitation and child prostitution in Tobago, which offers confirmation of the trends discussed in the literature review. In addition to publicly perceived trends of incest, parents and/or guardians may traffic their children for sexual exploitation. One informant personally knew of three cases in three different villages:

Location 1: “a young girl of about 13 years frequents bars with her mother to pick up clients for prostitution. She eventually got pregnant, the child is now two years old and she is now pregnant again at the age of 15.”<sup>613</sup>

<sup>607</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>608</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>609</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>610</sup> Key Informant interviews.

<sup>611</sup> Key informant interviews.

<sup>612</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>613</sup> Key informant interview.

Location 2 “a school girl (primary) was suspended from school and the parents have not even gone in to find out why. Both parents are in the home, but the father is on drugs. The mother prostitutes her daughter at home by calling male clients to the home.”<sup>614</sup>

Location 3: “a primary school student...her mother was separated from the father and living in Trinidad and she was living with the mother’s family, an uncle. The mother was killed in Trinidad by her male partner. The girl is on the street all hours of night prostituting herself. One time, the police took her, but she is back home as there is no place to keep her and no place for children like her to go...”<sup>615</sup>

One informant described cases of children being sexually exploited and forced into prostitution by parents or guardians.<sup>616</sup> Additionally, two informants specified children who were either not supervised in the daytime and so roamed the streets and/or were sent out to roam the streets, or worked with adults as petty traders or hustlers.<sup>617</sup> While these scenarios do not necessarily present clear links with or denote human trafficking, the fact that these children are on the streets unsupervised and out of school means that they are vulnerable exploitation. Additionally, information presented in the literature review and supported by key informant information provides disturbing accounts of trends in child labour and various forms of exploitation.

One informant, who claims that there are official case records, provided information on the illegal movement of children, mainly from Guyana, to rejoin parents and/or other family members in the United States, who migrated there illegally.

“...Guyanese children...obtain documents for example, T&T passport, legitimate passport that looks like the (trafficked) child. (They are) accompanied by a Trinidadian adult, trafficking the child to the US to rejoin family. There are many cases, not just one. They are sent to Trinidad and paid Trinidad agents escort them.....there are children who are brought or sent here to get visas and the ‘contacts’ appear to coach them on scripted personal information so that they can travel to the US.....know it exists but only find out through random checks and reports...”<sup>618</sup>

614 Key informant interview.

615 Key informant interview.

616 Key informant interview.

617 Key informant interviews.

618 Key informant interview.

In this trend, some parents provide the “accompaniers” or main contacts/organizers with the “use” of their child’s legitimate Trinidad and Tobago passport for this service. The key informant points out that this type of movement flows through a well-established network. The informant added that the vulnerability of a child who “may stay in a hotel or ‘safe place’ of a contact who comes to them and coaches them”, presents ample opportunity for exploitation.<sup>619</sup> The assumption could be made that all went accordingly and these children were reunified with their parents in the United States. However, such movement leaves these children vulnerable to those who “accompany” them and to possible exploitation along the way. In addition, the ability of children to move through the system of migration with someone who is not their parent should be considered a point of vulnerability in terms of migration management.

### *Links to drug trafficking and other crimes*

Approximately 70 percent of the informants expressed the belief that there is a significant link between human trafficking and the drug trade. This belief is underpinned by their assumption that the extensive use of human beings in drug trafficking was a natural predisposition for the vulnerability to human trafficking. For example, a drug mule<sup>620</sup> can become a victim of human trafficking if the element of threat, force, fraud, or coercion is present, and if the drug mule is then exploited (the commodity becomes the person, not the drugs).

Three informants referred to the widely recognized fact that both Trinidad and Tobago function as a trans-shipment hub for drug trafficking, denoting movement both in and out of Trinidad. While there are distinct differences between the use of drug mules and human trafficking, informants were of the impression that these activities presented a particular vulnerability to human trafficking as some drug mules may be coerced or forced into a situation of human trafficking.<sup>621</sup>

Some of the reasons offered by key informants that support this linkage are detailed below:<sup>622</sup>

“Because humans are frequently used to carry drugs...this has given rise to the ‘Eva Project’ - public awareness of drug mules. In a study in March/April 2005, 33% of women convicted of drug trafficking in the women’s prison were foreign. While many are aware that

619 Key informant interview.

620 A person who transports a drug by internally concealing it.

621 Key informant interviews.

622 Key informant interviews.



they are trafficking drugs, many are forced also and coerced under various threats.”<sup>623</sup>

“Significant linkage - Trinidad and Tobago is a known trans-shipment port ([drugs from] Venezuela and Colombia), methods used in drug trafficking also involve humans who conceal it in clothing, baggage and shoes. This use of humans lends itself to a tendency towards human trafficking. Numerous cases of foreign nationals (mainly European) who are caught for drug trafficking in Tobago.”<sup>624</sup>

“Visible links to the drug trade - Trinidad and Tobago is a recognized trans-shipment route for drug trafficking and that of arms, as it functions as a stepping stone for North America, Europe and Latin America. There is significant use of humans in drug trafficking, for example, mules transport through coastal borders.....”<sup>625</sup>

“...significant linkage. See daily cases of narcotics division where mules (at airports) are often coerced into activity (to the United States and the United Kingdom). Trinidad and Tobago is widely recognized as a trans-shipment point between Latin America and the the United States and the United Kingdom. Tobago is now more frequently used, given more direct flights to Europe.”<sup>626</sup>

Prisons and youth detention centres, all of which are located in Trinidad (only those convicted of minor offences remain in Tobago) constitute spaces where young offenders become aware of various types of criminal activity. Drug mules are recruited both directly and indirectly from prisons, as inmates may be drawn into the activity or recruit others upon leaving the detention centre.

One informant noted that volunteers are paid approximately TTD\$60,000 to transport drugs. While the activity involves transporting drugs in the direction of North America, drug mules are also used to transport drugs from South American countries such as Venezuela, where monitoring of such movement is not as stringent as in countries such as the United States.<sup>627</sup>

“In work with deportees, many did not realize they were functioning as drug mules, but carrying luggage/packages as an add-on to the job they

623 The Eva Project is a national awareness programme coordinated by the Ministry of National Security of Trinidad and Tobago to raise public awareness of the issue of drug mules as part of the drug trade.

624 Key informant interview.

625 Key informant interview.

626 Key informant interview.

627 Key informant interview.

were going to. Drug trafficking is a significant reason for increase in returning deportees. Human beings appear to be used a lot as part of drug trafficking.”<sup>628</sup>

The Media review below supports the frequent arrest of foreign nationals for drug offences Coverage of these arrests and informant input portray Trinidad and Tobago as a trans-shipment country, with subtle differences in trends and foreign nationals between Trinidad and Tobago:

- Trinidad is believed to be frequented more heavily by persons coming from Latin America, Africa (particularly Nigeria) and some countries of Europe.
- Persons detected for drug offences in Tobago are mainly from Europe (Dutch, German or Italian nationals).

The fact that multiple informants acknowledged Trinidad and Tobago as a trans-shipment hub for drug trafficking and regular use of drug mules, many of whom are coerced into the activity under threat, denotes a significant vulnerability to human trafficking within the context of drug trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago.

#### *Links between abduction and human trafficking*

When asked about a possible link between human trafficking and kidnapping, one informant offered this explanation: “Kidnapping and TIP are two different scenarios in Trinidad and Tobago. Apart from kidnapping as part of car-jackings and robberies, the trend in Trinidad and Tobago is kidnapping for ransom, where victims are either released after paying undisclosed sums or negotiation, or even found killed...mainly a local trend, no indication that people are transported out of country.”<sup>629</sup>

Information regarding the ease of entry and exit of irregular migrants raises some concern as to the possibility of human trafficking being related to the kidnapping trend in Trinidad and Tobago. However, no specific cases were cited by the informants as proof of this activity.

#### *The possible impact of the Caribbean Single Market Economy (CSME) on human trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago*

Some of the informants (33%) expressed concern about the potential impact of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the dynamic of irregular migration in the region. The literature review drew upon both regional and global examples of exploitation to define certain professional categories, such as “entertainers,” that are used to disguise the movement of exotic dancers and/

<sup>628</sup> Key informant interview.

<sup>629</sup> Key informant interview.

or prostitutes. Some informants were uncertain as to whether the free movement of migrants would assist in regulating the exploitative situations some migrants face. The informants expressed concern about potential human traffickers or irregular migrants who may manipulate loop-holes in the CSME system. One informant noted that Trinidad and Tobago does not have the social structures in place to handle an influx of immigrants. The informant believed that there is little coordination among NGOs and government agencies and that “CSME will bring more opportunity for exploitation, prostitution and will further undermine an uncoordinated response.”<sup>630</sup>

### *Media review*

The Media review was limited to the print media as visual and audio media reports could not be accessed. While few articles directly address human trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago, key words were used to identify reported issues and trends associated with human trafficking. Some of these words included, but were not limited to: trafficking, smuggling, drug trafficking, forced labour, sexual exploitation, prostitution, illegal immigrants, child prostitution, child immigrants, economic exploitation and debt bondage. As such, nearly 500 newsprint articles that made even a minimum reference to the above topics were examined.

One article entitled “Consider These Solutions to Crime”, which made mention of human trafficking in the criminal context of Trinidad and Tobago, encouraged a broader partnership in crime management: “international collaboration as specific aspects of transnational crime is a fundamental necessity...including... human trafficking, drugs transshipment.”<sup>631</sup> In the *Guyana Chronicle* there was an article entitled “Guyanese Girls Lured into Prostitution by Trinidad Company”.<sup>632</sup> The article detailed the plight of three Guyanese females (ages not published) who were seeking assistance from Trinidad and Tobago Immigration officials to retrieve their travel documents and personal belongings from a bogus company in East Trinidad. The company recruited girls and women via television in Guyana for promised job opportunities as telephone operators and masseuses. The article reported that the details of wages, period of employment and tasks described to the Guyanese nationals were different from what was encountered in Trinidad; instead they were required to have sex with clients.

