



# *Results of the Fiji National Trafficking in Persons Prevalence Survey*



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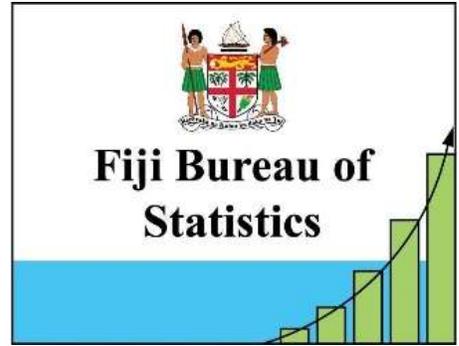


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## Glossary of Abbreviations

AOI	Areas of Interest
EA	Enumeration Area
FID	Fiji Immigration Department
FNTIPPS	Fiji National Trafficking in Persons Prevalence Survey
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
HH	Head of the Household
HTU	Human Trafficking Unit
HSD	Household Survey Division
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MEPIR	Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations
NSO	National Statistics Office
NSUM	Network Scale-Up Method
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

## Foreword

The collaboration between the Fiji Bureau of Statistics and the UNODC to conduct the Fiji National Trafficking in Persons Prevalence Survey was initiated by the scarcity and need for trafficking in persons data. Globally, the availability of statistics on trafficking in persons poorly reflect the true volume and hidden figure of the phenomena. Statistics on detected or identified trafficked persons reveals only a small part of the problem.

The partnership with UNODC to implement the project for strengthening human trafficking data collection systems to estimate and monitor the number of victims of trafficking in persons (SDG indicator 16.2.2) was accepted by the Fiji Bureau of Statistics to strengthen the statistical capacity to measure progress towards agreed international development goals in Fiji. Regionally, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Palau, Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) as implementing entities have partnered and joined in this cause.

The Fiji Bureau of Statistics piloted the Network Scale-Up Method (NSUM) to estimate the prevalence of trafficking in persons for the first time globally. The National Trafficking in Persons Prevalence Survey was also the first trafficking in persons prevalence survey to be conducted in Fiji and the Pacific region. Thus, this was a unique and valuable experience for the Fiji Bureau of Statistics, and although challenging to implement, the department encourages other NSO's to test and validate the methodology.

The value of NSOs doing this type of survey not only is going to help build a dataset nationally and regionally, but also in monitoring SDG 16.2 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The Fiji Bureau of Statistics has confidence that the data generated through the FNTIPPS will not only shed light but also make a significant contribution towards policy formulation to help improve the livelihoods of the people of Fiji.

The Fiji Bureau of Statistics is grateful to the support of key stakeholders and survey participants for their willingness to engage and participate in the interviews. The team at the Household Survey Unit is also acknowledged for the survey preparations, field operations, logistics and post survey activities.



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Maria Musudroka  
Chief Executive (Fiji Bureau of Statistics)

## 1. Executive summary

Fiji, as an established centre of economic and social activity in the Pacific Island region, has long been suspected as a potential hub for trafficking in persons. Yet, the Pacific Island countries are, in general, under-studied when it comes to trafficking. As such, the Fiji National Trafficking in Persons Prevalence Survey (FNTIPPS), the first of its kind in both the country and the region, is a pioneering view into potential victim and trafficker profiles, forms of exploitation, how traffickers operate and the flows within, to and from Fiji.

With support from UNODC and the Fiji National Human Trafficking Task Force coordinated by the Ministry of Defense, National Security and Policing, the Fiji Bureau of Statistics (FBoS) conducted the FNTIPPS between January and April 2021. A total of 1,476 households in both urban and rural areas participated in the survey.

A primary challenge in all surveys measuring the prevalence of victims of trafficking in persons is that this population tends to be more hidden and difficult to access due to low self-identification, the clandestine operations of traffickers and physical and/or social isolation. With this hurdle to address, the FNTIPPS used the Network Scale-Up Method (NSUM), which allows for the estimation of hidden populations using sampled social network data. The NSUM assumes that people's social networks are generally representative of the larger population, which can be useful to measure a complex crime like trafficking in persons. As such, implementing the NSUM in the questionnaire used resulted in questions aimed at estimating the size of the respondent's personal network and the number of individuals of interest over the past five years (2017-2022). Further, the NSUM implemented in the survey aimed to capture qualitative information, namely the experiences and behaviors of potential trafficking victims who are in the personal network of each respondent.

It is important to note that the FNTIPPS was conducted in the context of numerous operational challenges, including adverse weather conditions and the public health emergency posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Tropical Cyclone Ana struck Fiji three days into data collection, resulting in flooding, landslides, and damage to homes, buildings, farms and properties, making the survey difficult to continue in many areas of the country. The COVID-19 pandemic not only affected the operations of the survey, but also reflected in the survey's outcomes as a high number of respondents indicated that they had experienced or knew someone who had experienced significant social, economic and psychological impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, despite the focus on the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences, the main findings of the FNTIPPS allow for an innovative understanding of trafficking in persons in Fiji over the past five years.

## 1.1 Main findings

**The prevalence rate of trafficking in persons Fiji is 0.60%, equating to 5,208 hidden victims in the past five years (2017-2021) from a national population of 884,887.**

The NSUM was applied to the 165 respondents who knew people who were potential victims of trafficking to estimate the respondent's personal network or grade, using the formula  $\hat{c}_i = \frac{\sum_j m_{ij}}{\sum_j e_j} * t$ , where  $m_{ij}$  is the number of people that the respondent  $i$  knows from the subpopulation  $j$ ,  $e_j$  is the real size of the subpopulation  $j$  and  $t$  is the total size of the population. The total known population size used in the calculation was 884,887 taken from the 2017 Census.

To estimate the number of people in the target population, that is potential victims of trafficking, for the 165 respondents data, the following calculation applied:  $\hat{e}_h = \frac{\sum_i m_{ih}}{\sum_i \hat{c}_i} * t$ , where  $m_{ih}$  is the number of people that the respondent  $i$  knows from the target population  $h$ ,  $\hat{c}_i$  is the grade of the respondent  $i$  and  $t$  is the total size of the population.

**Trafficking for forced labour may be centred around service industries and the construction, agriculture, fishery and forestry sectors.**

A significant number of respondents reported that either they or someone they knew experienced trafficking indicators in the following industries and sectors: hospitality, food service, wholesale, retail, vehicle repair, construction, transportation, storage, agriculture, fisheries and forestry. The involved trafficking indicators included being prevented or restricted from communicating freely with others or restricted from communicating freely with family members; being threatened with not getting paid or paid less, and/or threatened with violence to coerce them to work longer or do different tasks.

**Foreign workers who come to work in Fiji are sometimes forced to do work that is different than what was initially promised or given new contracts upon arrival, heightening their risk to trafficking.**

Foreign workers in multiple industries are sometimes forced to do work than what was initially agreed upon. Further, some workers are provided new contracts with new terms upon arrival that are in English, which may be unfamiliar, and different from the initial contract.

Foreign workers may come to Fiji via different recruitment methods. In some cases, individual recruiters in Fiji work with counterparts in source countries to organize workers for companies in Fiji. In other cases, companies recruit workers directly using local or overseas agents.

**The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in increased in more children leaving school and resorting to street selling and being exposed to commercial sexual exploitation.**

Due to the economic strain of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of children who have abandoned school has increased. At the same time, the number of children engaged in street selling and who are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation has also increased.

**Trafficking for sexual exploitation may be of a more domestic nature and may involve family members as perpetrators.**

Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation appears to be more domestic than cross-border based on available literature and interviews. This form of exploitation appears to involve a large number of children, both girls and boys.

Both qualitative data and the indications of respondents suggest that family pressure or direct family involvement in exchange for money or something of value play a role in trafficking for sexual exploitation in Fiji.

**Knowledge of trafficking for organ removal is small but not unheard of and reflects global patterns.**

While the majority of respondents did not know of a situation involving trafficking for organ removal, a few indicated that they knew someone who had been approached and offered money for an organ. The limited number of reports of this form of trafficking for organ removal is in line with global patterns as trafficking for organ removal is one of the least reported forms of exploitation around the world.

## 1.2 Key recommendations

**Promote regular data collection, analysis and reporting on trafficking in persons**

- With the lack of a mandated centralized data collection framework in Fiji, it is imperative that the Ministry of Defence, National Security and Policing as the coordinating body for the Fiji Human Trafficking Strategy and Action Plan develop a comprehensive policy on data sharing and reporting
- Relevant agencies should create a formal data-sharing mechanism for potential cases of trafficking in persons and for regular contribution to the biennial data collection for the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*

- Establish a periodical reporting mechanism for national trafficking statistics and analysis, for example, through a national trafficking report, and collecting data on key indicators on trafficking victims and offenders
- Create and maintain a trafficking in persons hotline for potential victims that provides referrals and assistance

### **Build capacity and coordination**

- Provide continuous training and capacity building staff regarding legislation, identification, investigations, trauma-informed care and trafficking indicators in key agencies, including the Fiji Police and the Human Trafficking Unit (HTU), the Fiji Immigration Department, the justice system, the Ministry of Employment and the Ministry of Women and Children
- Improve the the compliance and monitoring of workplaces, especially with foreign workers, to ensure that workers are not subjected to trafficking and exploitation
- Strengthen coordination between ministries by appointing focal points in each to support activities and data sharing
- Empower and support civil society agencies to provide services to trafficking victims to exercise their rights and access to justice

### **Conduct further research and analysis**

- Carry out in-depth on cross-border trafficking for forced labour and sexual exploitation and the trafficking of children to and from Fiji
- Conduct a second prevalence study using the Multiple Systems Estimation (MSE) method
- Perform labour market studies to identify skill gaps and develop minimum qualification requirements to assist relevant agencies with the issuance of work permits and to strengthen regulations and prevent exploitation of foreign workers.

### **Expand awareness to communities and vulnerable groups**

- Provide training to foreign workers and members of known vulnerable groups on relevant legislation, especially on labour rights and mechanisms for reporting alleged exploitation and breach of working terms and conditions
- Conduct awareness campaigns on trafficking in the tourism and travel industries, especially with staff and clients of hotels, night clubs, bars, restaurants, airlines and public transport

## 2. General overview

### 2.1 Purpose

Between 2020 and 2021, UNODC implemented a project in the Pacific Islands to strengthen data collection systems to estimate and monitor the number of victims of trafficking in persons in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Fiji, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Solomon Islands and Tonga through three project objectives:

- 1) To create and strengthen the capacity of national and regional institutions to record and collate trafficking cases, including profiles of the victims and offenders;
- 2) To establish regional baseline data and build local capacity to continue monitoring; and
- 3) To publish a regional report on trafficking in persons, including estimates of the number of victims.

In Fiji specifically, the project supported the Fiji Bureau of Statistics to conduct the Fiji National Trafficking in Persons Prevalence Survey (FNTIPPS). This was a survey conducted for the first time in Fiji, and for the first time globally to pilot the use of the Network Scale-Up Method (NSUM) to estimate the prevalence of trafficking in persons. The FNTIPPS contributed to the objectives of the Fiji National Human Trafficking Strategy and Action Plan to, “improve understanding of the nature of people trafficking through research, information sharing and intelligence gathering amongst key stakeholders, improve the data collection system and centralised database, report on data annually and implement research studies to identify trends in trafficking in persons through trans-border crimes”.

### 2.2 International and national legal framework

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (hereinafter “Trafficking in Persons Protocol”), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2003 as a supplementary protocol to the UN Convention Against Organized Crime (UNTOC)<sup>1</sup> is the key international treaty on trafficking in persons and provides an accepted baseline definition of the crime.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by General Assembly resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000, is the main international instrument in the fight against transnational organized crime, supplemented by three Protocols, which target specific areas and manifestations of organized crime: the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition. [United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/convention-against-transnational-organized-crime.html)

<sup>2</sup> Article 3 of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol defines trafficking in persons as, “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 giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation, which 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”. Under this definition, all three elements must be present except for instances of child trafficking, which requires only the act of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of children, for the purpose of exploitation.

Fiji has been a State Party to the UNTOC and the Trafficking in Persons Protocol since 2017 and has a national legal framework prohibiting trafficking in persons. This framework consists of legislation in the Crimes Act of 2009<sup>3</sup>, which includes general provisions regarding trafficking in persons, the Fiji Immigration Act of 2003<sup>4</sup> regarding cross-border trafficking, and generally in the Employment Act of 2007<sup>5</sup>, which provides protection to workers and children against forced labour and slavery.

### 2.3 Anti-trafficking policy, coordinating mechanism and data availability

In 2021, Fiji government launched the Fiji National Human Trafficking Strategy and National Human Trafficking Action Plan under a national coordination mechanism administered by the Ministry of Defence, National Security and Policing.

A national Coordination Steering Committee comprised of key Permanent Secretaries was created to oversee the implementation of the Human Trafficking Strategy and Action Plan. The Coordination Steering Committee established the Interagency Human Trafficking Committee to oversee case management, coordinate victim support services and review current legislation and policies. When the need arises, technical working groups have also been created to provide policy advice, such as the Human Trafficking Data Working Group comprising representatives from Immigration, Employment, Women and Social Welfare, Police, Defence, Customs, the United States Embassy, UNODC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

#### 2.3.1 Data availability

There is no clearly mandated centralized data collection framework for trafficking in persons in Fiji and consequently, parallel and varied data collection efforts and a lack of data sharing arrangements exist within and between agencies. This poses major challenges as there is no comprehensive data source that can provide the basis for sound analysis of the trafficking situation in Fiji.

Administrative data about trafficking in persons are stored within the Human Trafficking Unit (HTU) of the Fiji Police Force, which is tasked with investigating potential cases of trafficking and

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<sup>3</sup> In the Crimes Act of 2009, Division 6 (Trafficking in Persons and Children) includes definitions and details offences of trafficking in persons and children, offences of domestic trafficking in persons and children, offences of debt bondage and aggravated offences. Division 7 outlines people smuggling and related offences. Additionally, the Crimes Act prohibits slavery, sexual servitude, and deceptive recruiting (Division 5).

<sup>4</sup> According to the Fiji Immigration Act 2003 (Part 5), it is an offence if a person engages in trafficking in a person knowing that the persons entry into the Fiji Islands or any other state was arranged by unlawful means, and in regard to the trafficking of children, it is an offence regardless of whether the child's entry into the Fiji Islands or any other state was arranged by unlawful means.

<sup>5</sup> The Employment Act 2007 promotes fundamental principles and rights at work and prohibits forced labour and child labour. The Act regards as offences (a) children exploited in all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and any form of forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children in armed conflict; (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in relevant international treaties; or (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, and for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances, and the use of children in hazardous work and breach of minimum age conditions. See also, Hazardous Occupations Prohibited To Children Under 18 Years of Age Order 2013.

preparing these cases for prosecution under the Crimes Act of 2009. The information the HTU collects is recorded, at various stages of the process, in the complaint registry, in a logbook or a police station diary, as well as in the relevant investigation files. While the HTU receives information on suspected cases from other government entities, there is no formal referral system in place, and no sharing and analysis of data about suspected trafficking cases by referral agencies.

The Fiji Immigration Department (FID) is mandated to address cross-border trafficking, including screening and investigation and has data on potential trafficking cases collected through compliance investigations under the Immigration Act of 2003. Border officials are trained on trafficking indicators to screen all entries and identify possible cases. They are tasked with identifying non-genuine visitors at the border and refusing entry or cautioning others who are entering the country as visitors but whom the FID has identified as at-risk of being exploited.

Similarly, the Labour Standards Division of the Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations (MEPIR) collects information through labour inspections and addresses issues involving allegations of abuse of the terms and conditions of workers' contracts. The MEPIR, as the lead ministry for Fiji's efforts to combat child labour, also manages the child labour database, which is populated from reported and detected cases of child labour, which may also include child trafficking for forced labour and sexual exploitation. Potential trafficking cases from the MEPIR and the FID are referred to the HTU for investigation, however, data on the number of these cases that have been detected and referred is not publicly available.

The Child Services Unit of the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation has a mandate to collect data on child abuse and neglect, which may include child commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking. There is mandatory reporting of suspected or detected cases to the Ministry from a range of frontline personnel. Under the Child Welfare Act of 2010<sup>6</sup> health professionals, teachers, legal practitioners, police officers and welfare officers are mandated to report child abuse and neglect. Dedicated staff from the Child Services Unit manage the information received in a national database and analysis of the data is shared through various forums. However as mentioned by key informants, potential trafficking for sexual exploitation or commercial sexual exploitation cases are often reported as child abuse or rape. This is taken from the Child Welfare Report Form submitted by agencies and affects the recorded entry in the database. For example, if a Police Officer reports a case of rape on the Child Welfare Report Form, the entry in the child welfare database is rape. Even though the case may later be identified as domestic trafficking of children for sexual exploitation, upon investigation by Social Welfare Officers, this does not change the database entry.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Fiji, Child Welfare Act, Decree 44 of 2010, as amended by Decree 9 of 2013, 13 February 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Key informants G001 to G011 (2021).

Besides government agencies, civil society organizations, such as Homes of Hope, Medical Services Pacific and Empower Pacific, have broad mandates to assist victims of abuse, which could also include victims of trafficking. Victims are referred by police, medical staff, social welfare services or other government entities. Through interviews with clients, the organizations record data in their case management databases. However, none of these databases are dedicated specifically to trafficking in persons cases and there is a need for closer screening against trafficking indicators to identify potential trafficking cases.

