

United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons Basic Facts

What is Human Trafficking?

According to the United Nations¹, human trafficking is defined as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of 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 the minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of other or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs".

When and how was the Trust Fund established?

The United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children was created as an integral component of a global effort to address trafficking in persons. In August 2010, the Member States of the United Nations established the Trust Fund to provide the opportunity for people from all walks of life including Governments, the private sector, international organizations, NGOs and individuals to work together to help victims of human trafficking in a practical and tangible manner. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime was tasked with the management of the Trust Fund, which became operational in November 2010.

What is the objective of the Trust Fund?

The Trust Fund was established to provide humanitarian, legal and financial aid to victims of trafficking in persons. The Trust Fund supports efforts around the world that ensure that women, children and men who have been exploited by human traffickers are identified, treated humanely as victims of crime, and provided with the assistance, protection and support necessary for their physical, psychological and social recovery and reintegration into their communities. The Trust Fund also seeks to prevent trafficking in persons, and to reduce the vulnerability of victims to being discriminated, re-victimized and re-trafficked.

Who is contributing to the Trust Fund and how much?

As of October 2013, the Fund received US\$ 1.5 million in contributions from a wide range of supporters. These include 16 Member States, 12 private sector organizations and 12 individual donors. Orascom Telecom Holding, Qatar, Australia, France and the UAE are the five largest contributors to the Trust Fund.

How is the Trust Fund helping the victims of human trafficking?

In its first global grant-making cycle launched in 2011, 11 NGOs were awarded grants of up to US\$ 25,000 per year for a maximum of three years, through an open, competitive process. The two thematic priorities addressed in the first cycle were: (i) Interregional and cross-border victim support initiatives, and (ii) Provision of effective remedies for victims of trafficking in persons. The NGOs, which are based in the local communities where the impact of this crime takes the highest toll, are best suited to provide direct assistance. In 2012, 1251 victims were provided with critical assistance, such as legal support and advice on victims' rights, appropriate treatment for physical and mental abuse, a safe place to take shelter and recover, vocational, life skills or literacy training for adults, schooling for children, and basic health services, among others.

¹ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.