However, drug trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago received a substantial amount of media attention. Numerous cases were reported involving drug mules that were

---

630 Key informant interview.

631 The *Trinidad Guardian*, 10.02.2006

632 <http://www.guayanachronicle.com/ARCHIVES.11/2/2005>.

caught entering Trinidad and Tobago from another country (often Guyana and Jamaica) and heading for a North American or European destination.

On 29 May 2005, *The Express* reported that in the previous two and a half years, the Organized Crime and Narcotics Bureau had seized 39.275kg of illegal drugs. The article points out that there were 10 heroin arrests between 2003 and May 2005 involving locals as well as foreign nationals, including citizens of Venezuela, the Netherlands and Puerto Rico. Numerous articles also detail the arrest of European nationals travelling from Tobago to destinations in Europe. The nationalities that were reported the most frequently include Dutch, German and Italian. Apart from the nationalities and ages of the persons apprehended, little information was provided on the circumstances of these individuals, therefore rendering it difficult to create a profile for them. Although many appeared to be wilful drug traffickers, the trend provides ample opportunity for drug mules to be vulnerable to exploitation, as explored in the previous discussion.

On the topic of prostitution and possible links to human trafficking, a number of articles reported raids on “hotels”, brothels and nightclubs, where groups of foreign nationals, mainly young women, were arrested. An *Express* article entitled “Mayor Turns up Heat on Sex Dens” (2 May 2005), lamented the existence of small hotels and nightclubs in Central and South Trinidad that involved foreign women for use in the sex trade. Consistent with key informant reports, the raids reported the arrest of Colombian, Venezuelan and Guyanese female nationals, as well as locals. Reports did not cover what happened to these women beyond criminal charges, nor did they make reference to human trafficking.

Coverage of the issue of irregular migrants was robust and reports supported many of the observations made by key informants with respect to the significant number of illegal African migrants employed in security firms, the ease of obtaining false Trinidad and Tobago documents and the demand for labour in certain sectors.

The use of advertisements as a method of recruitment was explored by the research team. The team responded to 12 advertisements for young women to work bar maids, live-in domestic workers and exotic dancers. During the period from December 2005 to March 2006, the advertised numbers (which were all mobile numbers) were called by one national researcher. On each occasion, very little detail was given other than to request a telephone number at which to return the call from the researcher, or to arrange for a face-to-face interview. Though this recruitment method was not conclusive, it proved to be easy, low-cost and effective. In accordance with the account from the previous informant, the

use of advertisements in the media may also be considered a successful type of recruitment for human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Among the articles examined, and given the overall absence of articles dealing directly with human trafficking, there was no visible indication of a broad awareness of human trafficking, nor a perception that human trafficking was a pressing issue in Trinidad and Tobago.

### ***Conclusion***

The findings of this research revealed that the human trafficking trends in Trinidad and Tobago include forced labour, sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. Males and females, adults and children, are thought to be trafficked from countries nearby (Guyana, Colombia and Venezuela) as well as from afar (Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Nigeria and China). Confiscation of travel documents, threats of deportation and violence are common tactics used to control victims.

The information obtained in the national survey and key informant interviews revealed possible profiles of victims of human trafficking and some scenarios of the human trafficking process. Situations of migrant females trafficked for sexual exploitation were frequently described, with the victims being deceived by false promises and transported by boat or aeroplane. While cases of human trafficking for domestic servitude and forced labour were noted, they were more limited. There were several references to children, both boys and girls, in Trinidad and Tobago who were particularly vulnerable to human trafficking (for example, street children or children from family circumstances that were difficult); these children seem to be more at risk of falling into exploitative situations or are in exploitative situations already.

Notably, human trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago may overlap with other kinds of crime, such as the smuggling of guns, drugs and migrants, as the criminals use the same networks. There have been several media articles covering situations that suggest elements of human trafficking.

### ***Specific methodology for the Trinidad and Tobago country report (2005 - 2007)***

#### ***The Trinidad and Tobago Researchers***

Between 2005 and 2007, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) contracted Maylene Leu-Bent and Chanzo Grennidge to conduct the research in Trinidad and Tobago.

**Research tools**

The research methodology combines literature and statistical reviews and primary data collection from a national survey questionnaire and key informant interviews conducted by the national researchers.

Research tools included a standardised national survey, which was distributed to participants at a national consultation on human trafficking. A total of 25 questionnaires were completed at the September 2005 National Seminar on Trafficking in Persons in Trinidad and Tobago. Original questionnaire scripts were collected by personnel from IOM Washington with copies passed on to the national researcher for analysis. Female respondents outnumbered their male counterparts at 72 percent, with a vast majority (84%) representing Government agencies. Only 8 percent of the respondents represented the NGO sector and International agencies respectively.

A standardised interview questionnaire, also developed by IOM, was also used to complete a total of 37 interviews. The questionnaire was extensive in its coverage of all issues surrounding human trafficking including, but not limited to all aspects of irregular migration, profiles of migrants, basic knowledge of human trafficking, specific details of cases of human trafficking and recommendations for policy responses. A tape recorder was used only with full agreement of the informants and recordings were used to ensure accuracy of informant contributions and verbatim quotes for the purposes of the reports.

Among the 37 key informants interviewed, 30 were in Trinidad and seven in Tobago. Among these respondents, 20 were male and 17 were female. Informants were drawn firstly from participants at the national consultation and then from additional contacts that were established through participants and/or persons who functioned in key sectors where they would have access to critical information.

**Chart 17: Distribution of key informants interviewed in Trinidad and Tobago**

Male	Female	Government	NGO
20	17	23	14

While the interview questionnaire was used with all key informants, focus was placed on specific areas of knowledge and/or experience that a particular informant possessed.

An extensive independent review of media sources was conducted using internet searches as well as references, reports and other literature. A review of newsprint media articles was examined for the period from November 2003 to February

2006, where approximately 500 newsprint articles were examined. *The Express*, *The Trinidad Guardian* and the *Newsday* were the newspapers reviewed. The Media review sought to examine the extent to which the media is aware of human trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago through the number of reports on the issue and the depth of this coverage. In the absence of many articles on human trafficking, articles that covered other possibly related key issues were examined, such as drug trafficking, forced labour, sexual exploitation, prostitution, illegal immigrants, child prostitution, child immigrants, economic exploitation and debt bondage. This resulted in a large number of articles examined. The use of web-based and non-literary secondary sources was also considered essential to the development of the context of the information received from primary sources and the identification of potential informants. Secondary sources consulted included advertisements, film, newspaper and journal articles and reports, as well as the archives on sex tourism and pornography-related digital networks/list-serves.

### ***Research limitations***

The absence of statistical data and information on human trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago and the general weaknesses in the collection, collation and accessibility of relevant data represented the most significant limiting factors to the research. The statistical data is limited in that it addresses human trafficking indirectly, presenting data on migration, proxy or indirect statistical data, and Caribbean and national research on key related issues. Nevertheless, these data provide the context in which trends in human trafficking may be discussed.<sup>633</sup>

The present exploratory assessment is heavily weighted on qualitative information which is intended to draw out trends around human trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago. The small and purposive sample size used for this research does not allow for generalization, but rather highlights trends that require attention. Additionally, access to potential victims of human trafficking was felt by the researchers to pose a security threat and as such could not be pursued.

---

633 See Kempadoo (2004), Kempadoo (1999), Hunte and Lewis (2002), Craig (2003), Dunn (2002) as cited in the Literature and Statistical Review.





## Part III. Responding to human trafficking

### *Responding to the Challenge*

The complexity of human trafficking requires a holistic response that is both broad enough to address the problem on multiple levels and specific enough to make sense in the local context. Identifying the local context and the specific mechanisms of human trafficking that are taking place within a country are essential to creating a strategic response. Prevention, protection and prosecution efforts tend to be the primary pillars on which many comprehensive counter-trafficking strategies are built.

Prevention activities are extremely important in combating human trafficking. For example, countries of origin or countries with internal human trafficking may strengthen education or create employment programmes to increase opportunities among people that could be otherwise vulnerable to human trafficking. A transit country could work on strengthening border control and provide training to border and immigration officials to enable them to identify sub-groups of trafficked persons within larger migrant groups moving through their country, legally or illegally. Destination countries may look at exploitation taking place within their borders and work to strengthen the labour rights of migrants, or facilitate legal flows of migrant workers to lessen the demand for irregular migrants.

In addition to activities designed to prevent human trafficking, protecting victims is an important part of any counter-trafficking response. Protection includes keeping identified victims safe while meeting their immediate basic needs (for example, shelter, food, clothing and medical and psychological care). Keeping victims safe also requires a high level of confidentiality when managing cases; the identity of victims must be protected. This is necessary not only to protect victims and those who help them from the human traffickers, but also to protect the victims from potential stigma within their families or home communities.

Protection also means creating a social, political and legal environment that works to assist victims of human trafficking. Emphasis must be given to the fact that victims of human trafficking are victims of a crime and must be recognized and treated as such, not as criminals themselves. Relevant legislation can be used to prosecute human traffickers and protect victims. This could involve the creation of a special or temporary visa to allow victims who are foreign nationals to remain legally in the country of destination. Additionally, access to the judicial system offers victims the opportunity to seek justice and compensation. Protection could

also involve helping victims return to their home community or country through safe voluntary return and reintegration.

Prosecuting human traffickers is another important part of a comprehensive strategy to combat human trafficking. Strengthening legislation and policy is necessary to effectively disrupt and/or stop the human trafficking process by holding traffickers accountable for their crimes. In some countries, the assets of human traffickers are confiscated and used to fund assistance programmes for victims of human trafficking.

Finally, the following crosscutting themes in the field of counter-trafficking must be noted:

- a victim-centred approach,
- a gendered response,
- cooperation and partnership.