#### 2.4 Knowledge of trafficking and related issues in Fiji

There is a dearth of information on the prevalence, patterns and trends of trafficking in persons in the Pacific region. Available administrative data collected by law enforcement anti-trafficking units, immigration and employment government bodies and social service providers are stored in internal databases, or other filing systems, and are not accessible to be analyzed and shared with other entities.

Some understanding of the dynamics of trafficking in persons in Fiji can be obtained from the narrative of cases that have been prosecuted for trafficking in persons, forced labour, child labour, debt bondage or slavery, and analysis of trends, patterns or trafficking flows may be carefully extrapolated from the limited reliable data that is available.

Since 2010, Fiji has successfully prosecuted four trafficking in persons cases. These include two cases of cross-border trafficking in persons<sup>8</sup> and two cases of domestic trafficking of children.<sup>9</sup> A few cases involving domestic trafficking of children for commercial sexual exploitation and cross-border cases alleging trafficking, slavery and forced labour, are in various stages of investigation or prosecution. Several have been dismissed due to insufficient evidence or refusal of victims to testify.

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<sup>8</sup> High Court of Fiji, *State v Murti*, Case No. HAC195.2010, Sentence, 17 November 2010; High Court of Fiji at Suva, *State v Laojindamane*, Case No. No: HAC323.2012, Judgement, 13 December 2012.

<sup>9</sup> High Court of Fiji, *State v Raikadroka*, Case No. HAC80.2013, Sentence, 9 June 2014; High Court of Fiji, *State v Werelagi*, Case No. HAC425.2018, 2019.

Table 1: Fiji trafficking in persons cases successfully prosecuted<sup>10</sup>

Case	Victims	Offenders	Elements of trafficking			Form of trafficking	Sector in which exploitation takes place	Charges	Sentence
			Acts	Means	Purpose of exploitation				
<i>State v Murti</i> , 2010	7 adult male Indian nationals	1 adult male Indian national	Recruitment; Transportation	Deception; Abuse of power or position of vulnerability	Other	Transnational	Agriculture	Trafficking in persons; Obtaining property by deception	6 years imprisonment; 4 years non-parole
<i>State v Laojindamane</i> , 2012	2 adult female Thai nationals	1 adult male Thai; 1 adult male Chinese; 2 adult-male Chinese-Fijian nationals	Recruitment; Transportation; Transfer; Harboring; Receipt	Threat or use of force or other forms of coercion; Deception; Abuse of power or position of vulnerability	Exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation	Transnational	Commercial sexual exploitation	O1& O2 Trafficking in persons; O3 Domestic trafficking in persons; O4 sexual servitude	O1 & O2 - 10 years imprisonment (both successfully appealed case and were released); O3 -8 years imprisonment; O4 - 11 years 9 months imprisonment
<i>State v Raikadroka</i> , 2014	2 children, female Fijian nationals	2 adult male Fijian	Recruitment; Transportation; Transfer; Harboring	Abuse of power or position of vulnerability	Exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation; Slavery or practices similar to slavery	Internal	Commercial sexual exploitation	O1- Slavery; Domestic Trafficking in children; O2- Domestic trafficking in children	O1- 16 years imprisonment; O2- 12 years imprisonment
<i>State v Werelagi</i> , 2019	1 child, female Fijian national	1 adult male Fijian national	Recruitment; Transportation; Transfer; Harboring	Abuse of power or position of vulnerability; Threat or use of force or other forms of coercion	Exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation; Slavery or practices similar to slavery	Internal	Commercial sexual exploitation	Sexual servitude; Domestic trafficking in children	14 years imprisonment; 10 years non- parole

<sup>10</sup> Court documents can be accessed from the UNODC Sherloc Case Law Database and the PACLII database – Fiji Primary Materials.

Qualitative data suggest the need to improve regulating and monitoring the terms and conditions of foreign workers in the fishing, shipping, garment, construction, agriculture, manufacturing and retail, services (restaurants and spas) and trades (mechanical, plumbing, electrical, plastering, painting) industries. Since 2017, there has been a notable increase in foreign workers in these industries from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and other countries in Southeast Asia. These are mainly male workers between the ages of 25 and 45, attracted to Fiji by favourable working conditions and a chance to migrate or work in neighbouring New Zealand or Australia.<sup>11</sup> The FID data in the Fiji Migration Profile of 2020<sup>12</sup>, show that permits issued to foreigners increased from 7,400 in 2013 to over 23,500 permits in 2017 and 18,429 in 2019, of which 11,637 permits were for long-term work and 11,770 for short-term work valid for one year.

In recent years, there has been an increase of media articles about foreign labourers alleging human rights violations and substandard living and working conditions, including restrictions on movement, withholding of wages and other breaches of terms of contract. Qualitative data from key informants indicate that there are foreign workers in Fiji in exploitative conditions working long hours, living in substandard conditions and whose terms and conditions of work, especially salaries, were substantially different from what they had been initially promised. Most of these workers were from countries where English was not their first language, and in most instances, would only come forward when they were not receiving the wages and conditions promised. Several had paid company owners, human resource officers or representatives doing recruitment drives in their hometowns for their work permits but had not received permits nor contracts.<sup>13</sup>

A 29-year-old Bangladeshi man arrived in Fiji in 2018 to work for a construction company. He was working as a labourer in Bangladesh when he met the owner of a company who offered him a job in Fiji and paid his airfare in 2017. The company's director organized his work permit, but he did not sign or review a written contract.

Instead, he had an informal contract arrangement for a salary of FJD\$975 a month with accommodation and food provided in exchange for doing tiling work for the company for 3 years. He worked in tiling, plastering and painting nine hours a day, 6 days a week, including on public holidays. He did not sign up for a social security or pension scheme in Fiji or Bangladesh and was not covered for medical costs, overtime or working on weekends or public holidays. He alleged that he has been working for the company for months without pay between 2019 and 2021 – totaling FJD\$17,000 in unpaid wages.

This scheme was not out of the ordinary for this company. Another man working for the company had only received small amounts of his promised salary, with most of it from 2019 to 2021 yet to be paid. He had a hand-written "balance sheet" signed by the employer showing total wages yet to be paid, after deducting airfares and other costs.

Both workers alleged that they had been working without pay since the COVID outbreak in 2020, which was used as an excuse for non-payment of salaries. Therefore, the workers were providing free labour during this period.

Source: Key Informant, TIPV02\_03, 2021, Fiji.

<sup>11</sup> View of a group of key informants – Fiji.

<sup>12</sup> International Organization for Migration, *Migration in the Republic of Fiji: A Country Profile 2020* (Geneva, 2021).

<sup>13</sup> Key informants G001 to G011 (2021).

The Ministry of Employment, Immigration Department and the Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Commission have referred cases of foreign labour exploitation to the HTU for further investigation into trafficking for forced labour in the construction, agriculture, retail and sea transport sectors.<sup>14</sup> However, it seems that once cases have been referred, outstanding wages and other issues are quickly settled by employers and workers either leave the country, move to work for another company or remain where they are working without pressing charges. Information from key informants also illustrate that, in some instances, there have been blatant attempts to attract foreigners to pursue labour opportunities in Fiji and to gain financial advantage through deception.

In one case, twenty foreign workers in Fiji who came from India were brought in by a local businessman who owned an agricultural company and was a dual citizen of Fiji and New Zealand. The workers had responded to an online advertisement to work on farms in New Zealand and each paid their own fares to come to Fiji and paid FJD \$4,500 as a bond to organize their work permits. They were told they would work first in Fiji before moving to New Zealand. The agreed contract stipulated a salary of FJD \$1,000 a month, free accommodation and transport provided by the company and one-month free food and basic living expenses. They were put to work on a farm in Fiji, supervised by a local farmer and accommodated on the farm. Yet, instead of receiving what was initially agreed upon, each worker received FJD \$500 for the first two months and then were left without food or wages. The local businessman moved the workers after a few weeks to another farm and then moved them out of town once he realized that the workers were being helped by local farmers who had noticed that the workers had no food. After three months, the workers still had not received their work visas. When they went to meet with the local businessman, he threatened to report them to the police as overstayers. After he left the country, the workers were then taken over by another local businessmen who took them to Samoa to work. They were denied entry, returned to Fiji and deported. Local key informants have been in contact with the workers as they want to follow up with authorities to get their money paid. There are also workers from Bangladesh in the construction industry who are working without work permits. The cases have been reported to the relevant authorities.

**Source: Key Informant, CI01WD, 2021, Fiji.**

Greater scrutiny is required to detect potential cross-border trafficking for forced labour, slavery and debt bondage in Fiji's fishing, forestry (logging) and agriculture sectors, and into the clandestine activities of massage parlours, spas and similar establishments for slavery, sexual exploitation and forced labour. There is a need to review legislation, strengthen regulations and improve monitoring and compliance to protect foreign workers.

In terms of the magnitude of flows to the wider Pacific, Australia reported 23 victims from Fiji detected between 2017 and 2019.<sup>15</sup> Between 2016 and 2019, authorities in New Zealand detected a total of 33 victims of trafficking in persons, the majority trafficked for forced labour. Of the victims detected during this period, 16 were from Fiji and 13 were from Samoa.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Key informants G001 to G011 (2021).

<sup>15</sup> Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020 (United Nations publication, 2020), Country Profiles: Australia

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* Country Profiles: New Zealand. Recent convictions of Pacific Islander citizens for trafficking in persons in New Zealand have been reported. In 2016, a New Zealand resident and Fijian citizen was convicted of 15 counts of trafficking in persons for the purpose of forced labour (High Court of New Zealand, *The Queen v Faroz Ali and Jafar Kurisi*, CRI 2015-092-6886/ NZHC 3077, Judgement, 15 December 2016). In 2020, another New Zealand resident and Samoan citizen was convicted of 10 counts of trafficking in persons and of 13 counts of slavery (High Court of New Zealand, *The Queen v Joseph Auga Matamata*, CRI-2018-020-003953, 27 July 2020).

Interviews with key informants, also indicate that Fiji citizens are trafficked within the region and to other parts of the world.

One woman was 19 years old when she was recruited to work in a restaurant outside of Fiji through her sister-in-law who was working for the same company. Her sister-in-law told her to organize her passport and police clearance, while her ticket was paid and arranged by the employer who was the owner of the restaurant. She was not sure whether she had a work permit as she gave her passport to her employer when she arrived. Her agreed upon salary was FJD \$200 a week.

In the first week, she worked at the restaurant as expected and then, the owner took her to work for the family as a domestic worker. She worked from 4:30 in the morning to 2:00 in the afternoon from Monday to Saturday preparing food in the restaurant and then did domestic chores at the owner's home where she lived with six other Fijian women and the family. On Sundays, she only worked at the home, where she was expected to clean, cook and look after the owner's grandchildren.

She was not allowed to go anywhere on her own. The family was verbally and physically abusive to her, slapping her with a wooden spoon. One of the family members was a police officer, so she was afraid to make a complaint.

Her employer offered to save her money for her and paid her FJD \$10 a week. After one year of work, she was allowed to return home. At the airport, she received the money that her employer had saved for her. It totaled only FJD \$100 as the employer deducted her expenses, including plane tickets, electricity, water, food and board.

**Source: Key Informant, TIPV01, 2021, Fiji.**

One informant's story of encountering victims of trafficking from Fiji:

"I was in the army and based in Iraq from 2005 to 2007. I met with many Fijian workers, both men and women. Some had been stranded in Kuwait while others had been taken across the border into Iraq. They had signed contracts in Fiji which were very different to what they ended up doing in Kuwait and Iraq. Some were living in shipping containers in degrading conditions, working as drivers, security guards, house maids, kitchenhands, airport and hotel workers. In one hotel in Kuwait, there were more than 50 Fijians working there. There were some Fijian women who were contracted to work for American companies but ended up working for subcontracted Iraqi companies instead. There were a few men who had been contracted to work in the airports but were working instead as drivers in Kuwait. Most of the workers had their travel documents taken away. Sometimes the workers were signed up by another company and had their debts, terms and conditions transferred to another owner. These workers had spent money to travel to work so there was a lot of family pressure back home to send money back, so many remained for years to work and earn enough money to send home."

**Source: Key Informant, CI03WD, 2021, Fiji.**

Regarding domestic trafficking, qualitative data from key informant interviews found no evidence of the trafficking of adults for labour exploitation. However, key informants shared stories about locals working in harsh labour conditions, some as part of cane harvesting crews, and children accompanying parents as part of the harvesting crews to the fields.

Information from key informants suggest, however, that domestic trafficking is mainly linked to child labour and trafficking of children for sexual exploitation. According to informants, since the outbreak of COVID-19, there are more children out of school and involved in street vending or loitering on the streets, begging or working as casual labourers, for example in carwashes or on farms. There is also an increase in the number of youths between 15 and 24 years old, both female and male, involved in the commercial sex trade in urban and rural areas or in hotspot areas where motels, hotels, yachts and fishing vessels are located. An increasing number of situations have been identified where there has been evidence of family complicity in this exploitation. Additionally, closely linked to the commercial sex trade is the increase in the trafficking or use of hard drugs, especially methamphetamine.<sup>17</sup>

One informant's perspective on child exploitation:

"We have a growing problem of child exploitation and increasing number of children in our communities who have left school early. We have current cases involving family members exploiting their children. The first situation involved a father earning money by selling his two daughters into commercial sexual exploitation. In another, a grandmother arranged for her three out-of-school granddaughters to work in a shop and then collected their wages. There was also a case of young boy in school who was also in the sex trade and solicited his clients, mainly local businessmen, through social media."

Source: Key Informant, 2021, Fiji.

Research on the sexual exploitation of children, child labour and trafficking of children for sexual exploitation by agencies and programmes of the United Nations and also by NGOs<sup>18</sup> previously highlighted the issue of child labour and domestic trafficking of children for commercial sexual exploitation in Fiji. Information from these research reports and key informants indicate that vulnerabilities to child labour or trafficking of children for sexual exploitation include financial hardship faced by families, breakdown of families, parental neglect and children moving away from home to live with relatives and being obliged to earn money to reduce the financial burden on the host family. Other factors such as children dropping out of school early, peer pressure and alcohol or drugs add to a child's vulnerabilities to being trafficked.<sup>19</sup>

There is a need for more research on the magnitude of cross-border and domestic trafficking in Fiji. Likewise, better understanding of the trafficking risks of vulnerable groups would contribute to the research objectives of the Fiji National Human Trafficking Strategy and Action Plan. Studies to identify the nature and trends in trafficking in persons in Fiji should be implemented.

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<sup>17</sup> Key informants G001 to G011 (2021).

<sup>18</sup> UNICEF, UNESCAP and ECPAT International, *Child Sexual Abuse and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Pacific: A Regional Report* (Suva, 2006); UNICEF Suva and International Labour Organization, *Child Labour in Fiji- A Survey of Working Children in Commercial Sexual Exploitation, on the Streets, in Rural Agricultural Communities, in Informal and Squatter Settlements and in Schools* (Suva, 2010); and Marie Jane Fatiaki, "A Study of the Trafficking Of Children in Fiji For Sexual Exploitation, as an Emerging Urban Issue", Master's thesis, University of the South Pacific, 2019.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

### 3. Survey findings on trafficking in persons in Fiji

#### 3.1 Methodology<sup>20</sup>

Quantitative data for the FNTIPPS survey was collected through a trafficking in persons questionnaire which consisted of two categories. The first was comprised of questions aimed to estimate the size of the respondent's network. The second category consisted of questions aimed at identifying potential victims and underlying economic, social or other vulnerabilities exposing them to a risk of trafficking. The questionnaire was digitalized by FBoS using the Survey Solutions programme<sup>21</sup> to facilitate Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI).<sup>22</sup>

Data for the FNTIPPS was collected between January and April 2021 by 11 enumerators and five supervisors from the Household Survey Division (HSD) staff throughout Fiji. The data collection was overseen by HSD managers in Suva. Households from several different and diverse areas of the country took part in the survey according to a sampling plan. All four divisions (Central/Eastern/Western/Northern) with urban and rural sectors were sampled for different socioeconomic household classes for a representative sample of Fiji. A total of 1,476 households that participated in the survey. This included 1,000 household interviews from the 100 sampled Enumeration Areas (EAs) in urban and rural areas and 476 household interviews conducted in Areas of Interest (AOI), identified by national stakeholders.

To provide context and additional information, qualitative data were collected from government agencies handling potential trafficking in persons cases, as well as from CSOs, community members and potential trafficking victims. Qualitative data were collected through key informant interviews conducted using a set of guided questions under broad themes to obtain and explore key information from all respondents. The objective of the qualitative data collection was to increase the awareness and knowledge of the size, profiles, patterns and flows of trafficking in persons in Fiji. The qualitative survey aimed to explore the respondents' knowledge and experiences with trafficking cases, particularly the types of trafficking cases and operations, the characteristics of the victims and perpetrators, aggravating risks and vulnerability factors, trafficking flows and size, as well as the challenges to address these cases.

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<sup>20</sup> See the **Methodological Report of the Fiji National Trafficking in Persons Prevalence Survey, 2022**

<sup>21</sup> Survey Solutions is a software programme developed by the World Bank Group that facilitates large-scale surveys using CAPI technology. The software uses rich data capture functionality on tablets along with survey management and data aggregation tools to improve data quality. See, The World Bank Group, *Advancing CAPI/CAWI technology with Survey Solutions* (2019), available at <https://docs.mysurvey.solutions/getting-started/overview-printable/>.