The most successful strategies are those that address the root causes of human trafficking, that assist victims, strengthen the legal framework in place to prosecute human traffickers and sensitize relevant actors to ensure that victims are at the centre of counter-trafficking activities. A victim-centred approach is based on human rights, protection and safety, self-determination and participation, voluntariness, full information and consent, non-discrimination, confidentiality, individualized treatment and care, and the best interest of the child.

No one person, agency or organization alone can combat human trafficking effectively. Multi-sector cooperation is imperative given the complex nature of the crime, whether it is internal or international. Communities of origin, transit and destination must work together to recognize the mechanisms of human trafficking, to properly identify and assist victims, and prosecute and punish human traffickers.

## **1. Select Caribbean country responses to human trafficking**

Caribbean governments and civil society have been working to better understand and respond to human trafficking.

In the region, counter-trafficking efforts began to take shape in the early 2000s. The biggest challenge for many of the Caribbean countries was not having the essential tools to combat the crime. Prior to 2005, only a few countries had ratified the Protocol, established a national plan of action, enacted comprehensive national legislation and/or had specific case management experience.

**Chart 18: The institutional framework of Select Caribbean country responses to human trafficking prior to the publication of the *Exploratory Assessment* First Edition in June 2005**

1-14 = CARICOM Member States	UN Transnational Crime Convention	UN Protocol against TIP	National Anti-TIP Law	National Anti-TIP Task Force	National Plan of Action	National Focal Point	Lead agencies or stakeholders	Case experience as noted by IOM Washington
1. Antigua and Barbuda	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2. The Bahamas	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N
3. Barbados	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
4. Belize	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
4. Dominica	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N
6. Grenada	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N
7. Guyana	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
8. Haiti	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9. Jamaica	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N
10. St. Lucia	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N
11. St. Kitts and Nevis	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
12. St. Vincent and the Grenadines	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
13. Suriname	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
14. Trinidad and Tobago	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
15. Aruba	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
16. The Dominican Republic	N	N	N	-	-	-	-	N
17. The Netherlands Antilles	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Source: IOM, 2010.

Note: IOM created this chart using available public information, which may not reflect government records. The official British, French and American territories in the Caribbean as well as Cuba and Montserrat were not included in this chart.

The countries in the region have made considerable progress in preventative, protective and prosecutorial efforts in combating the crime of human trafficking between 2005 and 2010, as reflected in the chart below.

**Chart 19: The institutional framework of Select Caribbean country responses to human trafficking at the time of publication of the *Exploratory Assessment* Second Edition in 2010**

1–14 = CARICOM Member States	UN Transnational Crime Convention	UN Protocol against TIP	National Anti-TIP Law	National Anti-TIP Task Force	National Plan of Action	National Focal Point	Lead agencies or stakeholders	Case experience as noted by IOM Washington
1. Antigua and Barbuda	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
2. The Bahamas	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y
3. Barbados	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
4. Belize	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
5. Dominica	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N
6. Grenada	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N
7. Guyana	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
8. Haiti	N	N	N	-	-	-	Y	Y
9. Jamaica	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
10. St. Lucia	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N
11. St. Kitts and Nevis	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N
12. St. Vincent and the Grenadines	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
13. Suriname	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
14. Trinidad and Tobago	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
15. Aruba	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
16. The Dominican Republic	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
17. The Netherlands Antilles	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Source: IOM, 2010.

Note: IOM created this chart based on available public information, which may not reflect government records. The British, French and American territories in the Caribbean as well as Cuba and Montserrat were not included in this chart. The legal framework (ratification of the Convention and the Protocol, and enactment of legislation) for Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles was received through the relationship with the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

***Best practices in the region***

Throughout the Caribbean, national multi-sector coalitions based on cooperation have been formed with stakeholders representing immigration, police, social services, foreign affairs, the departments of labour, education and health, faith and community-based organizations and the media.

Assigning tasks in the areas of prevention, protection, and prosecution is crucial for cooperation among stakeholders and for a balanced use of human and financial resources. For example, in The Bahamas and Jamaica faith-based groups are seen as important partners in prevention activities. Trade Unions offer information and awareness-building seminars, advocacy and make efforts at prevention. The media can be an important ally for informing the public about human trafficking and its consequences. The media is also an excellent mechanism for assessing the current public perception and knowledge about the crime of human trafficking. Immigration, police, labour inspectors, social workers and members of civil society organizations are working to identify and assist potential victims. Relevant law-enforcement agencies are taking steps to investigate leads, find evidence and prosecute the alleged perpetrators. Social services, children's and women's advocacy groups and other NGOs were noted as agencies providing immediate assistance (shelter, food, clothing, safety) to identified victims of human trafficking.

Partners in Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, St Lucia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago have been working closely with IOM and others to complete a number of capacity-building activities, ranging from training and public awareness to victim assistance and legislative initiatives.

IOM has helped to train thousands of Caribbean partners on the basic concepts of human trafficking. These partners, in turn, serve in the national task force or informal working group and coordinate local efforts.

Some countries, like Jamaica, have taken steps to prevent human traffickers from using newspaper advertisements as a recruitment method by holding the newspaper companies accountable for the advertised content. Other countries, like Guyana, have established focal points that are trained to identify and assist victims throughout the countryside.

For awareness-raising activities, some national partners devise their own information campaign strategies, provide input on campaign material created by IOM, and operate and ensure that their local hotline are equipped to handle telephone calls. Hundreds of thousands of IOM campaign brochures, posters and

leaflets have been distributed by local partners in nine countries. Additionally, partners participate in interviews for local media and contribute content to counter-trafficking newsletter published by IOM.

In addition to contributing time and effort (namely human resources), many countries also cover expenses related to trainings and awareness-raising activities, allocating line items in the budget for material items.

For direct victim assistance, national partners coordinate among local stakeholders and organizations such as IOM, ensuring that the immediate, medium- and long-term needs of the victim are satisfied. Costs related to immediate assistance (shelter, clothing, food) have been absorbed by local partners, while longer-term support can be resourced through IOM programmes.

The impact of the response of select Caribbean countries can be summarized as follows:

- There is now a large network of Caribbean persons who are aware of and want to counteract the crime of human trafficking.
- There is growing involvement of governmental and non-governmental partners in planning and completing activities, including the establishment and maintenance of focal points, task forces, hotlines, campaigns, as well as assistance to victims and investigation of human trafficking.
- Trainings, workshops and other technical tools provided to local stakeholders have raised awareness and brought recognition to key-stakeholder roles in the response. For example, the target audiences have expanded from immigration, police, civil society organizations and social services to also include parents (as prevention) and foreign affairs officers (as prevention and protection).
- The national response has broadened from an approach that focused mostly on prevention to also include protection and prosecution. In the beginning, governments often denied that human trafficking existed in their countries and only wanted to focus on prevention, such as how to prevent the crime from entering the jurisdiction. Nowadays, high-level bureaucrats and politicians often make comments in the press that the crime can and most likely exists, despite a dearth of official data and records. Along with this public acknowledgement, governments are emphasizing the need for protection and seeking to institutionalize victim assistance and referral processes.

- There is an investment in human and financial resources, with ministries and departments allocating a line item in their budget for counter-trafficking activities.
- Partners have established and are using mechanisms (for example, hotlines and standard operating procedures) to regularly screen potential victims to determine who is a victim of human trafficking.
- Partners are assisting identified victims through cooperation between and coordination among the stakeholders in the place of origin and destination.
- Partners are collaborating with counterparts in other countries in the areas of prevention, protection and prosecution.

Overall, the Caribbean countries have achieved considerable progress since 2005. The majority of them have adopted the necessary legal and technical tools for immediate and long-term effectiveness, demonstrated ownership by designing and implementing strategies and ensured sustainability of the efforts by allocating human, material and financial resources.

## 2. Recommendations

IOM recognizes the different actions that governments across the region have already taken to raise awareness and combat human trafficking. To complement the region's progress, IOM recommends some measures to respond to human trafficking that are comprehensively based on the areas of prevention, protection and prosecution.

The recommendations enumerated below are drawn from international standards and best practices and are appropriate for the regional and national levels, without being assigned to a specific country. While each country in the Caribbean has a unique context that must be reflected in national strategies, there are several areas where countries throughout the region can support each other when responding to this serious crime.

### *Policy Framework*

1. Establish and maintain regular contact with national focal points in the region on all issues pertaining to human trafficking operations and victim assistance.
2. Establish a National Task Force or Working Group on Human Trafficking that brings together relevant ministries, agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and representatives of civil society to monitor human trafficking as well as develop and implement policy to combat human trafficking.
3. Develop and/or revise the National Plan of Action, delegating priority action to stakeholders in the areas of prevention, protection and prosecution. Each area in the Plan should designate a lead government ministry or agency and necessary financial resources, stipulate a timeline for implementing the different actions included in the Plan, and have monitoring and evaluation processes.

### *Legal Framework*

4. Sign and ratify the United Nations *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.
5. Using the regional, model law on human trafficking developed by IOM as a guide, develop and enact national legislation with the following:
  - a. Precisely define the crime of human trafficking according to international standards and include expressly all exploitative practices covered by the international definition of human trafficking (forced labour, sexual exploitation, servitude, etc);



- b. Ensure that the law prescribes measures to protect victims, including care for child victims;
  - c. Ensure that trafficked persons are not punished for any offences or activities related to them having been trafficked, such as prostitution and immigration violations;
  - d. Ensure that victims of human trafficking are protected from summary deportation, or return to their country or region of origin where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that such return would represent a significant security risk to the trafficked person or to his/her family;
  - e. Establish a legal mechanism that grants temporary or permanent residency in countries of transit or destination for identified victims;
  - f. Ensure that victims of human trafficking are offered the possibility of obtaining compensation for damages suffered;
  - g. Provide for proportional criminal penalties to be applied to persons found guilty of human trafficking in aggravating circumstances, including offences involving trafficking in children or offences committed or involving complicity by State officials;
  - h. Provide for the confiscation of the mechanisms and proceeds of human trafficking, and related offences, to be used for the benefit of trafficked persons.
6. Using the Legal Review on Trafficking in Women and Children in the Caribbean as a basis, identify current national legal codes that are applicable to prosecuting human trafficking and train law-enforcement officials and the judiciary on their application.