<sup>22</sup> CAPI refers to a method of survey data collection by an in-person interviewer who uses a computer, tablet or other device to administer the questionnaire to the respondent and captures the answers digitally. See, Randall Olsen and Carol Sheets, 'Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI)' In Paul J. Lavrakas (eds), *Encyclopedia of Survey Research Methods* (Sage, 2008).

### 3.2 Demographic characteristics of the sample

The fieldwork covered a total sample of 100 EAs selected from both urban and rural areas, with 10 households interviewed per EA. A total of 1,000 household interviews from the 100 sampled EAs were conducted. In addition, the fieldwork extended to include 476 additional household interviews within Areas of Interest (AOIs) that were identified by national stakeholders who requested that the survey also target areas where potential cases of trafficking in persons might be found. The AOIs covered streets, urban informal settlements, rural villages and island communities and were chosen as they were places where trafficking was suspected of taking place. Because of the different nature of the respondents from the sample and AOI all results have been disaggregated. A total of 1,476 interviews were conducted by the end of the fieldwork operations and data collection exercise from the sampled EAs and AOIs.<sup>23</sup>

Figure 1: Number of households surveyed by sample and AOI

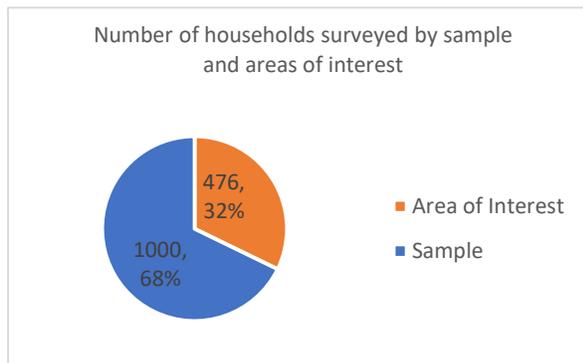
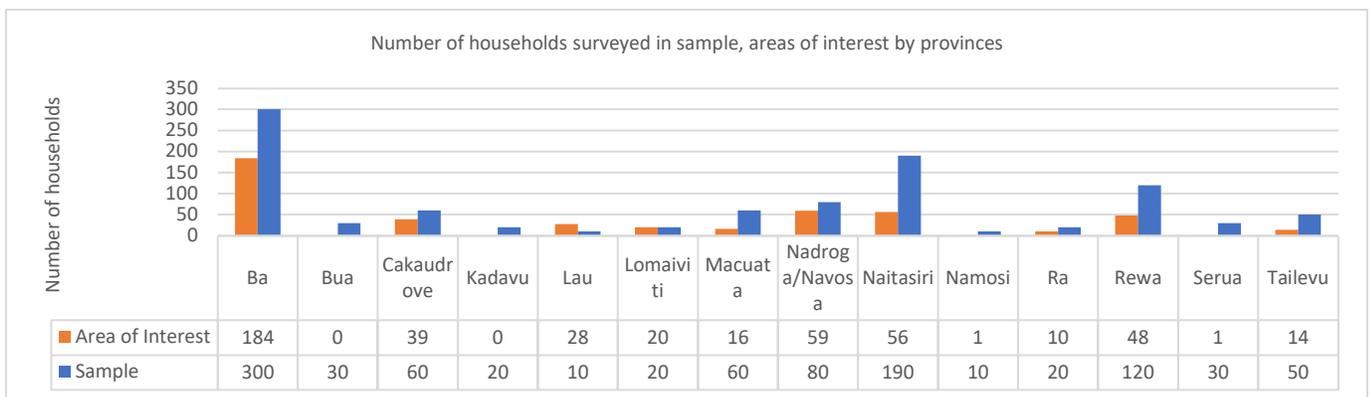


Figure 2: Number of households surveyed in sample and AOI by province



<sup>23</sup> In the 2017 Census findings, Fiji had an average size of 4.8 members per household with a total of 191,910 households. From the 191,910 households, a total of 1,476 households were interviewed.

Where possible, the survey respondent was the Head of the Household (HH). If the HH was unavailable, an adult member of the household who was at home at the time of survey, or who had some knowledge of or interest in the subject matter or who was designated by the HH to respond was surveyed. A total of 748 men and 728 women were interviewed in the survey. No one below the age of 18 years participated in the survey.

Figure 3: Survey respondents in sample and AOI by head of the household or relationship to the head of the household

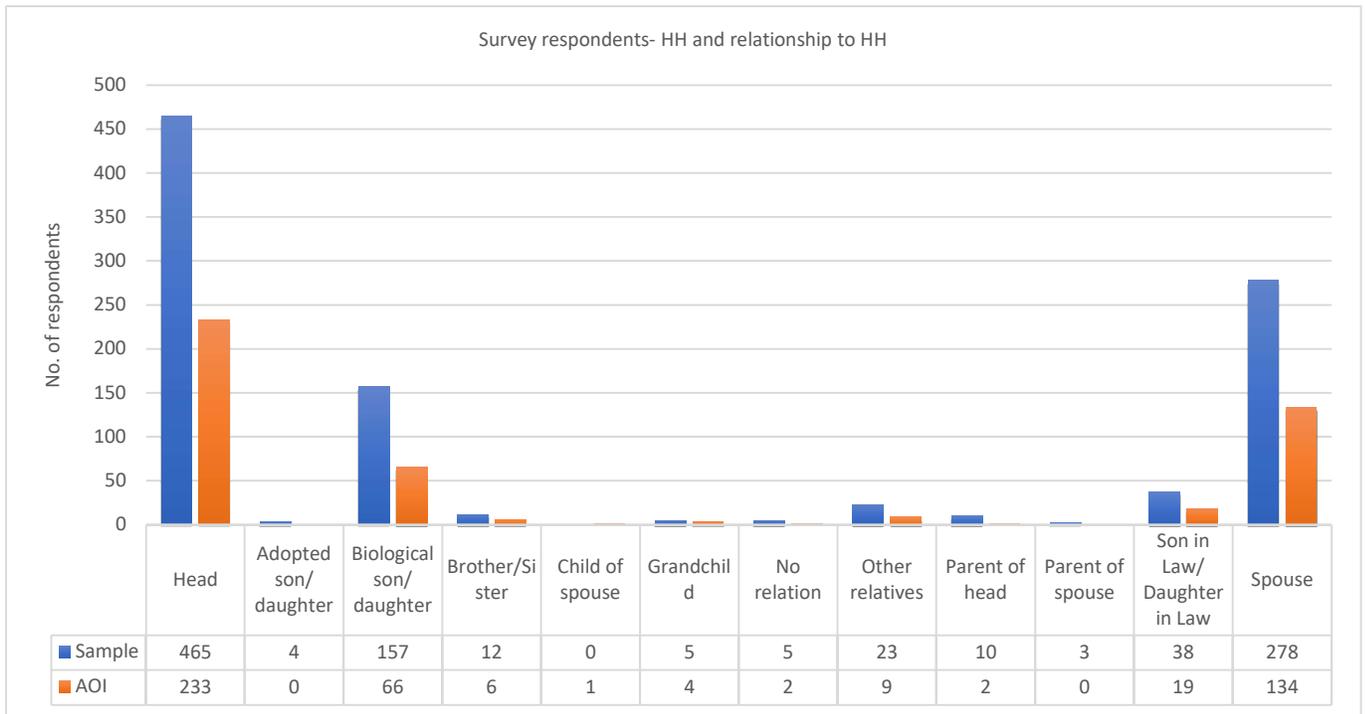
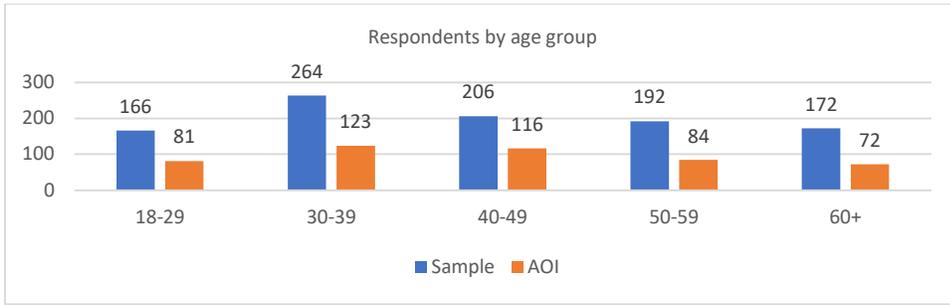


Table 2: Survey respondents in sample and AOI by age groups and sex

Age-Group	Sample			AOI		
	1. Male	2. Female	Total	1. Male	2. Female	Total
18-29	61	105	166	35	46	81
30-39	131	133	264	58	65	123
40-49	96	110	206	61	55	116
50-59	109	83	192	48	36	84
60+	102	70	172	47	25	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>476</b>

Figure 4: Survey respondents in sample and AOI by age groups



The survey respondents included nine foreign permit holders. Most respondents were born in Fiji and participating in the survey from their usual place of residence. A total of 189 respondents had moved to their current residence less than five years ago.

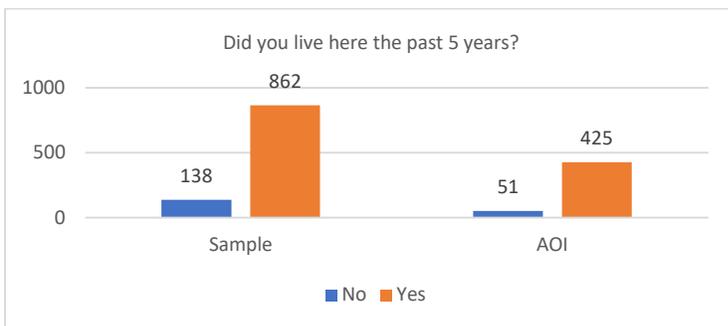
Table 3: Survey respondents in sample and AOI by country of birth

Country of birth	Sample	AOI	Total
Australia	1	2	3
Bangladesh	1	1	2
China	1	0	1
Fiji	987	470	1457
India	4	2	6
Kiribati	2	0	2
South Korea	1	1	2
USA	1	0	1
Vanuatu	2	0	2

Table 4: Survey respondents in sample and AOI by usual place of residence

Usual place of residence	Sample	AOI	Total
No	26	21	47
Yes	974	455	1429
Total	1,000	476	1,476

Figure 5: Survey respondents in sample and AOI by current place of residence in the past 5 years



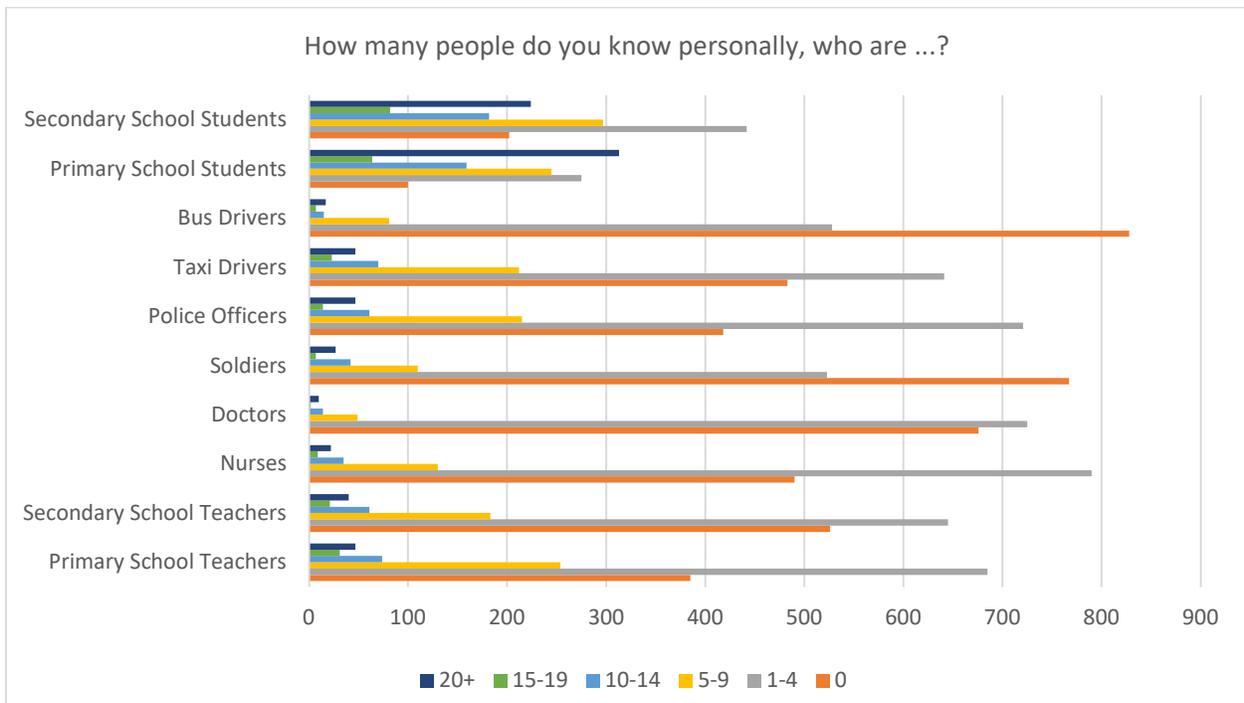
### 3.3 Personal networks of respondents

Respondents were asked how many people they knew personally in ten sub-groups (Section 3 of the questionnaire) to estimate the average size of their personal network. Care was taken to ensure that people they knew were not counted twice in more than one category. The definition of “someone who you know personally” was explained in the survey as:

- People who you know and they also know you by sight and name;
- You can contact them, and they are able to contact you;
- You may have their number or know where they live or they may have your number or know where you live; and
- You have had some personal contact with them (shared a meal with them, etc.) in the last five years.

Not included in “personal contacts” were social media contacts, work colleagues, church members or others they interacted with as part of their work or services unless those people also fit the criteria for “someone who you know personally”. Although many respondents did not know anyone personally in some categories such as public drivers, health workers or soldiers, most respondents knew at least one person personally from at least one sub-group.

Figure 6: Number of survey respondents by number of people they know personally by sub-group categories



### 3.2.2 The Network Scale-Up Method

The underlying assumption of the Network Scale-Up Method (NSUM) is that people’s social networks are, on average, representative of the general population. And, that these can be useful to measure the size of complex social phenomena when information is properly collected, aggregated and adjusted.

The estimation of the personal network size for each respondent was calculated using the formula below:

$$\hat{c}_i = \frac{\sum_j m_{ij}}{\sum_j e_j} * t$$

Where:

$\hat{c}_i$  = personal network size of person  $i$

$m_{ij}$  = number of people in subpopulation  $j$  known by person  $i$

$e_j$  = size of subgroup  $j$

$T$  = size of the general population (known)

The total number of persons known by person ( $i$ ) within the subpopulation was divided by the total subpopulation ( $e_j$ ), the result is then multiplied by the total estimated population. The sub-populations known by respondents were:

NSUM Questions	Sub-group population ( $e_j$ )
<i>a.</i> Number of primary school teachers known by the person	6,218
<i>b.</i> Number of secondary school teachers known by the person	5,622
<i>c.</i> Number of doctors known by the person	1,055
<i>d.</i> Number of nurses known by the person	2,809
<i>e.</i> Number of police officers known by the person	4,419
<i>f.</i> Number of taxi drivers known by the person	19,782
<i>g.</i> Number of bus drivers known by the person	7,607
<i>h.</i> Number of primary school children known by the person	153,698
<i>i.</i> Number of secondary school children known by the person	67,717

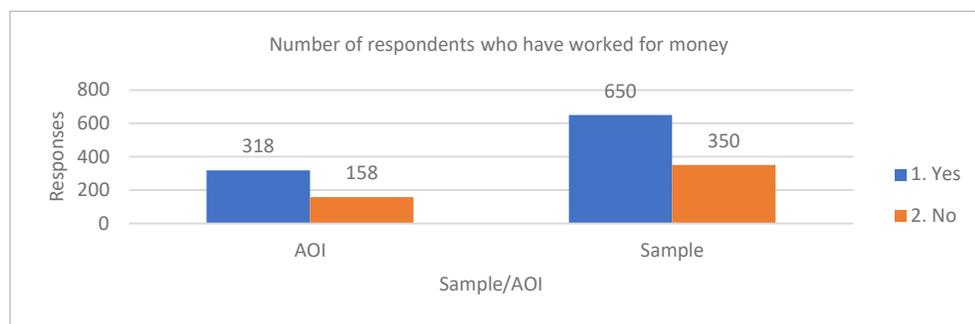
Based on the above formula, all respondents that knew any from the sub-population groups were considered and the estimation of the personal network was calculated. As the population for the group of soldiers was unknown, this population sub-group was excluded from the calculation of personal network size.

### 3.4 Situations experienced in paid work

#### 3.3.1 Situations experienced personally by respondents in paid work

A total of 968 respondents who had worked for money in the past five years answered the questions regarding paid work, from Section 4, Q1 to Q10 of the questionnaire. The remaining respondents (n=508) were excluded from answering Section 4, Q1 to Q10 of the questionnaire.

Figure 7: Survey respondents by whether they have worked for money in the past 5 years in the sample and AOI



Over one-third of the 968 respondents had experienced situations in their paid work related to “less pay and longer hours” and over one-quarter also felt that they had been *pressured to do something they were not comfortable with doing* and were *doing work that was different from what they had been promised*.

Several paid workers also experienced coercion or threats levelled against them or their families and were restricted from communicating freely with family or others, even outside working hours. A smaller number of workers experienced threats of being reported to authorities and had their passports or visas withheld by employers.

Table 5: Paid-work respondents who have experienced the following situations (a) to (k) in their work from sample and AOI

Section 4- Questions on Trafficking Part A- Trafficking related to paid work	Q2- Has any of the following happened to you in relation to your work?			Q3- Did it happen in the past 12 months?		
	Respondents who said “Yes”			Respondents who said “Yes”		
	Sample	AOIs	Total	Sample	AOIs	Total
a) You received less pay than you were promised	244	120	364	136	62	198
b) The type of work was different than what you were promised	153	99	252	77	54	131
c) The working hours were longer than you were promised	199	128	327	98	59	157
d) You felt pressured to do something you didn’t want to do or felt uncomfortable doing	176	99	275	89	43	132
e) You were threatened with violence to yourself or your family to perform certain tasks, work longer hours or accept less pay	48	14	62	26	6	32
f) You were physically harmed by your employer, manager, supervisor or co-worker while at work	18	6	24	13	4	17

g) You were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get you to work longer or carry out different tasks	53	30	83	30	16	46
h) You were threatened with being reported to the police (immigration authorities if respondent is foreign worker) or arrested if you didn't do as you were told at work	7	3	10	4	3	7
i) Your identification papers such as passport or visa was taken away or withheld by your employer	4	2	6	0	0	0
j) You were prevented or restricted from communicating freely with your family, including making or receiving phone calls to/from them even outside working hours	48	23	71	15	4	19
k) You were prevented or restricted from communicating freely with others outside the workplace, even outside working hours	27	5	32	12	2	14

Figure 8: Paid-work respondents who have experienced the following situations (2a) to (2d) at work from sample and AOI

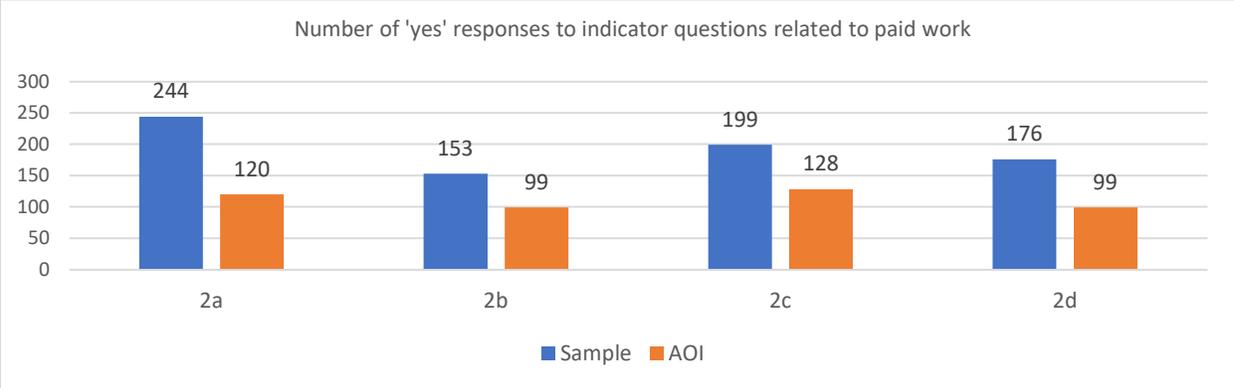
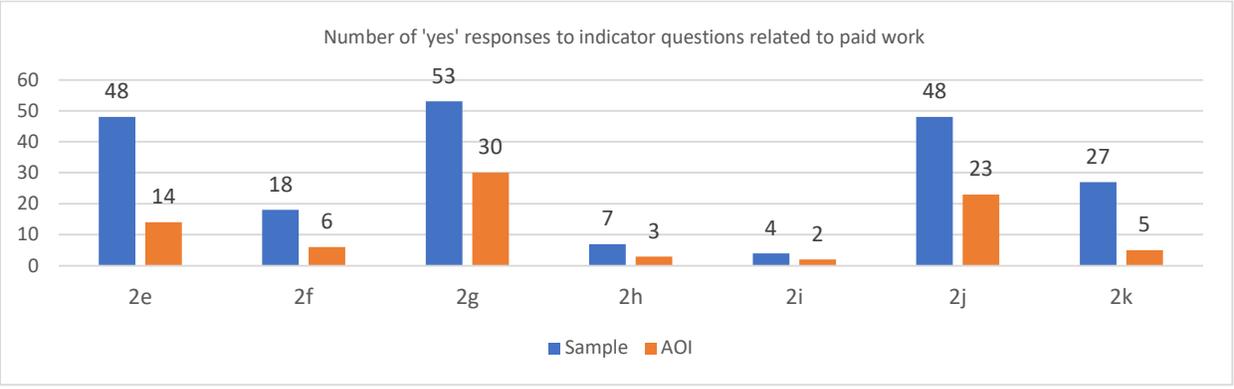


Figure 9: Paid-work respondents who experienced the situations (2e) to (2k) at work from sample and AOI



The survey was conducted in 2021, at a time when many individuals, families and communities were feeling the impacts of COVID-19. This was somewhat reflected in the survey with a significant number of respondents answering affirmatively to receiving *less pay than what they were promised (2a)*, working *longer hours (2c)*, being *pressured to do something they were not comfortable with doing (2d)* and *doing work that was different from what they had been promised*

(2b), and similarly indicating it happened in the last 12 months, and in the industries related to accommodation and food services, wholesale, retail and vehicle repair, construction, transportation and storage, agriculture, fisheries and forestry and other service activities.

Because of concern’s related to the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact, a trafficking indicator threshold approach was employed in this survey. Trafficking in persons is a complex, three-component crime and can take many forms. Some situations might seem to be trafficking but are not defined as such if one or more components are not present. For this purpose, values were assigned to each indicator that would allow cases to be analysed and designated as trafficking if a threshold value was met.

The responses mentioned above were not fully isolated situations and potential trafficking victims needed a multiple indicator combination to achieve a threshold value of 100 to be counted as a potential trafficking case using the Indicator Weighting Scheme. For example, Respondent X, who experienced (2a), (2b), (2c), (2d) at work, would need to answer affirmatively to another indicator related to coercion, violence or threats of violence, withholding salary or being reported to authorities, and restrictions on communication to be “counted” as a potential trafficking victim.

*Table 6: Indicator weighting scheme- Fiji National Trafficking in Persons Survey*

INDICATOR	Numerical value (based on reaching minimum of 100 for TIP)
<b>Section 4: Trafficking related to paid work - Question: In the past 5 years, have any of the following happened to you in relation to your work?</b>	
a) You received less pay than you were promised	20
b) The type of work was different than what you were promised	20
c) The working hours were longer than you were promised	20
d) You felt pressured to do something you didn’t want to do or felt uncomfortable doing	30
e) You were threatened with violence to yourself or your family to perform certain tasks, work longer hours or accept less pay	50
f) You were physically harmed by your employer, manager, supervisor, or co-worker while at work	50
g) You were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get you to work longer or carry out different tasks	50
h) You were threatened with being reported to the police (immigration authorities if respondent is foreign worker) or arrested if you didn’t do as you were told at work	50
i) Your identification papers such as passport or visa was taken away or withheld by your employer	50
j) You were prevented or restricted from communicating freely with your family, including making or receiving phone calls to/from them even outside working hours	30
k) You were prevented or restricted from communicating freely with others outside the workplace, even outside working hours	30

A significant number of respondents from accommodation and food services, wholesale, retail and vehicle repair, construction, transportation and storage, agriculture, fisheries and forestry and other service activities, also experienced other trafficking indicators such as *being prevented or restricted from communicating freely with others (2k)* or *restricted from communicating freely with family members (2j)* and being *threatened with not getting paid or paid less (2g)* or *threatened with violence to coerce them to work longer or do different tasks (2e)*.

Several respondents had been physically harmed at work in a range of work industries (n=24) and a smaller number of respondents in construction, agriculture, fisheries and forestry and accommodation and food services had their identity documents (passports) taken away or withheld by the employer (n=6) or were threatened to be reported to the authorities n=10 (Figures 9,11).

Figure 10: Total respondents experiencing situations (2a), (2b), (2c) and (2d) at work by industry

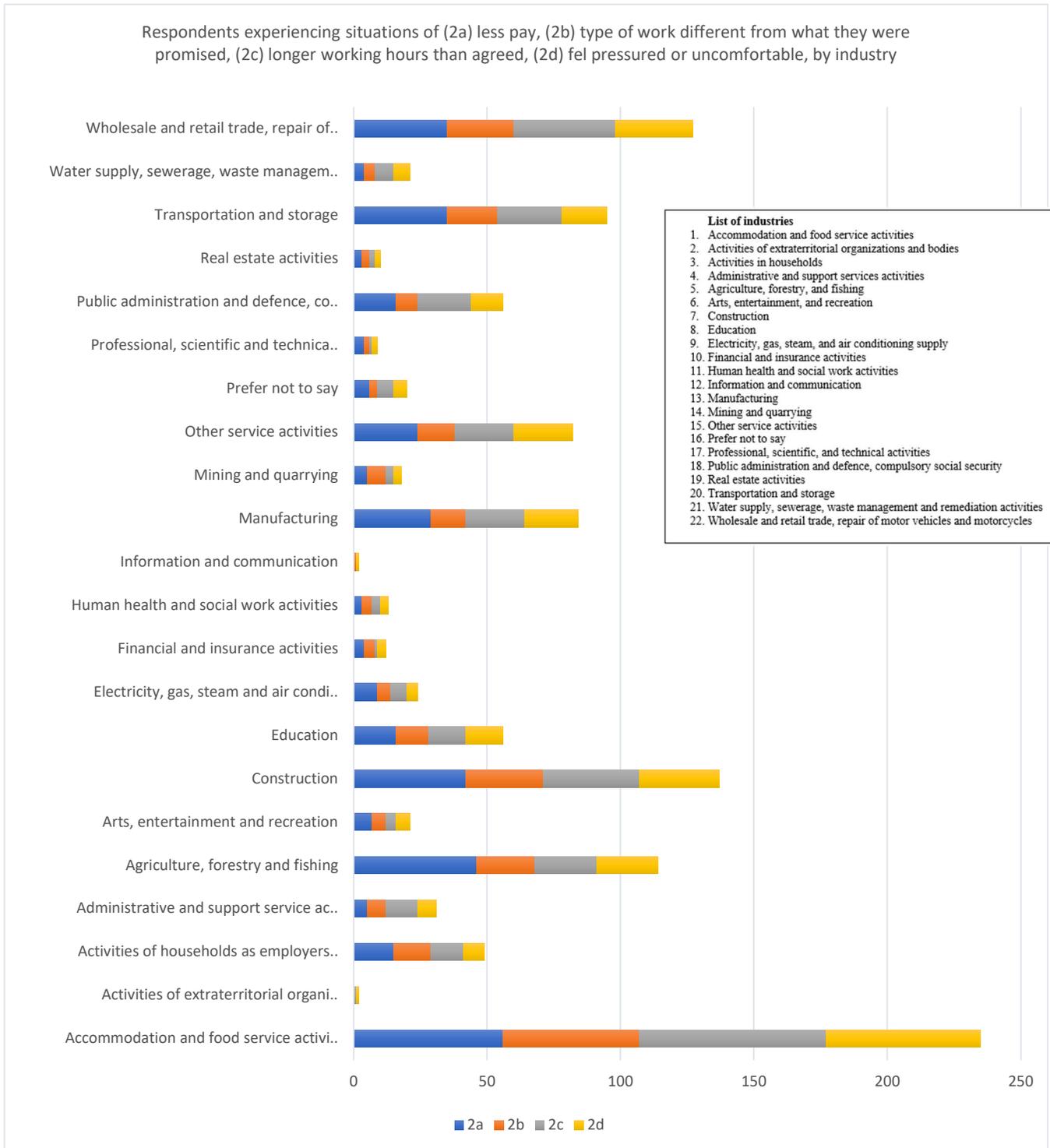
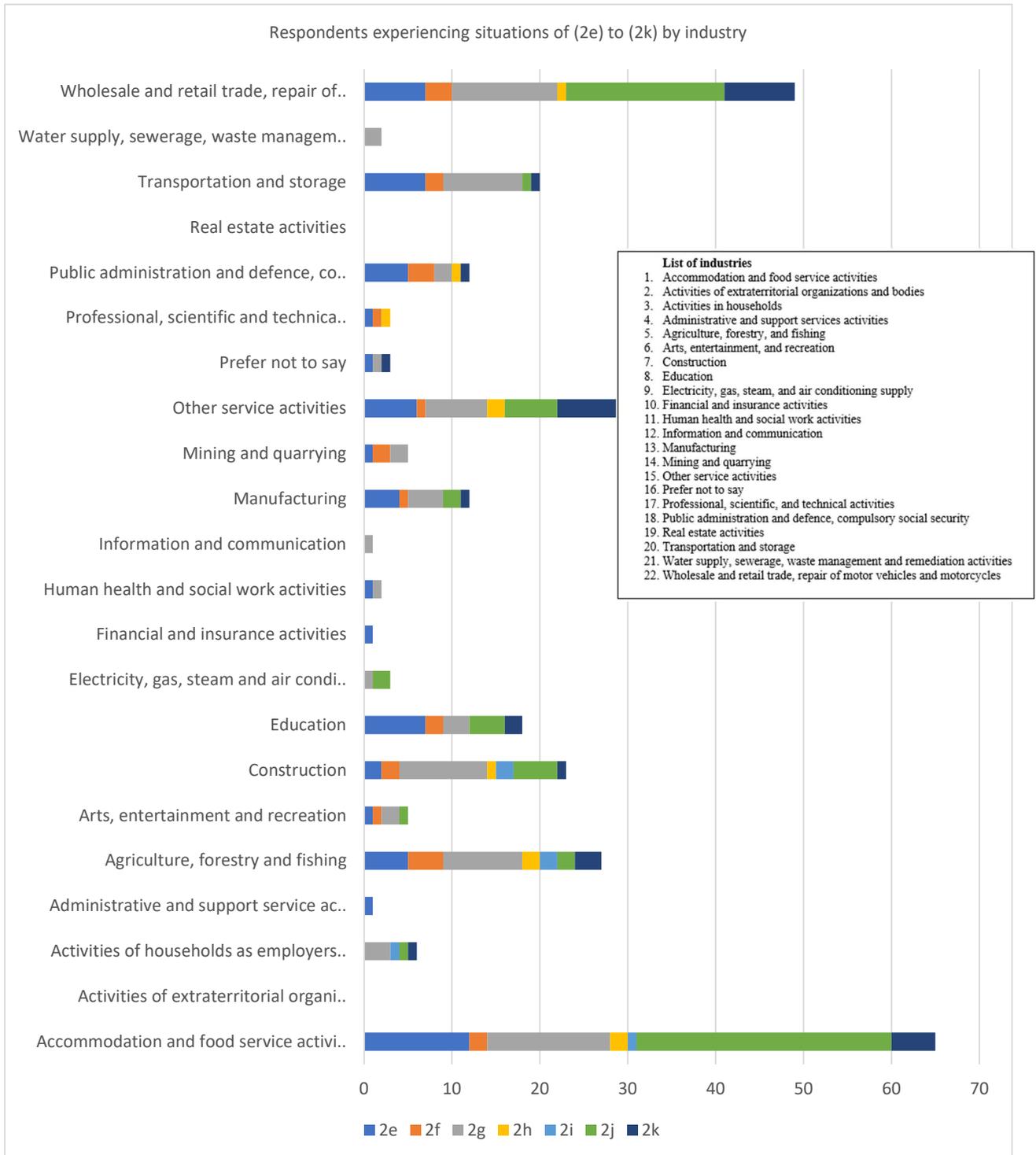


Figure 11: Total respondents experiencing situations (2e) to (2k) at work by industry



Most respondents in the sample and AOI in paid work agreed to do the work as they needed the income. They found their work through employers, friends, family members or other means such as responding to advertisements and were working in Fiji when they experienced these negative situations at work. A small number of respondents (n=34) were not working in Fiji when they experienced these situations.