### ***Investigation and Prosecution of Human Traffickers***

7. Strengthen training for law-enforcement personnel, immigration and customs officials, prosecutors and judges and other relevant officials in the prevention of human trafficking, prosecuting the traffickers and protecting the rights of victims, including child victims, especially when victims provide evidence and serve as witnesses in criminal investigations.
8. Establish direct channels of communication within and between Caribbean countries as well as with countries outside the region such as Brazil, Canada, Colombia, the Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States and Venezuela, which link investigators, law-enforcement agencies, regional and intergovernmental agencies. This could be modelled on experience with Interpol, the Caribbean Financial Task Force or the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties.
9. Take necessary measures to identify and trace financial proceeds from human trafficking. These proceeds should be confiscated and or seized if

it is proven that they are a result of the crime of human trafficking. Money confiscated could be used to fund victim assistance programmes and provide individualized victim compensation.

### ***Prevention, Awareness-raising and Information***

10. Use information materials provided through IOM and other organizations to support the development and dissemination of regional and national awareness on human trafficking that focus on raising public awareness among particular target groups including victims, policymakers, law-enforcement officials, medical and social service providers, diplomatic and consular staff and the media on human trafficking, the differences between human trafficking and migrant smuggling, and the response of each country in prosecuting human traffickers and protecting victims.
  - a. Special attention should be given to educating families about child trafficking.
  - b. Outreach and awareness-raising efforts in communities of origin should be linked with community development programmes offering other options for income generation and/or education.

### ***Data Collection***

11. Across the region, standardize the collection of information and field data on human trafficking, and related movements, such as irregular migration and migrant smuggling, which may include a human trafficking element. Ensure the disaggregation of migration data on the basis of age, gender, nationality, date and place of entry and departure, place of visa renewal, overstay and deportation. Share this data with counterparts across the region.

### ***Identification, Assistance and Support to Victims***

12. Establish screening and victim identification guidelines to support the rapid and accurate identification of trafficked persons and ensure that special procedures are in place for the consistent and rapid identification of trafficked children across the region.
13. Develop and institute coordination procedures between law enforcement and other stakeholders for immediate victim assistance (safe shelter, food, clothing, etc.)
14. Introduce standard procedures within the region for the voluntary return and reintegration of victims of human trafficking in their countries of origin and the extradition of human traffickers for prosecution. Use the IOM Global Emergency Fund to provide assistance in the interim and consider establishing a regional voluntary return and reintegration fund.

15. Identify new and existing resources in government and non-governmental organizations that could be used to assist trafficking victims. Establish a strategy to provide assistance to victims of human trafficking, to ensure the proper identification and referral of trafficked persons, including trafficked children, and to ensure that they receive adequate assistance while protecting their human rights. Victim assistance services should include: safe and appropriate accommodation, counselling, health care, free legal assistance, education, vocational and employment opportunities.
  - a. Identify a national hotline that can serve as the information point For the community, government and non-governmental officials, media, migrant groups, potential victims of human trafficking and victims of human trafficking.
  - b. Targeted training to government and non-governmental organizations, to develop the capacity of reception centres or other shelters to receive trafficked persons by providing physical security, basic material assistance, medical care, psychological counselling and legal assistance to victims.



## Conclusion

Migration is extensive within the Caribbean, including irregular migration. As previously stated, it is difficult to identify human trafficking victims within regular and irregular migration flows. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including literature reviews, national surveys and key informant interviews, this exploratory research points to some level of internal and/or external human trafficking in all the countries studied.

Victims of human trafficking in the Caribbean region were found to be men, women, boys and girls from the Caribbean as well as from countries outside the region. These victims were found in multiple forms of exploitation including sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude. While women and girls were found to be vulnerable due to gender-based violence, discrimination and sexual exploitation; boys were increasingly found to be at risk. Some boys were already living on the streets and were exposed to drug traffickers, while others were forced into sexual relationships with older men as a means of survival for themselves or their families.

Major push factors throughout the Caribbean included poverty, socio-economic status and inequality often based on gender and/or ethnicity. Push factors are combined with recruitment methods such as word of mouth, newspaper advertisements, Internet sites and radio advertisements, to manipulate flows of low-skilled and cheap labour throughout the Caribbean.

While there was not a widespread scale of human trafficking in the eight participating countries, exploitative labour conditions were present, especially of migrant populations. Many informants recognised that some migrants, including those who may be potential victims of human trafficking, come from dire situations and may choose to remain in exploitative situations rather than return home. Some informants also expressed negative opinions of migrant workers, especially those in the sex trade or entertainment industry. The combination of discrimination and exploitation make migrants even more vulnerable to human trafficking.

The crime of human trafficking is believed to operate in conjunction with other organized criminal activities, such as migrant smuggling or drug trafficking. Though the extent of this link is not yet known, criminals will expand into lucrative operations based on demand, especially when the mechanisms to satisfy that demand in terms of movement and transportation are already in place. Corruption and complacency are concerns throughout the Caribbean region and contribute to the facilitation of human trafficking.

A diverse range of stakeholders from government and civil society is necessary to counter the crime of human trafficking in a comprehensive and effective manner. The complexity of human trafficking requires a multi-sector approach to strengthen legislation, inform and raise awareness, and provide services to victims of human trafficking. Adding the media as a public information and education ally can be an effective strategy in combating human trafficking.

This *Exploratory Assessment*, both the first and second editions, was primarily a qualitative exercise and not intended to supply statistics as to the numbers of trafficking victims within each country. The purpose of the research was to provide a starting point for the participating countries to examine human trafficking within their local context and to encourage dialogue about how to combat this crime within the region. Human trafficking exists at some level in the eight countries that participated in this study. The potential for human trafficking to grow makes a strong, pro-active approach to addressing the crime an important issue for the nations of the Caribbean and the region as a whole.

## References

### Introduction and Caribbean regional overview

- Allen, C., R. McLean and K. Nurse  
 2004 "The Caribbean, HIV/AIDS and Security," in *Caribbean Security in the Age of Terror*, Ian Randle Press, Jamaica.
- Beckles, H.  
 1990 *A History of Barbados from Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, Cambridge University Press, New York.
- Caribbean Community (CARICOM)  
 2003 Secretariat.
- Greene, E.  
 2003 *Accelerating the Caribbean Response to HIV/AIDS*, Presentation at the Third Annual General Meeting of the Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS, Georgetown, Guyana, 12-13 November.
- International Migration Policy Programme (IMP)  
 2001 *The International Migration Policy Seminar for the Caribbean Region: Summary of Priority Topics Addressed*. Kingston, Jamaica, 28-31 May.
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
 2006 *IOM Counter-Trafficking Training Modules*. IOM, Washington, D.C.  
 2004 *HIV/AIDS and Mobile Populations in The Caribbean: A Baseline Assessment*. IOM, Santo Domingo.  
 2008 *Handbook on Performance Indicators for Counter-Trafficking Projects*. IOM, Washington, D.C. 2009  
 2009 *Caring for Trafficked Persons: Guidance for Health Providers*, IOM, Geneva.
- Marshall, D.  
 1998 *HIV/AIDS and Mobility in the Caribbean: Policies and Strategic Priorities for Interventions*, Caribbean Consultation on HIV/AIDS: Strategies and Resources for a Coordinated Regional Response, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 3-June. Nankoe,

- Alia (Forthcoming) *Mobility and HIV in the Caribbean*. IOM Geneva. Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)
- 2004 General information. Available online at <http://www.paho.org>.
- Reddock, R. E.
- 1994 *Women, Labour & Politics in Trinidad & Tobago: A History*. Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston. Statistical Review Curaçao, 1999-2001
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- 2004 *Human Development Report*. [www.undp.org/hdr2004](http://www.undp.org/hdr2004).
- 2009 *Human Development Report*. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/indicators/88.html>.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- 2000 *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*. [http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking\\_protocol.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_protocol.html).
- ### **An Analysis of Cross-Country Trends in Trafficking**
- Dunn, L. L.
- 2002 “*The Bahamas, The Situation of Children in the Worst Forms of Child Labour in a tourism economy: A Rapid Assessment* December 2002,” [http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child\\_labour/rapid\\_assessment/RABahamaspdf](http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child_labour/rapid_assessment/RABahamaspdf).
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- 2002 “*Child Labour In The Bahamas: Summary of Research Findings based on a Rapid Assessment* Study by the International Labour Organization,” [http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child\\_labour/fact\\_sheets/BahmsFS.pdf](http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child_labour/fact_sheets/BahmsFS.pdf).
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- 2004 *HIV/AIDS and Mobile Populations in The Caribbean: A Baseline Assessment*. IOM, Santo Domingo.
- Poverty Reduction Fund of St Lucia
- 2000 *Social Assessment Study of 2000*.



*Stabroek News* newspaper

2004 "Plan to combat people trafficking," *Stabroek News*, 23 April.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

2000 *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.*

## **The Bahamas**

Bahamas Drug Information System

2001 *Annual National Report.*

Caribbean Community Secretariat

2003 *Men and Women in the Caribbean Community, Facts and Figures, 1980-2001.*

Dunn, L. L.

2002 *The Bahamas, The Situation of Children in the Worst Forms of Child Labour in a Tourism Economy: A Rapid Assessment* December 2002, [http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child\\_labour/rapid\\_assessment/RABahamaspdf](http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child_labour/rapid_assessment/RABahamaspdf).

Bahamas Immigration Department

2004 Enforcement Unit.

Ferguson, J.

2003 *Migration in the Caribbean: Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Beyond*, Minority Rights Group International, <http://www.minorityrights.org/admin/Download/pdf/MRGCaribbeanReport.pdf>.