Figure 12: Means by which respondents in the sample found their work

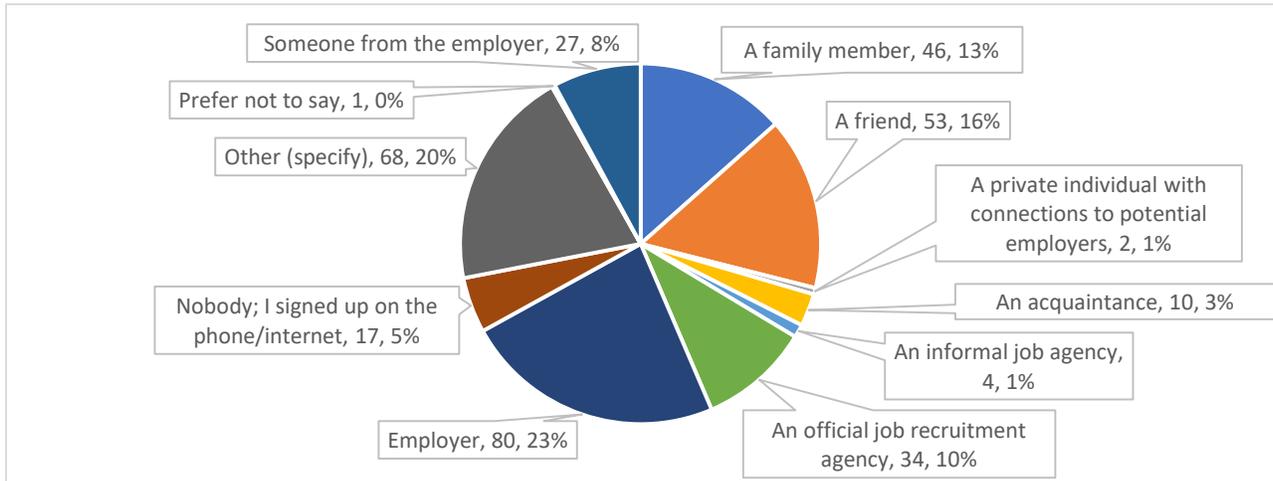


Figure 13: Means by which respondents in the AOI found their work

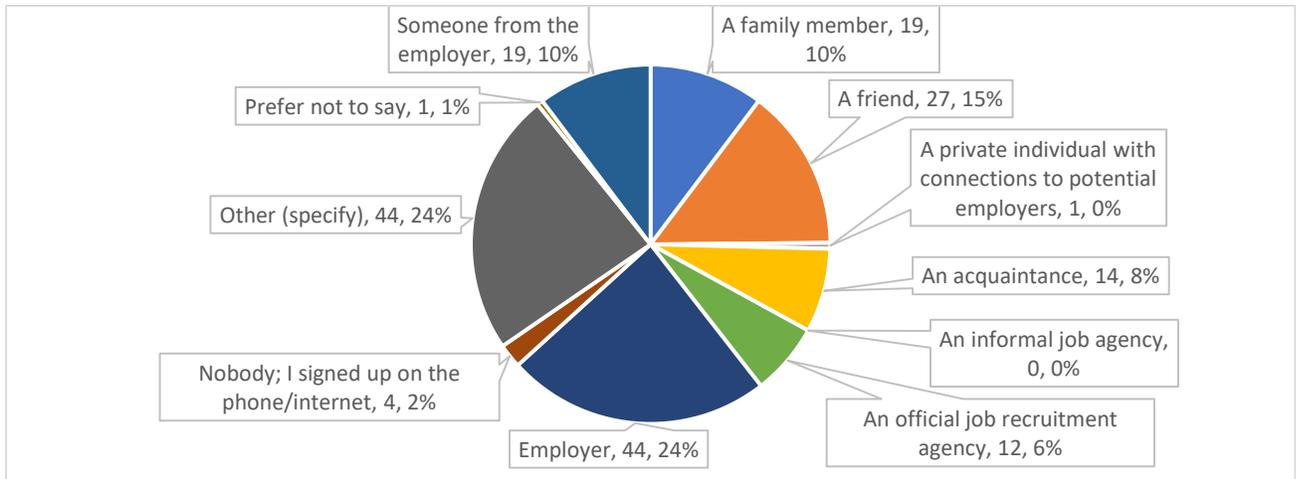


Figure 14: Reasons why respondents in the sample agreed to do this work

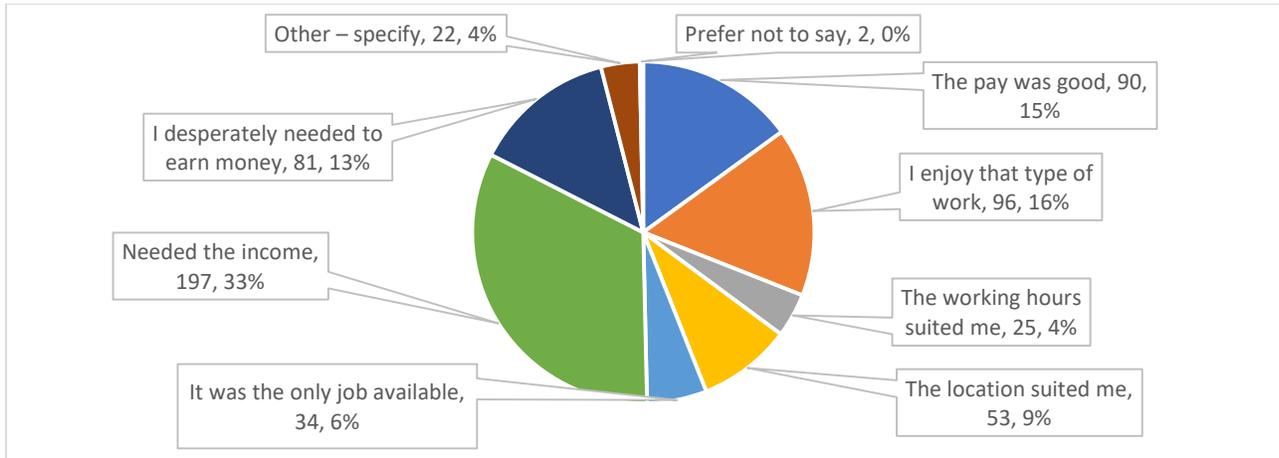


Figure 15: Reasons why respondents in the AOI agreed to do this work

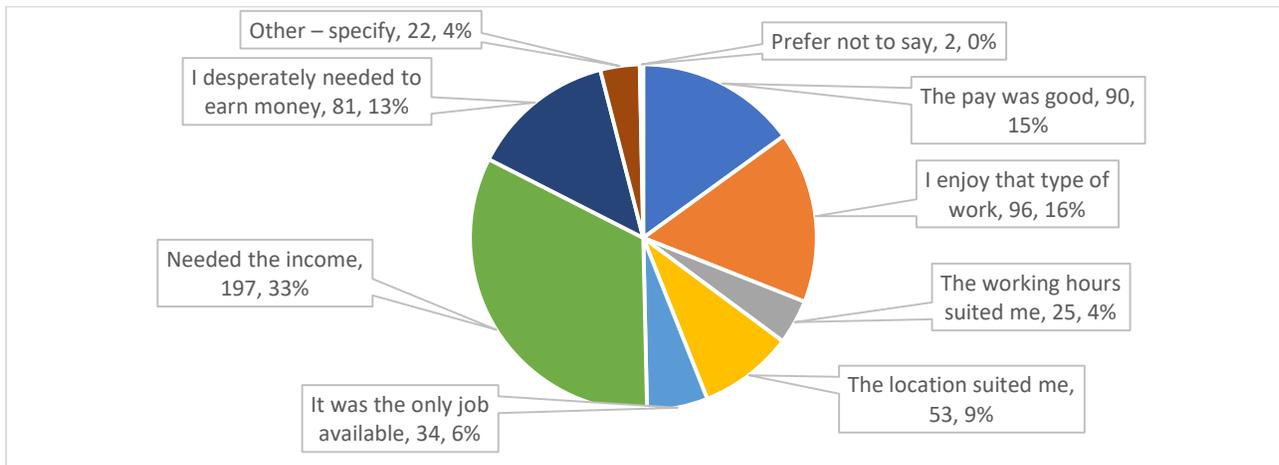


Figure 16: Respondents in the sample and AOI who were not in paid work in Fiji when experiencing these situations

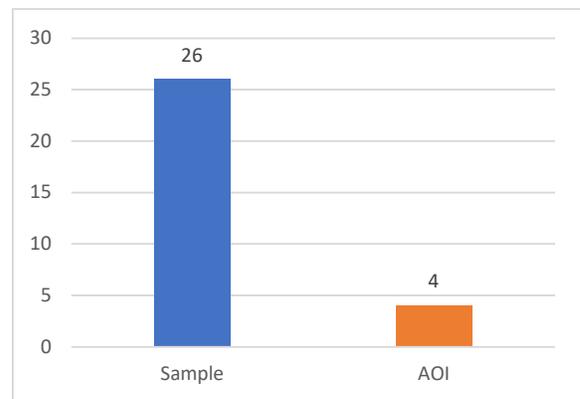
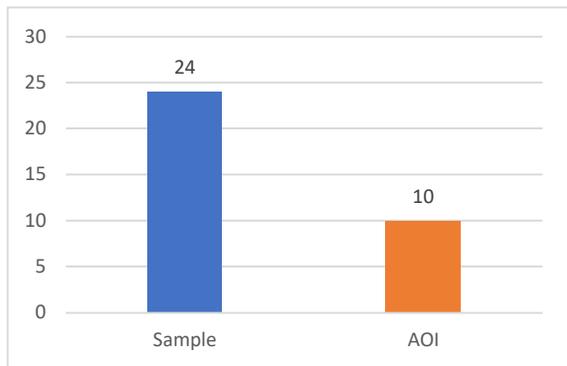


Figure 17: Respondents in the Sample and AOI who experienced similar situations in previous work

Some of the respondents also had experienced similar negative experiences in other previous work situations (n=30) in the past five years. Over half had experienced *less pay (9a)* and *working longer hours (9c)* being *pressured to do something they were not comfortable with doing (9d)* and *doing work that was different from what they had been promised (9b)*. A few were physically harmed while at work (n=3) and others threatened with violence (n=4), threatened with not getting paid (n=9), and restricted from communicating freely with family and others (n=2) even outside working hours.

Figure 18: Respondents who had similar experiences in other work situations

Section 4- Questions on Trafficking Part A- Trafficking related to paid work Indicator questions 9 (a) to (k)	Q9- Has any of the following happened to you in other work situations?		
	Respondents who said "Yes"		
	Sample	AOIs	Total
a) You received less pay than you were promised	4	19	23
b) The type of work was different than what you were promised	15	1	16
c) The working hours were longer than you were promised	18	3	21
d) You felt pressured to do something you didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing	16	2	18
e) You were threatened with violence to yourself or your family to perform certain tasks, work longer hours or accept less pay	3	1	4
f) You were physically harmed by your employer, manager, supervisor or co-worker while at work	2	1	3
g) You were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get you to work longer or carry out different tasks	7	2	9
h) You were threatened with being reported to the police (immigration authorities if respondent is foreign worker) or arrested if you didn't do as you were told at work	0	0	0
i) Your identification papers such as passport or visa was taken away or withheld by your employer	0	0	0
j) You were prevented or restricted from communicating freely with your family, including making or receiving phone calls to/from them even outside working hours	1	0	1
k) You were prevented or restricted from communicating freely with others outside the workplace, even outside working hours	1	0	1

Figure 19: Respondents who had similar experiences in other paid-work situations by year



### 3.3.2 Respondents from the sample and AOI who are potential victims of trafficking

By adding the combination of indicators for each respondent answering affirmatively for experiencing any of the situations (2a) to (2k) in relation to their paid work, a total of 140 respondents out of 1,476 interviewed, reached the “trafficking positive” threshold of  $\geq 100$ . This included 94 respondents in the sample and 46 in the AOI, the majority of whom were males.

Figure 20: Number of respondents by total value of combined responses

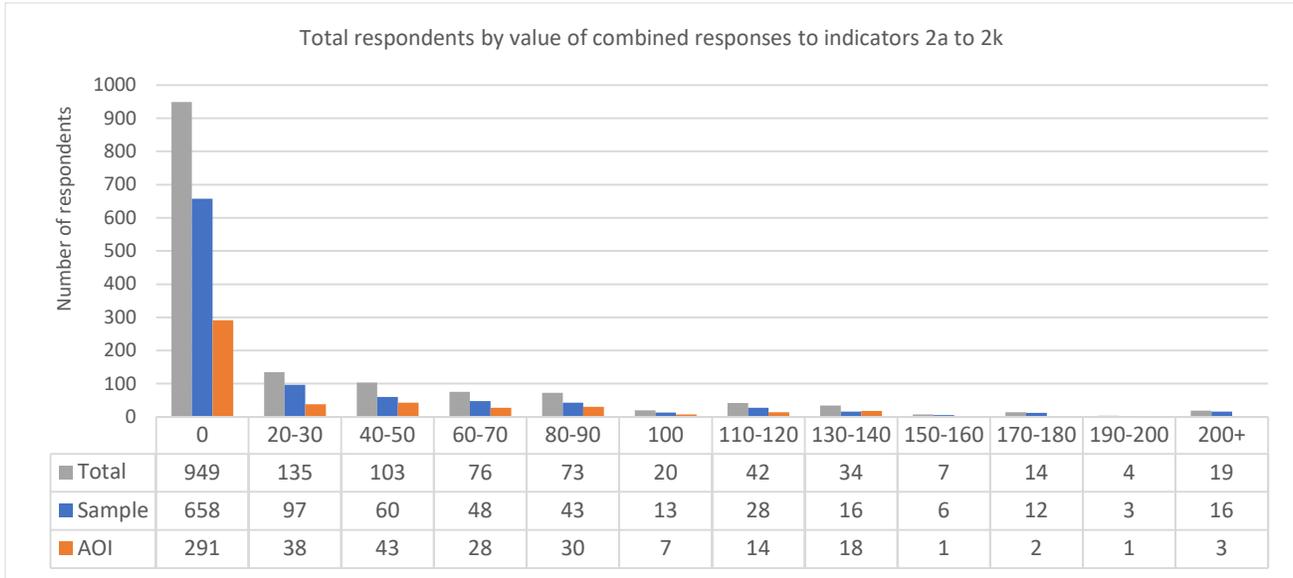


Figure 21: Number of respondents experiencing potential trafficking situations –combined indicators over the threshold of 100

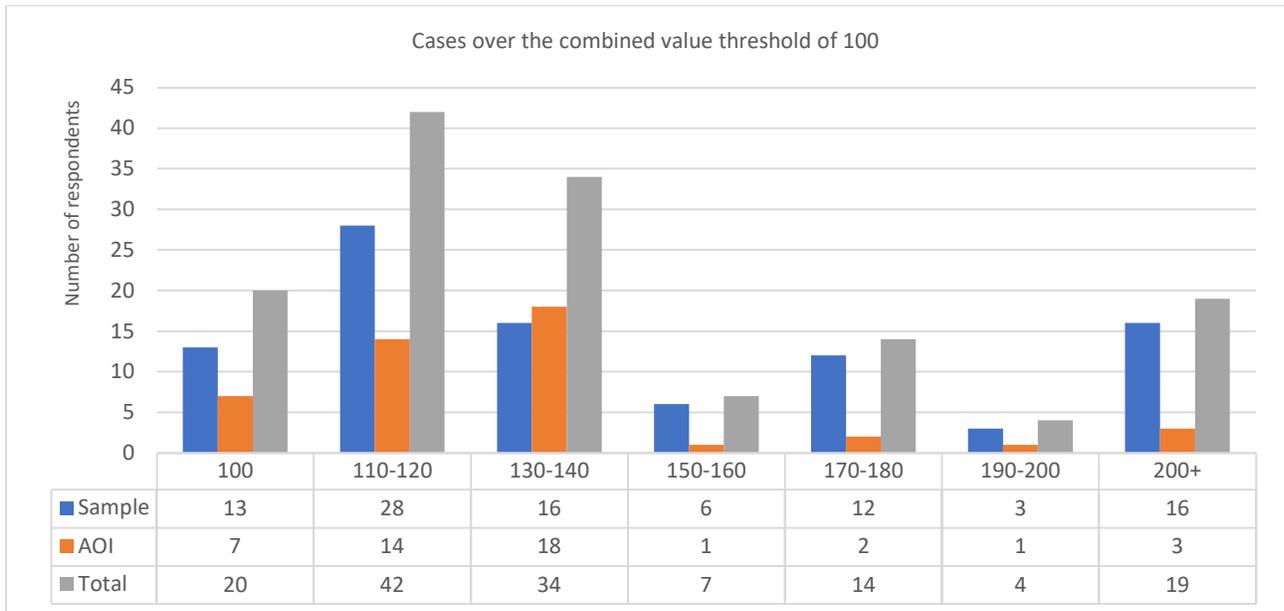
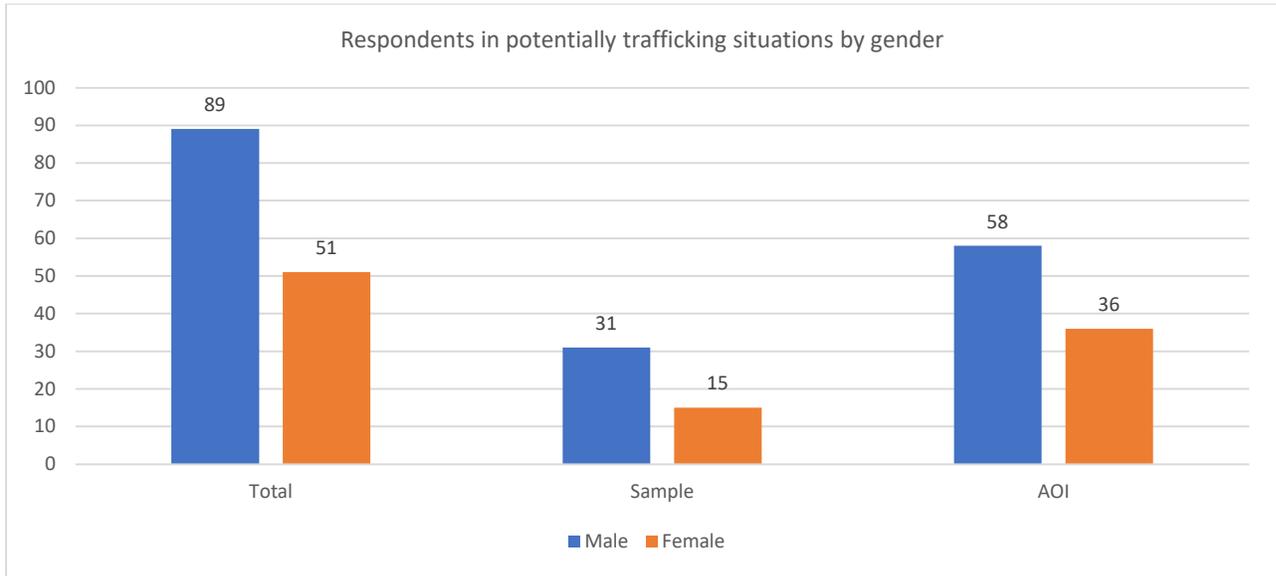


Figure 22: Respondents in potentially trafficking situations by gender



Thus, 140 respondents identified as potential victims of trafficking had various indicator combinations. For example, the combined indicators of less pay and conditions of employment that were different from what they agreed to, were physically harmed at work, were threatened with violence to themselves or family and restricted from communicating with others and were threatened with being reported to the authorities and had their passports taken from them by the employer.

One key informant interviewed a 22-year-old local man working in the construction sector. He had agreed to a verbal contract to receive FJD \$3.50 per hour to work in an office but was sent instead to work as a labourer on a construction site. Daily, he worked 13 hours but was not paid overtime. At the time of the interview, he had been working for three months in the job and desperately needed the income. He had been told that if he reported his situation to the authorities he would be terminated.

At the same site, there were four Bangladeshi workers who paid their recruiter money for air fare and work permits to work in Fiji. They had been in the country for two years and their passports were held by the employer. They worked seven days a week and were not paid overtime. If there was a defect in their work, they would lose a week's pay. They stayed at the company's house and bought their own food. Although they were told that they could not work anywhere else, one of them was sent to work for a local Bangladeshi. The new employer promised to pay him FJD \$100 a day for six days to work in his company, plus provide him meals and accommodation. Instead, he was paid FJD \$60 a week for the first two weeks and FJD \$75 in week three. He was not paid at the end of week four.

Source: Key Informant, CI02WD, 2021, Fiji.

The four indicator combinations below were common to several respondents:

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- b) The type of work was different than what was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- j) Prevented or restricted from communicating freely with their family, including making or receiving phone calls to/from them even outside working hours

N=16 people with these combinations

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- b) The type of work was different than what was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- g) Were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get them to work longer or carry out different tasks

N=15 people with these combinations

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- b) The type of work was different than what was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- e) Threatened with violence to them or their family to perform certain tasks, work longer hours or accept less pay

N=10 people with these combinations

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- g) Were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get them to work longer or carry out different tasks

N=8 people with these combinations

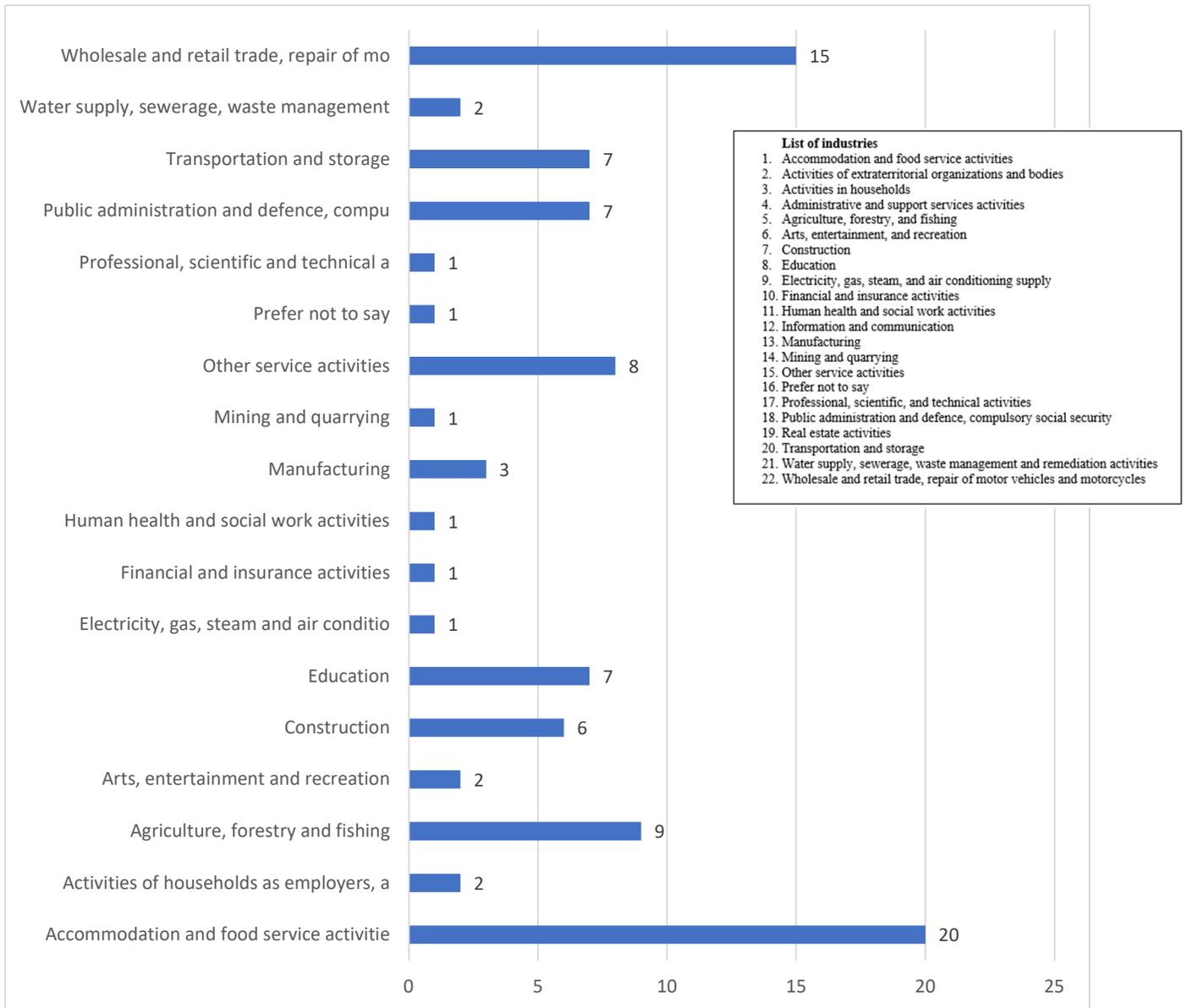
Other respondents experienced a wider range of exploitative conditions in the past five years as below, and some experienced between seven, or even all 11 indicators.

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- e) Threatened with violence to them or their family to perform certain tasks, work longer hours or accept less pay
- f) Was physically harmed by your employer, manager, supervisor or co-worker while at work
- g) Were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get them to work longer or carry out different tasks

- b) The type of work was different than what was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- i) Identification papers such as passport or visa was taken away or withheld by the employer
- j) Prevented or restricted from communicating freely with their family, including making or receiving phone calls to/from them even outside working hours
- k) Was prevented or restricted from communicating freely with others outside the workplace, even outside working hours

Figures 23 and 24 illustrate the various indicator combinations experienced by paid workers, many of whom experienced these negative situations in the industries involving accommodation and food services, wholesale, retail and vehicle repair, construction, transportation and storage, agriculture, fisheries and forestry, other service activities, public administration and defence, education, and professional, scientific and technical activities.

Figure 23: Potential trafficking cases of respondents  $\geq 100$  threshold by industry



### 3.3.3 Situations experienced by others in paid work who the respondents knew personally

Responding to the question *in the past 5 years, have any of the following happened to someone you know personally in relation to their work*, most respondents in the sample and AOI who answered affirmatively knew someone personally who had experienced indicators (11a) to (11d) in their work. These were the indicators related to *less pay than what they were promised for the work they were recruited to do (11a)*, were *working longer hours than they were promised (11c)*, were being *pressured to do something they were not comfortable with doing (11d)* and *doing work that was different from what they had been promised (11b)*.

Other people known personally to the respondents experienced other situations in their work. These include being threatened with violence to themselves or family to perform certain tasks, forced to work longer hours or accept less pay; physically harmed by their employer, manager, supervisor or co-worker while at work; threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get them to work longer or carry out different tasks; threatened with being reported to the police (immigration authorities if respondent is foreign worker) or arrested if they did not do as told at work; having their identification papers such as passport or visa was taken away or withheld by their employer; being prevented or restricted from communicating freely with family, including making or receiving phone calls to/from them even outside working hours; and being prevented or restricted from communicating freely with others outside the workplace, even outside working hours.

Those identified who the respondents knew personally were in construction, accommodation and food services activities, wholesale and retail trade and repair of vehicles, agriculture, forestry fishing and other service activities, and some in manufacturing and transport and storage activities. Most agreed to do this work as they greatly needed the income, it was the only job available and the promised pay was good. Responding to advertisements and communication with employers and friends were the main means for finding their jobs.

Figure 24: Total number of respondents from sample and AOI who knew people personally experiencing situations 11a to 11k in their work in the past 5 years

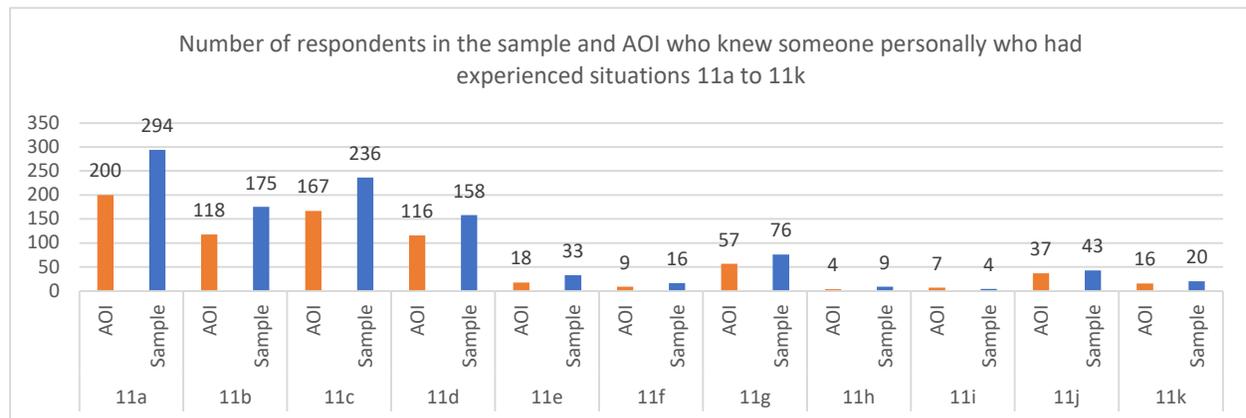


Figure 25: Total number of people known personally to respondents from sample and AOI by situations experienced in their work in the past 5 years

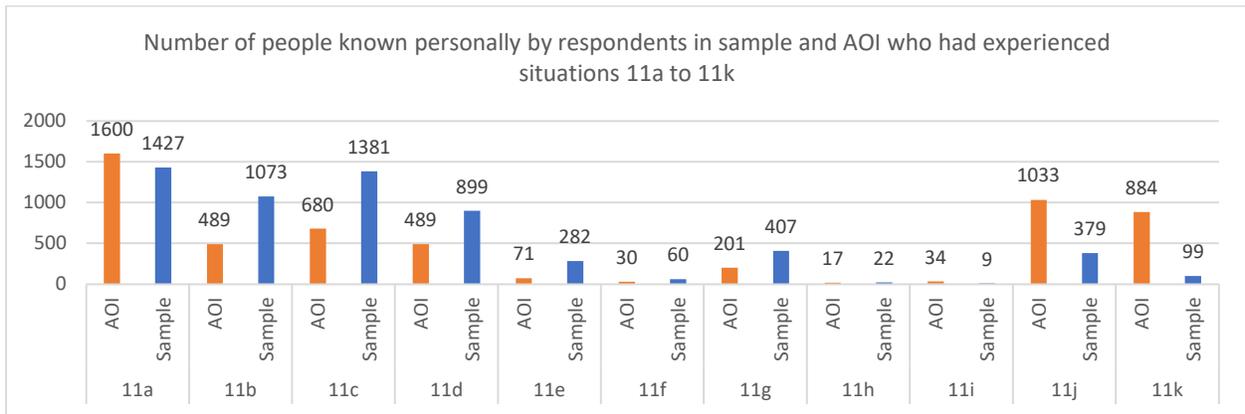


Figure 26: Total respondents by how their personal contacts got the job

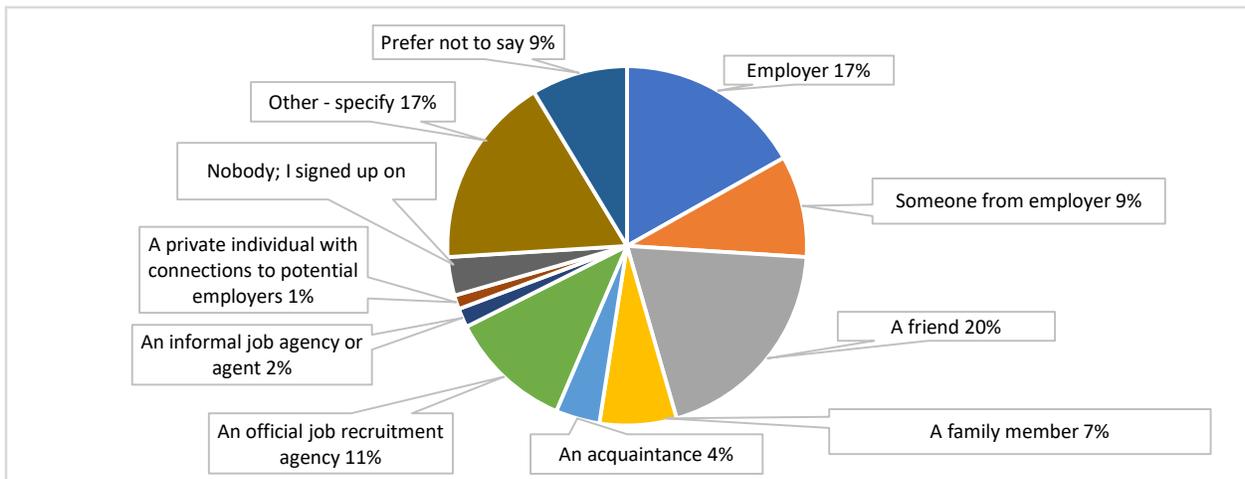
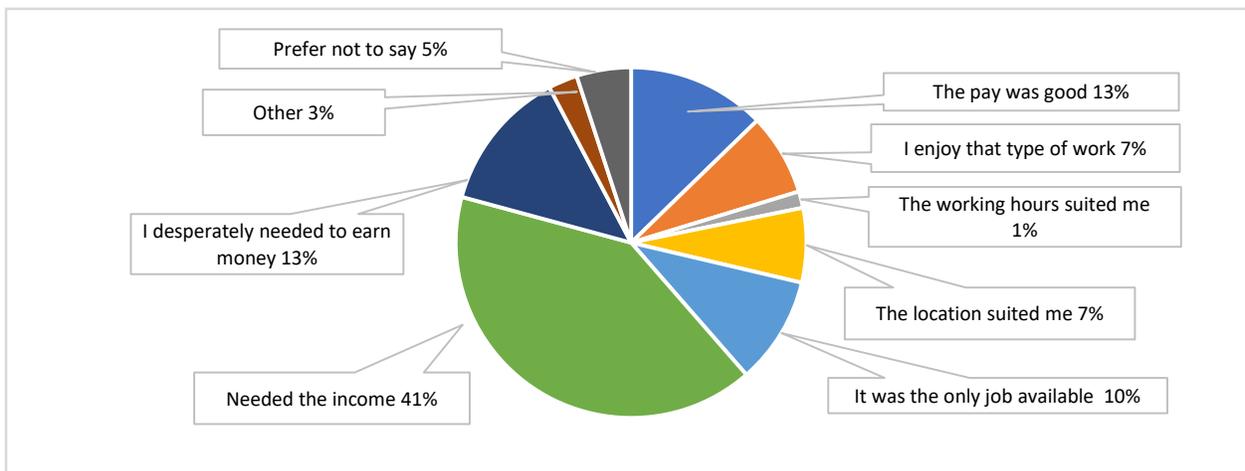


Figure 27: Total respondents by main reason for their personal contacts agreeing to do this job



### 3.3.4 People identified in personal networks who are potential victims of trafficking

By adding the combination of indicators for each respondent responding affirmatively for experiencing any of the situations (11a) to (11k) in relation to their paid work, a total of 165 respondents (96 in the sample and 69 in AOI) knew people who reached or exceeded the threshold of 100 for potential trafficking cases. The most common combinations of indicators were:

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- b) The type of work was different than what was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- g) Were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get them to work longer or carry out different tasks

N=38 people knew others with these combinations

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- g) Were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get them to work longer or carry out different tasks

N=13 people knew others with these combinations

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- b) The type of work was different than what was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- e) Threatened with violence to them or their family to perform certain tasks, work longer hours or accept less pay

N=7 people knew others with these combinations

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- b) The type of work was different than what was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- j) Prevented or restricted from communicating freely with their family, including making or receiving phone calls to/from them even outside working hours

N=13 people knew others with these combinations

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- b) The type of work was different than what was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- g) Were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get them to work longer or carry out different tasks

N=10 people knew others with these combinations

- a) Received less pay than was promised
- b) The type of work was different than what was promised
- c) The working hours were longer than was promised
- d) Felt pressured to do something that they didn't want to do or felt uncomfortable doing
- e) Threatened with violence to them or their family to perform certain tasks, work longer hours or accept less pay
- f) Were physically harmed by their employer, manager, supervisor, or co-worker while at work
- g) Were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get them to work longer or carry out different tasks

N=9 people knew others with these combinations

Most people whom respondents knew in potential trafficking situations were working in the construction industry, accommodation and food services activities, wholesale and retail trade and repair of vehicles industry, agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors and other service activities.