Goździak, E. M. and E. Collett

2004 *Not Much to Write Home About: Research on Human Trafficking in North America*, Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown University Washington, DC, Presented at a meeting on Improving Data and Research on Human Trafficking, Rome, Italy, 27-28 May.

- Higgins, J. K.  
2004 *The Central Bank of The Bahamas and The Bahamian Economy: An Analysis*, The Counsellors Ltd., Publishers, Nassau. <http://bahamaweb.com/pds/publications.htm>.
- Hughes, D.  
2000 "The 'Natasha' Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of trafficking in Women," *Journal of International Affairs*, Spring, <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/natasha.htm>.
- Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM)  
2001 "Trafficking of Women and Children for Sexual Exploitation in the Americas," Fact Sheet, July.
- International Labour Organization (ILO)  
2002a *Child Labour in The Bahamas: Summary of Research Findings based on a Rapid Assessment Study by the International Labour Organization*. [http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child\\_labour/fact\\_sheets/BahmsFS.pdf](http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child_labour/fact_sheets/BahmsFS.pdf).  
2002b *Unbearable to the human heart: Child trafficking and action to eliminate it*. International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, <http://www.ilo.com>.
- Kalny, C. T. (Ed.)  
2003 *The Greenwood Encyclopaedia of Women's Issues Worldwide*, Greenwood Press, Westport.
- Kelly, Liz  
2001 *Conducting Research on Trafficking: Guidelines and Suggestions for Further Research: Guidelines and Suggestions for Further Research*, IOM Gender Working Group and Research and Publications Division, November. Kempadoo, Kamala (Ed.)  
1999 *Sun, Sex and Gold: Tourism and Sex Work in the Caribbean*, Rowan and Littlefield Publishers Inc., Lanham. Levine, Daniel H.  
1995 "Migration from the Caribbean: Issues for the 1990s," *The Journal of the International Institute*, 3(1), The University of Michigan. [http://www.umich.edu/~iinet/journal/vol3no1/v3n1\\_MigrationfromtheCaribbean.html](http://www.umich.edu/~iinet/journal/vol3no1/v3n1_MigrationfromtheCaribbean.html).

Marshall, D.

- 1979 *The Haitian Problem: Illegal Migration to The Bahamas*, Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, Mona.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of The Bahamas

- 2002 Unpublished data, The Bahamas.

Moss, A. C.

- 2004 "The Haitian Situation -- Part 2," *The Nassau Guardian* Online. 18 March, <http://www.thenassauguardian.com/>.

Miko, F. T. and G. Jea-Hyun Park

- 2000 "Trafficking in Women and Children: The U.S. and International Response," *Congressional Research Service Report 98-649 C*, 10 May. <http://www.globalmarch.org/child-trafficking/virtual-library/traffickingwomen.htm>.

Poitier, Khashan

- 2002 "Dead person among 41 Haitian illegals found," *The Nassau Guardian*, 20 December.

Project DIANA

- 1994 *Human Rights Delegation Report on Haitians in The Bahamas*, <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/diana/haiti/haitibahama.htm>.

Sawyer, J.

- 2004 "Haitian Beatings," Island 102.9 FM, Radio Report, March 29.

Thomas-Hope, E.

- 2004 *Data and Research on Human Trafficking in the Caribbean*, University of the West Indies Mona, Jamaica, Presented at a meeting on Improving Data and Research on Human Trafficking, Rome, Italy, 27-28 May.
- 2003 *Irregular Migration and Asylum Seekers*, United Nations University Press, World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER), <http://www.wider.unu.edu/conference/conference-2002-3/conference%20papers/hope.pdf>.

Treco, R. N.M.

- 2002 "The Haitian Diaspora in The Bahamas," Florida International University, Department of International Relations, 17 April. [http://lacc.fiu.edu/research\\_publications/working\\_papers/working\\_paper\\_04.pdf](http://lacc.fiu.edu/research_publications/working_papers/working_paper_04.pdf).

United Nations (UN)

- 2003 *Illegal Drug Trade in the Caribbean: Trends 2000-2001*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Caribbean Regional Office, Bridgetown, Barbados, WI, February. [http://www.unodc.org/pdf/barbados/caribbean\\_drug-trends\\_2001-2002.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/barbados/caribbean_drug-trends_2001-2002.pdf).
- 2000 *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*,

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

- 2000 *Human Development Report 2000*, Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford.

## Barbados

Andaiye

- 2003 "Smoke and Mirrors: The Illusion of CARICOM Women's Growing Economic Empowerment: Post-Beijing," in G. Tang Nain and B. Bailey (Eds.), *Gender Equality in the Caribbean: Reality or Illusion*, CARICOM Secretariat and Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston.

*Barbados Advocate* newspaper

- 2004a Democratic Labour Party, *Barbados Advocate*, 9 July.
- 2004b "Need for protocol on regional workers," *Barbados Advocate*, 9 July.
- 2004c "Home drums must beat first and loudly," *Barbados Advocate*, 22 July.
- 2004d "Treat them equally: Senator Sir Roy Trotman urges fair deal for migrant workers," *Barbados Advocate*, 22 July.

Barriteau, V. E.

- 2003 "Beyond a Backlash: The Frontal Assault on Containing Caribbean Women in the Decade of the 1990s," in G. Tang Nain and B. Bailey (Eds.), *Gender Equality in the Caribbean: Reality*

or *Illusion*, CARICOM Secretariat and Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston.

Beckles, H. McD.

- 1990 *A History of Barbados from Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State*, Cambridge University Press, New York.

Brennan, D.

- 2004 *Methodological Challenges to Doing Research on Trafficking: Tales from the Field*, Presented at a meeting on Improving Data and Research on Human Trafficking, Rome, Italy, 27-28 May.

Caribbean Times Live

- 2004 "Barbados Airport Scam," 7 May. [www.caribbeantimes.co.uk/iframe\\_story.asp?NID=364](http://www.caribbeantimes.co.uk/iframe_story.asp?NID=364).

Central Bank of Barbados

- 2004a *Review of Economy for First 6 Months of 2004*, 28 July. <http://www.centralbank.org.bb/Publications/EconRevJul2004.pdf>.  
2004b Various reports: <http://www.centralbank.org.bb>.

DaSilva, F.

- 2004 "Barbados-Guyana Situation," *Nation Newspaper*, 5 September. <http://www.nationnews.com/StoryView.cfm?Record=53157>.

*Daily Nation* newspaper

- 2004a "Sir Roy wants registry to safeguard local workers," *Daily Nation*, 18 May.  
2004b "Sir Roy: Weed out bad employees," *Daily Nation*, 22 July.  
2004c "Nassar knocks CSME: Guyanese migrants must be controlled," *Daily Nation*, 16 August.  
2004d "Unfit homes: Probe into non-nationals housing," *Weekend Nation*, 27 August.

Diez de Medina, R.

- 1997 *Poverty and Income Distribution in Barbados 1996*, Report to the Inter-American Development Bank.

Goździak, E. M. and E. Collett

- 2004 *Not Much to Write Home About: Research on Human Trafficking in North America*, Institute for the Study of International Migration,

Georgetown University Washington, DC, Presented at a meeting on Improving Data and Research on Human Trafficking Rome, Italy, 27-28 May.

Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) and Inter-American Children's Institute in association with DePaul University

- 2002 *Final Report on Trafficking in Women and Children: Research Findings and Follow-up*, Presented at the XXXI Assembly of Delegates of CIM, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, October.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- 2003 *Seduction, Sale and Slavery: Trafficking in Women and Children in Southern Africa*, IOM, Southern Africa.
- 2002 *Shattered Dreams: Report on Trafficking in Persons in Azerbaijan*, IOM, Azerbaijan.
- 2001 *Deceived Migrants from Tajikistan: A Study of Trafficking in Women*, IOM, Geneva.

Kelly, L.

- 2001 *Conducting Research on Trafficking: Guidelines and Suggestions for Further Research*, IOM Gender Working Group and Research and Publications Division, November.

Reddock, R. E.

- 1994 *Women, Labour & Politics in Trinidad & Tobago: A History*, Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston.

Statistical Department

- 2000 Barbados Population and Housing Census.

*Sunday Sun* newspaper

- 2004a "BEC against registry: Director says migrant labour must not displace Bajans," *Sunday Sun*, 6 June.
- 2004b "'Scams' luring Guyanese here," *Sunday Sun*, 1 August.
- 2004c Mac Callender, *Sunday Sun*, 22 August.

Thomas-Hope, E.

- 2004 *Data and Research on Human Trafficking in the Caribbean*, University of the West Indies Mona, Jamaica, Presented at a meeting on Improving Data and Research on Human Trafficking, Rome, Italy, 27-28 May.

## United Nations (UN)

- 2004 *Human Development Report: Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*, Published for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Oxford University Press, New York. [http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/pdf/hdr04\\_HDI.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/pdf/hdr04_HDI.pdf).

**Guyana**

## Andaiye

- 1995 *Democracy and Development: the Case of Guyana*, WAND Occasional Paper, Critical Perspectives on Human Rights in the Caribbean: Regional Conference Port of Spain, 26-28 January. *You Got to Get Good Heart: Stories by Guyanese Women Traders*, Mimeo, undated.

## Bulkan, J.

- 2004 Presentation to Ministry of Amerindian Affairs Strategy Planning Meeting, 7 June.

## Cabral, C.

- 2004 *Voices of Children: Experiences with Violence*, in collaboration with MLHSS, RTWDP, and UNICEF-Guyana, Georgetown, June.

*Catholic Standard* newspaper

- 2004 Article dated 2 August.

## Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

- 2004 *Report of the CARICOM Regional Task Force on Crime and Security*, Georgetown.

## Danns, G. K. Ph.D.

- 2002 *Guyana - The Situation of Children in the Worst Forms of Child Labour: A Rapid Assessment*, ILO Sub Regional Office for the Caribbean, Port of Spain, Trinidad, October.

## Email Correspondence

- 2004 National Research and Documentation Centre for Gender and Development, 31 August.

## Government of Guyana

- 2004a *Bill No. 12 of Combating Trafficking in Persons*, Georgetown.