Key informants interviewed had limited information on the trafficking of locals domestically, and shared stories regarding locals working in harsh labour conditions as part of cane harvesting crews, as well as a few incidences of breach of labour contracts. There was greater awareness of issues related to foreign workers in potential trafficking situations in Fiji.

According to key informants, some foreign workers were forced to do work that was different from what they had agreed to do. Others had signed contracts in their own language, and upon arrival in Fiji, were given new contracts to sign in an unfamiliar language (English). Foreign workers were identified in construction, furniture making, the garment industry, restaurants, sugarcane mills, wholesale and retail sales, poultry, vegetable farming and shipping industries. There were also some complaints of exploitation in the logging industry.

According to key informants, recruitment methods varied. In some instances, individual recruiters in Fiji working with counterparts in source countries – both paid by workers or prospective employers – engage and organize workers for companies in Fiji. Alternatively, employers may directly recruit workers in partnership with local or overseas agents. In both cases, there was often a disconnect between the expectations and aspirations of the workers and the employers and agreed terms.<sup>24</sup>

A key informant's experience of meeting possible trafficking victims:

“During a routine check, I visited a house where eight foreign labourers, men between 25 and 40 years old, were staying. They were tradespeople, recruited from the same community abroad and had been in Fiji for four months. They told me they believed that they were going to work in Australia and had paid money to the contractor. After one week in Australia, they came to work for a company in Fiji. Labour for the company was organized through the contractor who recruited the workers and was paid by the company and then paid the workers. The workers were not sure whether they had a contract and said that the contractor held their passports and permits. When I returned two weeks later, the workers had left the house.”

Source: Key informant, Fiji, 2021.

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<sup>24</sup> Key informants G001 to G011, Fiji, 2021

### 3.5 Vulnerabilities of children living away from home

The survey also asked questions about children living away from home to identify the vulnerabilities faced by this group that may put them at risk of being trafficked. A total of 466 respondents (286 in the sample and 180 in the AOI) knew of situations where children were living away from home. Most respondents knew of one or two children living away from home, with almost equal amounts of girls and boys in the sample and AOI.

Figure 28: Number of respondents in the sample and AOI by number of girls whom they knew were sent away from their birth families to live with others

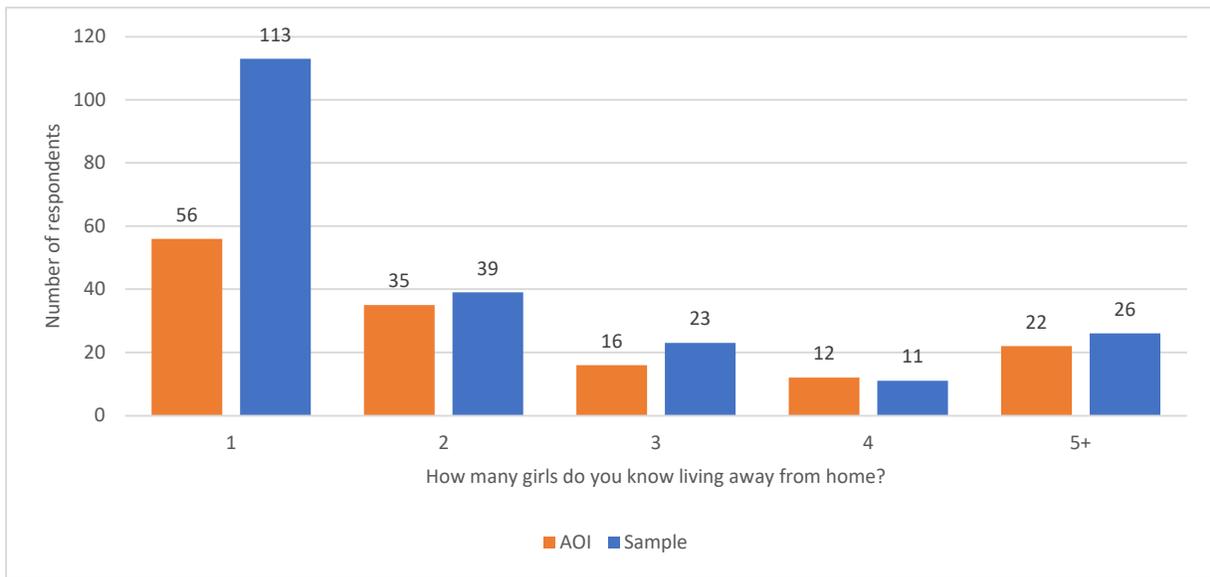
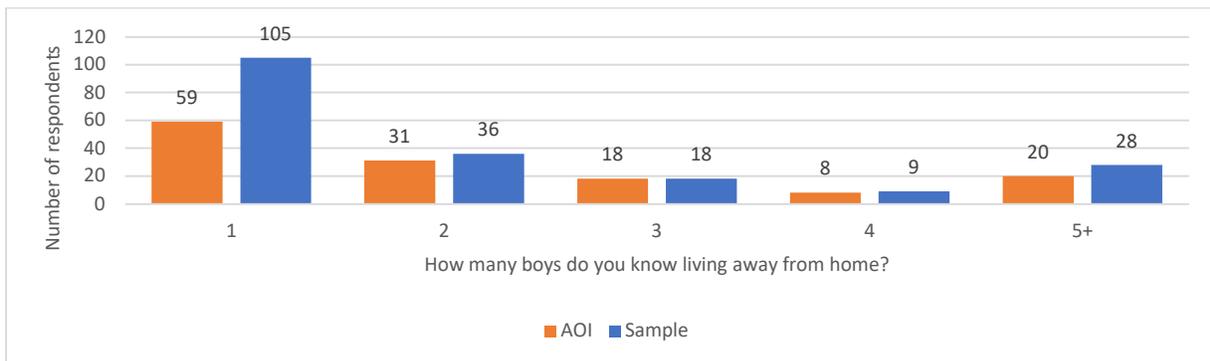


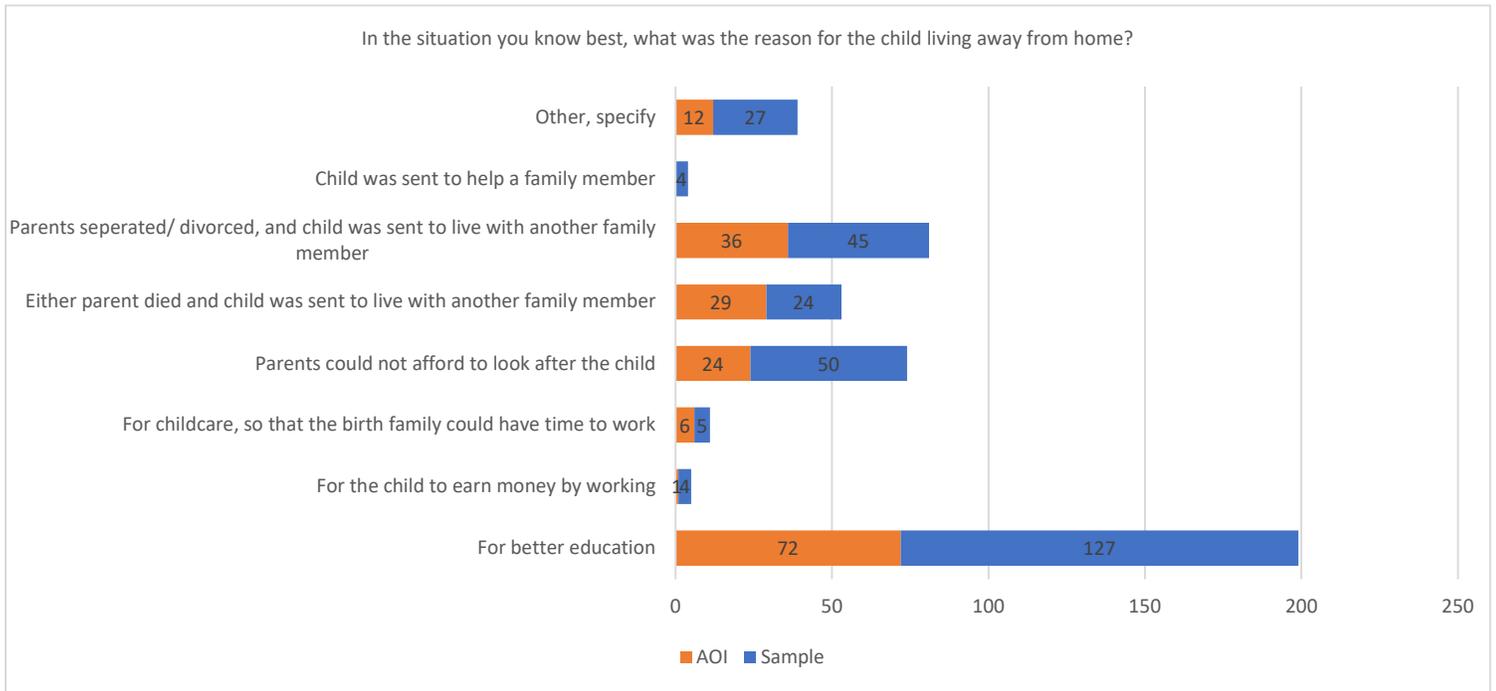
Figure 29: Number of respondents in the sample and AOI by number of boys whom they knew were sent away from their birth families to live with others



Based on the situation that respondents knew best, they identified that moving for better education was the main reason for families sending children to live away from home. Children were also sent to live with other family members in situations where parents were being separated or divorced or unable to afford to look after the children. Other reasons for sending

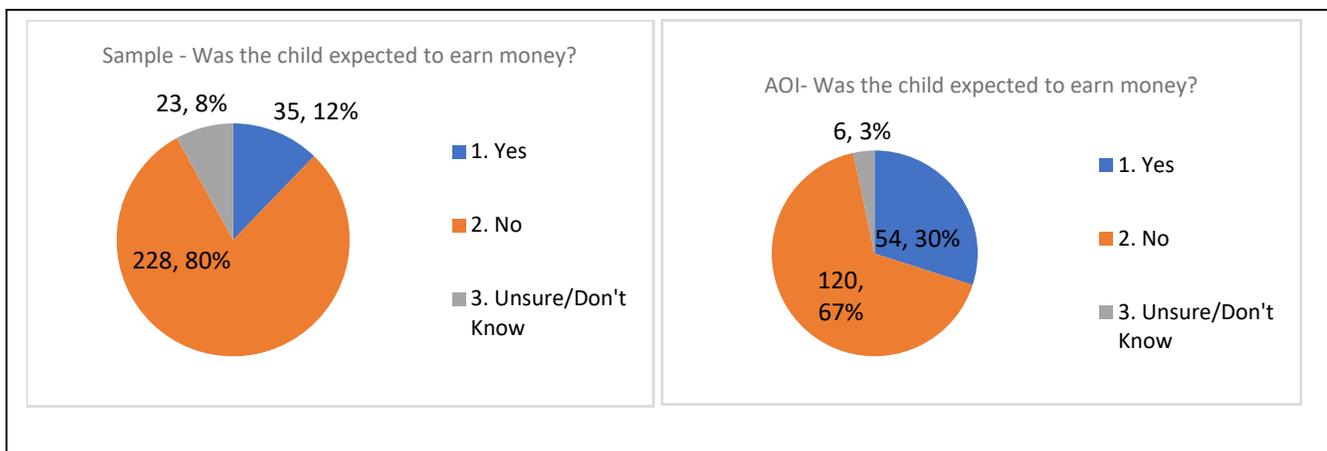
children away from home were also related to the breakdown of the nuclear family, for example, a child being ill-treated by a stepparent or experiencing domestic violence.

Figure 30: Reasons for the child living away from home in the situation known best by respondents in the sample and AOI



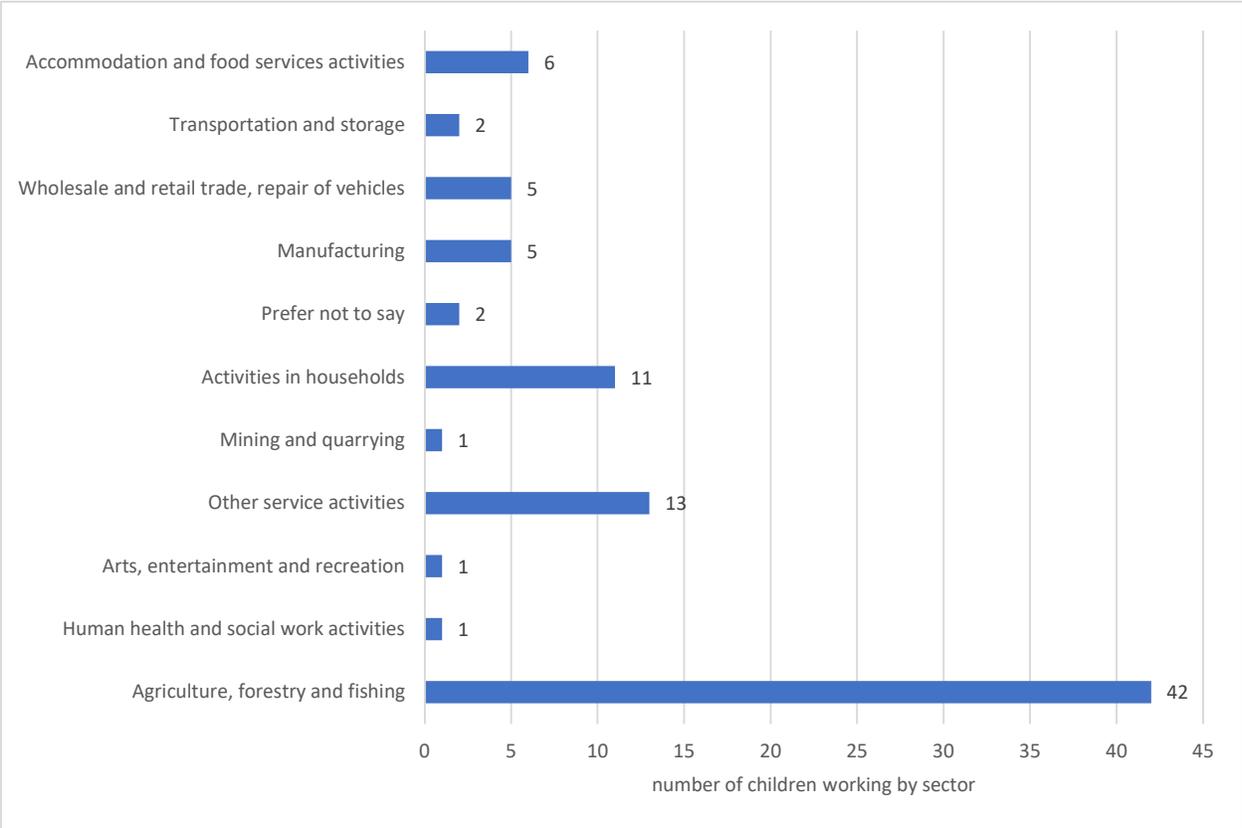
Only a few respondents identified that the reason for children living home to stay with others was to earn money by working (n=5) or to help family members (n=4). However, when questioned whether the child was expected to earn money in his or her new home, 89 responded affirmatively (Sample n=35/ AOI n=54) based on the situation which they knew best.