- 2004b *Guyana Poverty Reduction Strategy Progress Report 2004*, Georgetown.
- 2003a *Convention on the Rights of the Child, Guyana Report 1993-2003*, Georgetown.
- 2003b *The Economic Status of Women in Guyana*, Women's Affairs Bureau, Georgetown.
- 2003c *The 2003 Report on Progress towards the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals*, Guyana, Georgetown.
- 2002a *Education for All-Fast Track Initiative Country Proposal/Credible Plan*, Georgetown.
- 2002b *Report of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana under Article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women 1998-2002*, Georgetown.
- 2001a *Guyana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, Georgetown.
- 2001b *Report of the Guyana Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey*, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Regional Tables for Guyana, Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown. <http://www.childinfo.org>.

Government of Guyana / UNICEF

- 2003 *Report of the Mid-Term Review of the Government of Guyana - UNICEF Program of Cooperation 2001-2005*, Georgetown, December.

*Guyana Chronicle* newspaper

- 2004 "The exploitation must be addressed," *Guyana Chronicle*, Editorial, 18 June.

Guyanese Human Rights Association

- 2000 *Concerns over the Vulnerability of Minors at Corriverton Border*, February.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- 2004 *Guyana Country Brief*, updated in July.

Ismail S.

- 2003 *National Plan of Action on Nutrition*. Revised draft.

*Kaieteur News* newspaper

- 2004a "Minister Dubs US State Dept. Report Unfair," *Kaieteur News*, 17 June.
- 2004b Article dated 7 July.



## Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, Government of Guyana

- 2004 Draft Working Document: "Report on Strategy Planning Meeting," Georgetown, 7-8 June.

## Ministry of Education, Government of Guyana

- 2001 *Digest of Educational Statistics of Guyana 1999-2000*, Georgetown.

## Ministry of Labour, Human Services &amp; Social Security, Government of Guyana

- 2004 *National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons in Guyana: Protecting the Exploited*, Georgetown.

## Red Thread Women's Development Programme (Red Thread)

- 2001 *Guyana NGO Report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child*, Georgetown.
- 1998 "'Givin' Lil' Bit fuh Lil' Bit: Women and Sex Work in Guyana," in Kamala Kempadoo (Ed.), *Sun, Sex and Gold: Tourism and Sex Work in the Caribbean*, Rowan and Littlefield Publishers Inc., Lanham: 263-290.

*Stabroek News* newspaper

- 2004a "Plan to combat people trafficking," *Stabroek News*, 23 April.
- 2004b "Trafficking in Amerindian girls is not new," *Stabroek News*, Editorial, 15 June.
- 2004c "Caribbean not au fait with human trafficking issues - expert," *Stabroek News*, 22 June.
- 2004d "The Exploitation of Amerindian girls," *Stabroek News*, 31, July.
- 2004e "GHRA hails human trafficking bill," *Stabroek News*, 24, August.
- 2004f Article, Berbice special edition, 1 July.

## United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Guyana

- 2000 *Guyana: Report of the 1999 Living Conditions Survey*, Georgetown.

## United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

- 2002 *Guyana Drug Information System, Annual National Report 2002*.

## US State Department

- 2004 *Trafficking in Persons Report*, June. <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2004/>.

The World Bank Group's International Development Association (IDA) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- 2004 "Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper a Joint Assessment," *The Guyana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, 28 August.

Zellyne, Jennings, et al.

- 1995 *Functional Literacy Survey of Out of School Youth*, in collaboration with UNICEF, Ministry of Education, Georgetown.

## Jamaica

Dunn, L. L.

- 2001 *Situation of Children in Prostitution: A Rapid Assessment, Jamaica*. International Labour Organization.

Embassy of the United States of America, Kingston, Jamaica

- 2002 Press Release: *Action to End Trafficking in Persons*, 15 June.

Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM)

- 2003 "Trafficking of Women and Children for Sexual Exploitation in the Americas," Fact Sheet, July.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- 2004a *HIV/AIDS and Mobile Populations in the Caribbean: A Baseline Assessment*. IOM, Santo Domingo.
- 2004b "Cooperation and Networking to Counter Trafficking in Persons," Pilot Training Workshop, August, Kingston, Jamaica.

Kempadoo, K. (Ed.)

- 1999 *Sun, Sex and Gold: Tourism and Sex Work in the Caribbean*, Rowan and Littlefield Publishers Inc., Lanham.

Little-White, H.

- 2003 "Sex Trafficking," *Outlook Magazine, the Sunday Gleaner*, The Gleaner Co. Ltd., Kingston, 21 September.

McMillan, T.

- 1996 *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*, Signet Publishers/Penguin Books, USA. Mian, Zia
- 2004 "Natasha for Sale," *The Sunday Gleaner*, The Gleaner Company Ltd., Kingston, 25 January.

Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Government of Jamaica

- 2003 *Statistical Bulletin*, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Kingston, Jamaica.

Planning Institute of Jamaica

- 2003 *Economic and Social Survey of Jamaica (ESSJ)*, Planning Institute of Jamaica, Kingston.

Planning Institute of Jamaica and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica

- 2002 *Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions*, published by Planning Institute and Statistical Institute of Jamaica.

Thomas-Hope, E.

- 2004 *Data and Research on Human Trafficking in the Caribbean*, University of the West Indies Mona, Jamaica, Presented at a meeting on Improving Data and Research on Human Trafficking, Rome, Italy, 27-28 May.

US Department of Justice

- 2004 "Timothy Bradley and Kate O'Dell Sentenced to More Than Five Years for Civil Rights and Fraud Crimes," US Department of Justice, <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nh/pdfreleases/january04/MSZ%20ODell%20Bradley%20sentencing.pdf>.

US State Department

- 2004 *Fourth Annual Trafficking in Persons Report*, June.

Wignall, M.

- 2004 "Crews, Criminality and the Drug Link," *The Jamaica Observer*, Jamaica Observer Ltd., Kingston, 5 August.

Williams, S.

- 1999 *Sexual Violence and Exploitation of Children in Latin America and the Caribbean: the Case of Jamaica*, Caribbean Child Development Centre, University of the West Indies, Mona.

Wynter, S.

- 2000 "The Hidden Truth about Massage Parlours," *Jamaica Gleaner*, The Gleaner Co. Ltd., Kingston, 10 October.

## The Netherlands Antilles

Bodde de, G.A.B.

- 2003 "Het vreemdelingenproces in de Nederlandse Antillen: een verkenning van toelating and toezicht," Willemstad, 23 April.

Benoit, C.

- 1999 "Sex, Aids Migration and Prostitution: Human trafficking in the Caribbean" in *New West Indian Guide* 73 (3&4): 27-42.

Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW )

- 2001 Shadow report: "Emancipation Policy in the Netherlands Antilles: Still an Illusion," CAFRA, Curaçao 2001.

Extra newspaper

- 2003 Redakshon, "10 Ilegal detene den Otrobanda," Extra, Curaçao, 11 March.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- 2004 *HIV/AIDS and Mobile Populations in The Caribbean: A Baseline Assessment*, IOM, Santo Domingo.

Martis, J.

- 1999 "Tourism and Sex Trade in St Maarten and Curaçao" in Kamala Kempadoo (Ed.), *Sun, Sex and Gold: Tourism and Sex Work in the Caribbean*, Rowann and Littlefield, Lanham.
- 2004 *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Women's Issues*, v. 5, *North America and the Caribbean*, Greenwood, Westport.

United Nations (UN)

- 1997 *Consejo Economico y Social- Comisión de Derechos Humanos, Intensificación de la promocion y el fomento de los Derechos Humanos y las libertades fundamentales, en particular la cuestion del programa y los metodos de trabajo de la comicion; otros criterios y medios que ofrece el sistema de las Naciones Unidas para mejorar el goce efectivo de los Derechos Humanos y las libertades fundamentales; Informe de la Relatora Especial, Sra. Radica Coomaraswamy sobre la violencia contra la mujer, con inclusión de sus causas y consecuencias, Ginebra, Suiza.*

## US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

- 2004 "Economy: The Netherlands Antilles," *Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook*, 3 January. <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/nt.html#Econ>. 2005

**St Lucia**

## BBC Caribbean Radio

- 2004 Radio report, 28 June.

*Caribbean Online*

- 2004 "More Calls for Reform in Sex Laws," Brief-Former minister lends her voice to the calls for change, *Caribbean Online*, 29 June, <http://www.afiwi.com>.

## Government of St Lucia

- Department of Statistics, Official Website of the Government of St Lucia, undated, <http://www.stats.gov.lc>.  
2001 Department of Statistics, *Vital Statistics Report*.

## Organization for Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)

- 2002 *Human Development Report*.

## Poverty Reduction Fund of St Lucia

- 2000 *Social Assessment Study of 2000*.

## Robinson, F.

- 2001 *St Lucia Report to the Regional Congress on Children Sexual Exploitation*, Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations, November.

## Star Publishing Company

- 2004 Various articles, *Monday Star*, 18 June.

## US Department of Labour

- 2005 *Country Reports*, Bureau of International Labour Affairs, 14 January, <http://www.dol.gov/ilab>.

## US Department of State

- 2003 *Country Reports - St Lucia, Section 6*, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour, 31 May.

## Suriname

Antonius-Smits, C. C.F., et al.

- 1999 "Gold and Commercial Sex: Exploring the Link between Small-scale Gold Mining and Commercial Sex in the Rainforest of Suriname," in Kamala Kempadoo (Ed.), *Sun, Sex and Gold: Tourism and Sex Work in the Caribbean*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., Lanham: 237-259.

Bakboord, C.

- 2004 *Ook Ik Heb Recht Op Een Veilige Plek*, Paramaribo, March.

Cairo, I.

- 2004a "Veel zwangere vrouwen illegaal naar Frans Guyana, VS sponsort workshop mensensmokel," *De Ware Tijd*, 26 April.
- 2004b Vreemdelingen polite beter inzetten in strijd tegen mensensmokel *De Ware Tijd*, April 27.

Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Country Report Republic of Suriname 1993-1998*, CEDAW first and second report.

Debidien, B.

- 2003 "Politieboot voor Nickerie, Smokkel en criminaliteit beter aanpakken," *De Ware Tijd*, 17 July, <http://www.dwt.net/Archief/2003/juli/17%20juli%202003/Politieboot%20voor%20Nickerie.htm>.

De Kom, A.

- 1964 "Wij slaven van Suriname," in *Buiten de perken*, nr. 47 28.11 : 6-10. *De Ware Tijd* newspaper
- 2003 "Gilds weer op dreef," *De Ware Tijd*, 15 July, <http://www.dwt.net/Archief/2003/juli/15%20juli%202003/Gilds%20weer%20op%20dreef.htm>.

De West Nieuws Online

- 2003 "Ruim US\$ 143.000 hulp voor tegengaan drugshandel," *De West*, 26 September, <http://www.dewestonline.cq-link.sr/main.asp?id=13945>.

Downes, A. S., Ph.D.

- 2003 *Employment in the Caribbean: An Overview*, Prepared for presentation at the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of CARICOM Labour Officials, Georgetown, Guyana, 7-9 May 7-9, [www.uwichill.edu.bb/iser/Caribbean%20employment.doc](http://www.uwichill.edu.bb/iser/Caribbean%20employment.doc).

Fishstein, P., G. Rosenthal, and R. Brohim

- 2002 *National Health Accounts: Support for Health Sector Reform*, Republic of Suriname, Study #1, National Health Accounts, 15 June, [http://www.iadb.org/sds/specialprograms/lachealthaccounts/Documents/Suriname\\_NHA\\_Report\\_2002\\_en.pdf](http://www.iadb.org/sds/specialprograms/lachealthaccounts/Documents/Suriname_NHA_Report_2002_en.pdf).

General Bureau of Statistics

- 2002 *Annual Statistics Traffic Transport 1995-2000*, Paramaribo, May.

General Bureau of Statistics/Inter American Development Bank (IDB)

- 2001 *Household Budget Survey Suriname 1999/2000*, Paramaribo, January.

Institute for Social Studies

- 1999 *Social Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy for Suriname*, Prepared by The Hague and Paramaribo, August.

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

- 2002 "Towards an Alternative Development Model in Suriname," *Economic and Sector Study Series*, Region 3 IDB RE3-02-003, July, [http://www.countryanalyticwork.net/Caw/CawDocLib.nsf/0/040E988AC3BA800F85256D0200587CB5/\\$file/Development+Model.11.91.doc](http://www.countryanalyticwork.net/Caw/CawDocLib.nsf/0/040E988AC3BA800F85256D0200587CB5/$file/Development+Model.11.91.doc).

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- 2004 "Glossary on Migration," *International Migration Law*, IOM, Geneva.

Ketwaru-Nurmohamed, S.

- 2001 *Situation Analysis of Women in Suriname*, Paramaribo, October. Malmberg-Guicherit, Henna
- 2002 *Situatie Maawina Pikin: Situation Analysis of Children in the District of Marrowijne*, Workshop, Paramaribo, December.

Maxilinder Foundation

- 2001 *Profile of Clubs and Informal Sexual Locations in Paramaribo and Nieuw Nickerie*, July.

## Migration Dialogue

- 1998 "INS Enforcement," *Migration News*, 5 (1), January, [http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=1419\\_0\\_2\\_0](http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=1419_0_2_0).

## Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of Suriname

- 2002 *Demographic Data Suriname 2000*, January, Paramaribo.  
 2004 *Demographic Data Suriname 2001 and 2002*, January, Paramaribo.

## Ministry of Labour, Technological Development and Environment, Government of Suriname

- \_\_\_\_\_. Information Booklet: *Working Permits for Foreigners*.  
 2003 "Statistics on issued working permits segregated by gender over the year 2003" Work Permit Department.

## Modi, Y.K.

- 2003 FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry), Closing Remarks, Business Session In Honour of H E Mr Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan, Honourable President of The Republic of Suriname, New Delhi, 17 March, <http://www.ficci.com/ficci/media-room/speechespresentations/2003/Mar/march17-suriname-modi.htm>.

## Oxfam, Netherlands, N(o)VIB

- 2003 "Wereld voert strijd tegen mensenhandel op," (VS) 13 June. <http://www.novib.nl/content/?type=Article&id=5818>.

## Playfair P., J. Terborg, and S. Ramdas

- 2004 *HIV/AIDS and Commercial Sex in Nickerie*, ProHealth Paramaribo, May.

## Schalkwijk, Marten Ph.D and Wim van den Berg

- 2002 *Suriname, the Situation of Children in Mining, Agriculture and the Worst Forms of Child Labour: a Rapid Assessment*, ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, Port of Spain, November. [http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child\\_labour/rapid\\_assessment/RASuriname.pdf](http://www.ilocarib.org.tt/infosources/child_labour/rapid_assessment/RASuriname.pdf).

## Schmeitz M.

- 2002 *Wie staat op voor mijn recht*, Paramaribo, January.



Tai Apin, N.

- 2004 Paper for the Training International labour standards for judges, lawyers and legal educators in Port of Spain from 17-21 May, Paramaribo.
- 2003 Suriname Labour Study by order of the Inter-American Labour Cooperation Human Resources Development Canada, 3 July, Paramaribo.

United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

- 2001 "Sustainable combat against poverty in Suriname," March, Paramaribo.

Vance, C.

- 1984 "Pleasure and Danger: Toward A Politics of Sexuality", in Vance, Carol (Ed.), *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Boston.

## Trinidad and Tobago

Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Planning and Development of Trinidad and Tobago, Government of Trinidad and Tobago

- 1997 *Migration Report*
- 2005a *Report on Crime Statistics 2000/2002*
- 2005b *Annual Statistical Digest, 2001*, No. 46
- Annual Statistical Digest, 2002*, No. 47 (forthcoming publication)

Author unknown

- 2005 Mayor Turns up Heat on Sex Dens. *The Express*, 2 May.

Author unknown

- 2005 And Justice for All. *The Express*, 20 March.

Inter-American Development Bank

- 2004 *IDB Country Strategy with Trinidad and Tobago (2004-2007)*, Elias, Carlos G., November.

International Federation of Workers Education Association (IFWEA), International Study Circle

- 2000 *Migrant Workers in the Global Economy 2000-2001*, Country Report, Trinidad and Tobago, August.

Ministry of National Security, Government of Trinidad and Tobago

- 2006a *Number of Returning Deportees by Age Group per Year for the Period August 2002 - December 2005*, January 31.
- 2006b *Number of Deportees to Trinidad and Tobago by Offences for the Period August 2002 - December 2005*, January 31.
- 2006c *Number of Returning Deportees to Trinidad and Tobago by Gender per Year for the Period August 2002 - December 2005*, January 31.

Author unknown

- 2006 Consider these solutions to crime. *Trinidad Guardian*, 10 February.

Author unknown

- 2006 Heroin worth US\$ 0.8m seized in Tunapuna. *Trinidad Guardian*, 28 January.

Author unknown

- 2006 Firms Taking on illegal migrants. *Trinidad Guardian*, 8 January.

Author unknown

- 2006 Regularise security industry. *Trinidad Guardian*, 15 January.

Author unknown

- 2006 Influx of illegals. *Trinidad Guardian*, 27 July.

Author unknown

- 2006 Filling the labour gap. *Trinidad Guardian*, 5 February. World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2004. (WDI2004)

Author unknown

[www.country-studies.com](http://www.country-studies.com)

## Annex: Semi-structured interview questionnaire template<sup>634</sup>



IOM International Organization for Migration  
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations  
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

### Semi-structured Interview Guide and Questionnaire - Trafficking

#### *Trafficking of Persons in the Caribbean Region*

The International Organization for Migration, in coordination with the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization for American States (OAS) is conducting a research project to assess the current situation regarding trafficking of persons, particularly women and children, in **The Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, St Lucia and Suriname**. IOM contracted researchers are administering a survey to governmental, non-governmental organizations and other individuals in order to collect data on the context of trafficking in human beings.

The information obtained in the survey will contribute to a better understanding of the trafficking phenomenon, and increase the awareness about victims, trends, and existing assistance networks. A public report will be published based upon the information gathered in this survey. The information will contribute to the development of national strategies and programmes to combat trafficking in your country.

Please note that all information given in this survey will be kept **strictly confidential** and is only for the use of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). All identifying personal information will be removed. Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.

<sup>634</sup> This is the original template that IOM created prior to 2007 and the researchers used to compile information for the country reports.

***For Interviewer’s use only:***

Name of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Number: \_\_\_\_\_

***General Information***

***Please fill in the following information about yourself:***

Gender	Age	Education Level	Civil Status
<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-12 <input type="checkbox"/> 13-17 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-25 <input type="checkbox"/> 26-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 41-55 <input type="checkbox"/> 56-65 <input type="checkbox"/> 65+	<input type="checkbox"/> No schooling <input type="checkbox"/> Less than primary <input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Some technical <input type="checkbox"/> Technical degree <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced studies	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Separated <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed

***Place of Employment:***

<input type="checkbox"/> Government agency	<input type="checkbox"/> International organization
<input type="checkbox"/> Non governmental organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Self employed
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic institution	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired
<input type="checkbox"/> Faith based organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

***Country of Residency:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Country of Birth:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Information on Migration***

***1. What are the main reasons people come to live and work IN your country?***

<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment / poverty in home country	<input type="checkbox"/> Asylum: political/social/cultural/ religious persecution
<input type="checkbox"/> Better job opportunities available	<input type="checkbox"/> Risk of war
<input type="checkbox"/> Better educational opportunities available	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> To join family / friends	

**2. What are the most common countries of origin of migrants living or working IN your country? Please list.**

---



---

**3. Are you aware of people living and working in your country illegally?**  
 Yes      No

**4. What do you estimate to be the scale of this type of migration?**

---



---

**5. Where do they come from?**

---



---

**6. What are the most common characteristics of these persons? Check all that apply.**

Gender	Age	Education Level	Type of Labour IN your country
Adults: <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly women <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly men <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-12 <input type="checkbox"/> 13-17 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-25 <input type="checkbox"/> 26-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 41-55 <input type="checkbox"/> 56-65 <input type="checkbox"/> 65+	<input type="checkbox"/> No schooling <input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Some technical <input type="checkbox"/> Technical degree <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced studies <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism/Leisure <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Mining/logging <input type="checkbox"/> Prostitution <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic/Household help <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Informal trading <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

---



---

**7. What countries do most people FROM your country go to? Please list.**

---



---

**8. What are the most common characteristics for people migrating FROM your country? Check all that apply.**

Gender	Age	Education Level	Activity in Country of Destination
Adults: <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly women <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly men <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-12 <input type="checkbox"/> 13-17 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-25 <input type="checkbox"/> 26-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 41-55 <input type="checkbox"/> 56-65 <input type="checkbox"/> 65+	<input type="checkbox"/> No schooling <input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Some technical <input type="checkbox"/> Technical degree <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced studies <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Family reunification <input type="checkbox"/> Professional <input type="checkbox"/> Study <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism/Leisure <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Mining/logging <input type="checkbox"/> Prostitution <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic/Household help <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Informal trading <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

---

---

**9. What are the main reasons people come to live and work WITHIN your country?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment / poverty in home country	<input type="checkbox"/> Asylum: political/social/cultural/ religious persecution
<input type="checkbox"/> Better job opportunities available	<input type="checkbox"/> Risk of war
<input type="checkbox"/> Better educational opportunities available	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> To join family / friends	

---

---

**10. From what countries are the people who are migrating THROUGH your country?**

---

---

## Work Experience

**11. Have you heard of people who migrated INTO, FROM or WITHIN your country for work and then ended up in circumstances that were not what they expected?      Yes      No**

If yes, please explain:

---



---



---

**12. Of those cases from the previous question, do you know of anyone who has been controlled in any of the following ways? (Please mark all that apply)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Violence (physical, emotional, sexual) | <input type="checkbox"/> Lower wages, delay or denial of payment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Threats to individual                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted movement                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Threats to family or friends           | <input type="checkbox"/> False marriages                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Debts or high fees (debt bondage)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Documents (id, passport) taken          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> False contracts                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                            |

**13. Do you know of any migrant who has been forced to work in dangerous or poor conditions IN your country?      Yes      No**

**14. In your opinion, how widespread is this problem? Please explain:**

---



---



---

**15. What is your view of women who come here or are brought here to work in the entertainment or sex industry/prostitution?**

---



---



---

*16. Do you think that the women in this type of work were fully aware of the circumstances in which they would be working?*

---

---

---

*17. Do you think men are also exploited in cases of trafficking in persons? Explain.*

---

---

---

*18. In your opinion, to what extent is the trade in human beings linked to sex tourism in your country?*

---

---

---

*19. To what extent is the trade in human beings linked to the trade of drugs in your country?*

---

---

---

*20. To what extent is the trade in human beings linked to the demand for cheap domestic labour in your country?*

---

---

---



## Trafficking in Persons

### 21. Are you familiar with any of the following occurring in your country (mark all that apply)?

- ☐ Forced prostitution
- ☐ Forced labour
- ☐ Domestic servitude
- ☐ None of the above

*When asking questions 22 - 25, please use the following prompts to assist you during the interview. While most likely you will not be interviewing a victim directly, many key informants have important information about the experiences of victims, often more than they realize. During the interview, probing for as much detail as possible on all stages of the process will be important in providing the most complete picture of trafficking in persons within your country. Use the guidelines below to assist you in looking for this detail.*

**Background of victims:** Particular characteristics of possible victims of trafficking including age, gender, education levels, socio-economic status and work experiences in their community of origin, gender based violence, etc.

*What were their expectations as they migrated? Type of work in community/ country of destination, how much money would they make, living conditions, etc.*

**Recruitment:** Who recruited them? Was it an employment agency, travel agency, government-sponsored recruitment program, advertisement in newspaper or internet, word of mouth (friend, family, neighbour, community member, gender of recruiter)? What were they promised?

**Transportation:** During their movement process, how did they enter the country? Visa (type) or other legal means of entry? If they entered illegally, how did they do so? What were the conditions like as they moved? Were they treated well? Did they have any concerns about safety? Did they have any interaction with government officials? How did they travel? Was it by private or public transportation?

**Exploitation:** Once they were in their place of exploitation, what was daily life like? Did they interact with anyone, have access to health care services? What were some of the methods used to control them: violence (physical, emotional, sexual), threats to individual or loved ones, debts or high fees (for food, housing, etc.), false contracts, lower wages, delay or denial of payment, restricted movement, confiscation of documents, etc.

22. *Tell us what you know about trafficking for forced prostitution or sex work. Can you tell me about any recruitment or transportation mechanisms that you have heard about? Do you have any information about the ways in which people are being controlled? What do you know about the daily life of trafficking victims?*

23. *Tell us what you know about trafficking for forced labour. Can you tell me about any recruitment or transportation mechanisms that you have heard about? Do you have any information about the ways in which people are being controlled? What do you know about the daily life of trafficking victims?*

24. *Tell us what you know about trafficking for domestic servitude. Can you tell me about any recruitment or transportation mechanisms that you have heard about? Do you have any information about the ways in which people are being controlled? What do you know about the daily life of trafficking victims?*

23. *Are you aware of cases involving men? What about children, are their cases involving boys?*

---

**24. How do you think this process is organized? Who is benefiting from this?**

---

---

---

National Survey

The following set of questions was given out in written survey form at the first national seminars on trafficking in persons. The person that you are interviewing may have already filled out this survey. In addition, some of the questions in it are repeated from above, but others are new or different. Please use your discretion during the interview as to which of the following questions to ask.

1. What is trafficking in persons?

2. In your view, do you think trafficking in persons is a problem in your country?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes If yes, why and how do you explain this?

3. Are you aware of any of trafficking in persons IN your country?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes If yes, how many persons?

Please check all that apply:

Gender	Age	Form of exploitation
<div><input type="checkbox"/> Mostly women</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Mostly men</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Mostly children</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Mix</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> 0-12</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 13-17</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 18-25</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 26-40</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 41-55</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 56-65</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 65+</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Forced prostitution</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Forced labour</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Domestic servitude</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Other: <div></div></div> <div></div>

Please explain and describe including place of origin:

**4. Are you aware of any cases of trafficking in persons *FROM* your country, but *IN* a different country?**

☐ No

☐ Yes *If yes, how many persons?* \_\_\_\_\_

*Please check all that apply:*

Gender	Age	Form of exploitation
<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly women	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Forced prostitution
<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly men	<input type="checkbox"/> 13-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Forced labour
<input type="checkbox"/> Mostly children	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Domestic servitude
<input type="checkbox"/> Mix	<input type="checkbox"/> 26-40	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> 41-55	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> 56-65	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 65+	

*Please explain and describe including place of origin:*

---



---



---

**5. Are you aware of any cases where someone has been accused of trafficking in persons *IN* your country? If yes, please answer the following questions.**

**Form of exploitation:**

☐ Forced prostitution

☐ Forced labour

☐ Domestic servitude

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*How many were arrested?* \_\_\_\_\_ *Convicted?* \_\_\_\_\_

---



---

*If more than 1 known case, were any of these cases related? Please explain.*

---



---

6. *Does your country have laws that address practices such as forced labour, forced prostitution, or child labour?*

☐ No

☐ Yes *If yes, please describe:*

---

---

---

7. *Are you aware of victims of trafficking or their families telling someone of their exploitation, threats of violence or other abuses?*

☐ No

☐ Yes *If yes, to whom?*

☐ Clergy

☐ Law enforcement

☐ Friends

☐ Family

☐ Neighbour

☐ Medical

☐ Client

☐ Government Agency

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

8. *If they haven't told anyone, what are the main reasons why not? (please check all that apply)*

☐ Don't know where to go to for help

☐ Fear of harm to self

☐ Lack of trust of local officials

☐ Victim or family doesn't know the incident is a crime

☐ Threat to family

☐ Shame or social stigma

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

**9. What government and non-governmental organizations, if any, are addressing trafficking in persons in your country? Please name.**

---



---



---

**Please check all relevant services that they provide:**

**Prevention:**

- ☐ Information and awareness raising
- ☐ Migration Information Centers
- ☐ Job skills training
- ☐ Research
- ☐ Seminars
- ☐ Advocacy
- ☐ Other:

---



---



---

**Protection of Victims:**

- ☐ Shelter
- ☐ Counseling/Psychological
- ☐ Victim/Witness Protection
- ☐ Voluntary Return to home country
- ☐ Financial compensation for victims
- ☐ Advocacy
- ☐ Legal assistance
- ☐ Religious
- ☐ Other:

---



---



---

**Prosecution:**

- ☐ Criminal investigations
- ☐ Law enforcement training
- ☐ Prosecutor training
- ☐ Judicial training
- ☐ Policy/legislation
- ☐ Other:

---



---



---

**10. In your opinion, how well do you think this response is working? Are there any gaps?**

---



---



---

**11. In your opinion, what needs to be done to combat trafficking in persons within your country? Please prioritize.**

---



---



---













IOM International Organization for Migration  
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations  
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

#### **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

17, route des Morillons  
1211 Geneva 19

Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 717 91 11

Fax: +41 22 798 61 50

Email: [hq@iom.int](mailto:hq@iom.int)

Internet: <http://www.iom.int>

1752 N Street NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20036

United States of America

+1 202 862 1826

+1 202 862 1879

[mrfwashington@iom.int](mailto:mrfwashington@iom.int)

<http://www.iom.int/unitedstates>