Figure 31: Number of children who were expected to earn money while living away from home in the situation known best by respondents in the sample and AOI



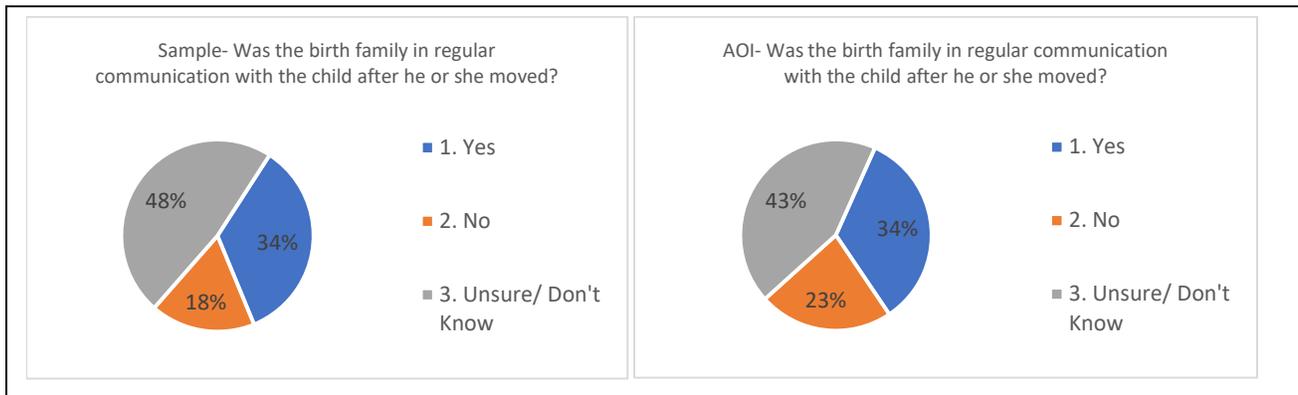
Almost half of the 89 respondents stated that children were earning money in agriculture and/or fishing (n=42) including at sugarcane or vegetable farms as casual farm labourers or in selling farm produce and fish from roadside markets. Others were engaged in other services, including in household activities and food services, mainly in street vending or selling of food such as roti parcels or BBQ from food stalls or from house to house. There were also children working in retail mainly as packers or “row boys”, as kitchen hands and casual labourers in garages, carwashes, garment factories and other industries.

Figure 32: Working children by sector of work in which they were engaged in the situation known best by respondents



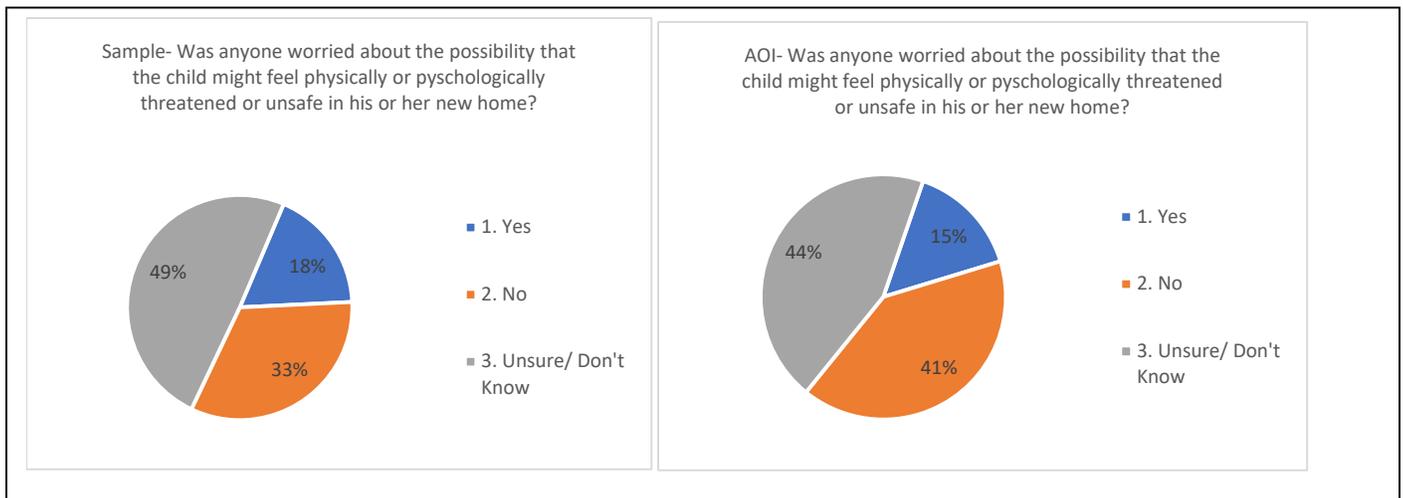
Most respondents in the sample and AOI were unsure whether there was regular communication between the children living away from home and their birth families. Respondents were also unsure whether anyone was worried about the safety of children living away from home and whether these children felt threatened or unsafe.

Figure 33: Children living away from home whose families communicated regularly with them in the situation known best by respondents in the sample and AOI



Respondents in the sample and AOI agreed that there were some cases of people worried about children living away from home feeling unsafe or threatened. In most cases, family ties between children and their birth home remained and children living away from home were able to go back to their birth families. However, because of the lack of communication or monitoring of children living away from home, parents may be unaware of and less likely to prevent or address difficulties faced by their children in their new home environments.

Figure 34: Perception of respondents in the sample of whether anyone was worried about children living away from home



According to qualitative data, the number of out-of-school children has increased alongside job losses and increasing financial struggles resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>25</sup> More children are selling on the streets after school hours and are in commercial sexual exploitation, which has become increasingly associated with hard drugs (e.g., methamphetamines) and marijuana sales.

Previous reports on child labour, child protection and trafficking of children for sexual exploitation in Fiji<sup>26</sup> have highlighted concerns related to the vulnerability of children living away from their parents, putting children at risk of exploitation, abuse and neglect. These reports cite examples of children in situations of child labour, domestic servitude or commercial sexual exploitation, namely prostitution. Data from key informants also suggest that children living away from home are more vulnerable to abuse and some have been trafficked and exploited. In-depth research linking the vulnerabilities of children living away from home and human trafficking is recommended.

### 3.6 Vulnerabilities linked to trafficking for sexual exploitation

Available literature on trafficking and related issues and qualitative data from key informant interviews indicates that international and domestic trafficking for sexual exploitation occurs in Fiji. While cross-border trafficking for sexual exploitation remains largely undetected, with only one case prosecuted in Fiji,<sup>27</sup> the HTU has, since 2010, investigated several cases of domestic trafficking of children for sexual exploitation and a few offenders have been convicted.<sup>28</sup>

The survey attempted to explore respondents' knowledge and awareness of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Fiji and related vulnerabilities and risks. As a result of discussions on the cultural sensitivities of including questions on sexual exploitation, it was agreed that terms such as commercial sexual, prostitution, pornographic performances should not be included in the questions as these were too sensitive. Instead, questions on "arranged sexual relationships" was included with the aim to identify potential situations, risks and vulnerabilities related to trafficking for sexual exploitation, which could further inform the design of a specialized national survey or qualitative research.

Several respondents in the sample and AOI (n=192) knew one or more persons who was or had been in an arranged sexual relationship situation, in the last five years. These 192 respondents knew a total of 1,126 people who were or had been in an arranged sexual relationship, including

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<sup>25</sup> Key informant interviews, G006-G011, Fiji, 2021.

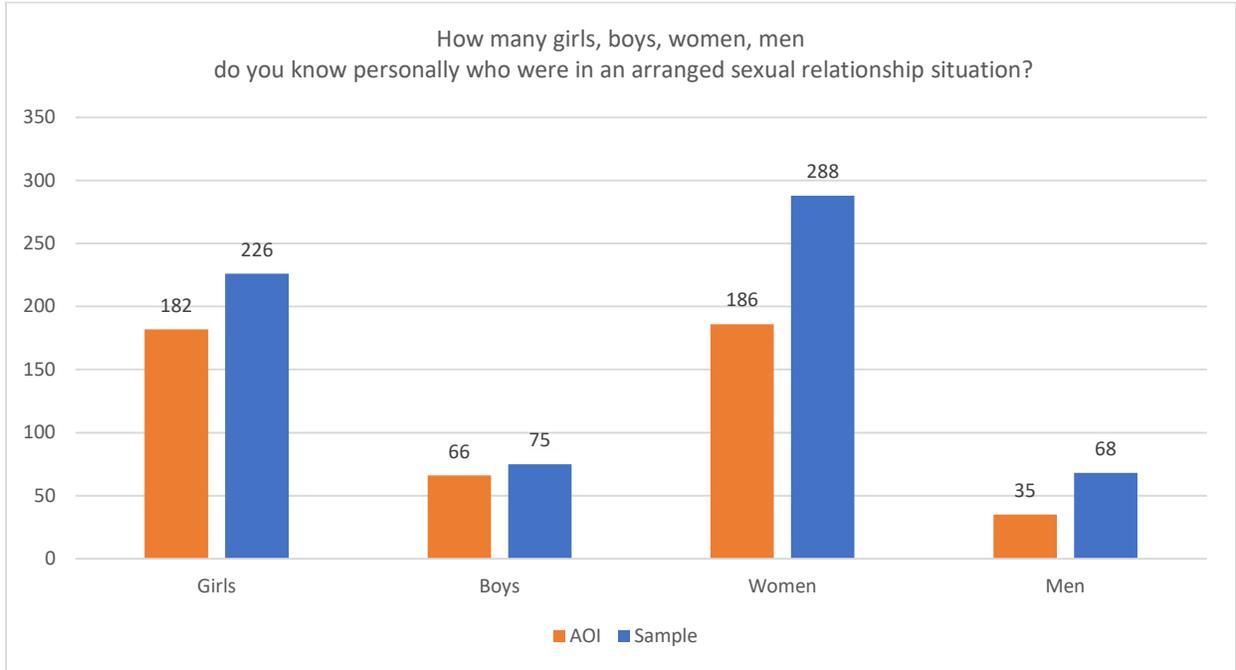
<sup>26</sup> UNICEF, UNESCAP and ECPAT, 2006, "Child Sexual Abuse and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Pacific: A Regional Report", [Untitled-5 \(unicef.or.jp\)](#); International Labour Organization, 2010, "[Child labour in Fiji: A survey of working children in commercial sexual exploitation, on the streets, in rural agricultural communities, in informal and squatter settlements and in schools](#)". ([ilo.org](#)); UNICEF, 2017, [Situation-Analysis-of-Children-Fiji.pdf \(unicef.org\)](#); Fatiaki, M., 2019, "A study of the trafficking of children in Fiji for sexual exploitation, as an emerging urban issue", master's thesis available at: <http://digilib.library.usp.ac.fj/gsd/collect/usplibr1/index/assoc/HASH17ca.dir/doc.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> High Court of Fiji at Suva, *State v Laojindamane*, Case No. No: HAC323.2012, Judgement, 13 December 2012.

<sup>28</sup> High Court of Fiji, *State v Raikadroka*, Case No. HAC80.2013, Sentence, 9 June 2014; High Court of Fiji, *State v Werelagi*, Case No. HAC425.2018, 2019.

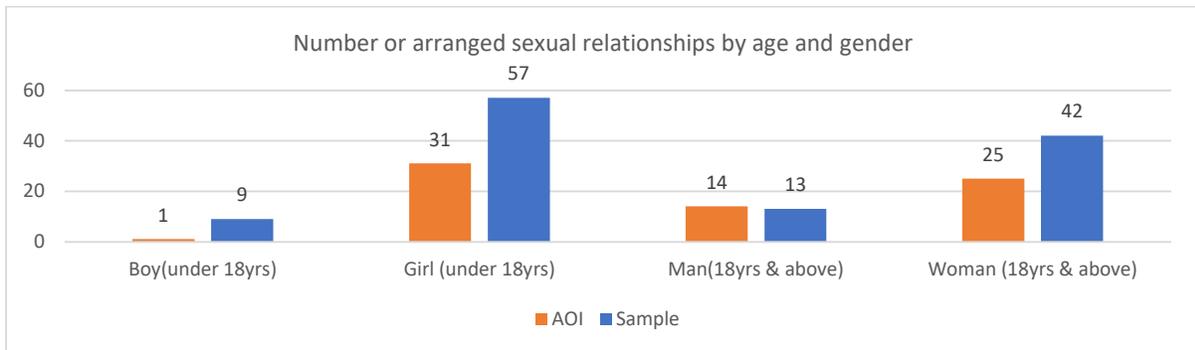
549 children, of which 408 were girls and 141 were boys. Most of the people known by respondents in this situation were females (n=882).

Figure 35: Total number of persons known by respondents in the sample and AOI who had sexual relationships arranged - by age and gender



In the situation known best to the respondents, 81 per cent of the persons in an arranged sexual relationship were females, with nearly half being girls below 18 years (46 per cent). More than half of the persons known best to respondents were children (51 per cent), predominantly girls and a small percentage of boys (five per cent).

Figure 36: Number of persons in arranged sexual relationships by age and gender in the situation best known by respondents in the sample and AOI



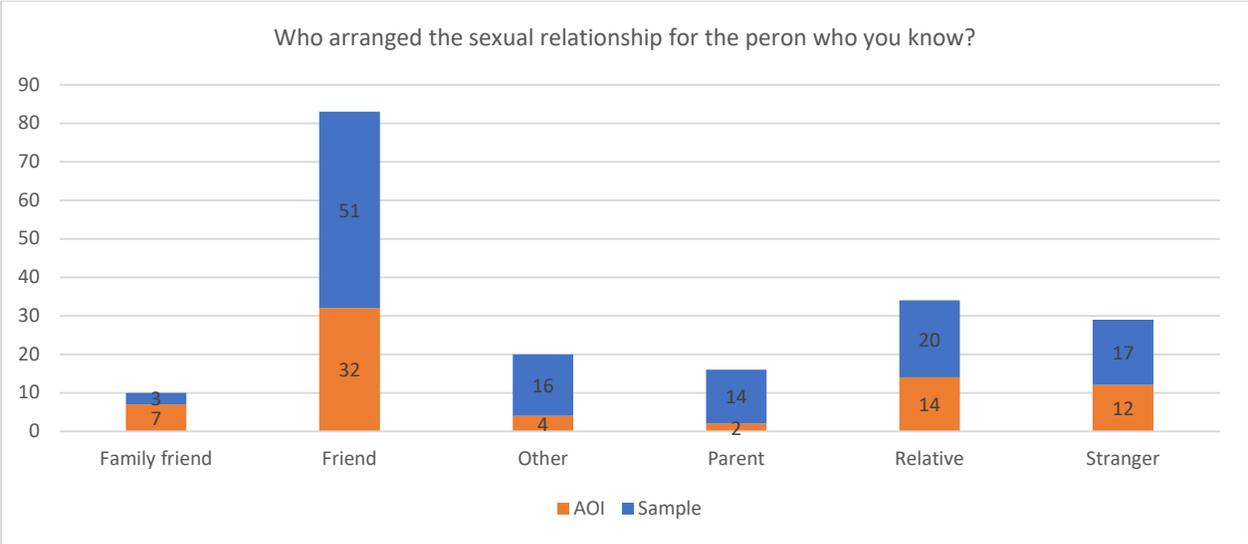
According to most respondents (n=192) regarding the situation they knew best, the sexual relationships for the person whom they knew was organized by friends, relatives, strangers, parents, family friends and others. While most respondents did not specify who the “others” were, according to qualitative data, this may include pimps, partners, sex workers, taxi drivers, bartenders, staff at hotels and nightclubs, friends or workmates.

Experience observing arranged sexual relationships from one key informant:

“I worked in two hotels in Fiji where the staff would be asked to arrange young girls below 18 years for clients who were checking in. There was a middleman (pimp) we would contact to organize the girls and he would send them to the hotel in taxis. They were university students or young girls from out of town, children who were staying with relatives or just loitering in town and young girls from the neighbourhood. For example, once a mother from the neighbourhood came to the hotel with her two young daughters and was drinking at the bar with a businessman. It was local knowledge that the two young girls (aged 17 and 19), were both in the sex trade. The staff were wary to talk about what was happening in the hotel, as we all needed our jobs.”

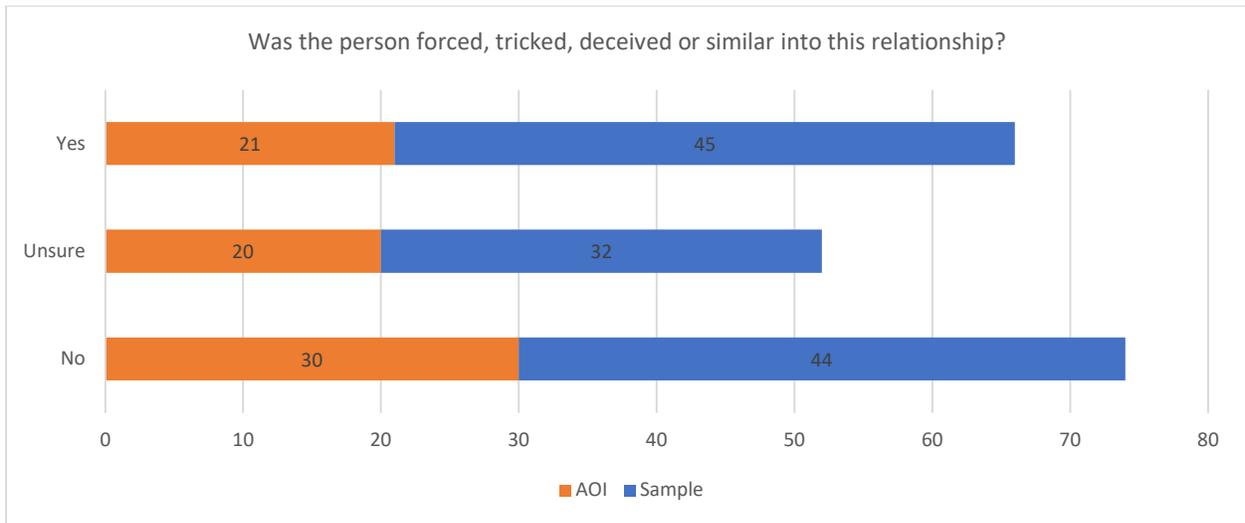
Source: Key informants, CI05ND, 2021, Fiji.

Figure 37: Persons in the situation best known to respondents in the sample and AOI who were involved in arranging the sexual relationship



A total of 66 respondents stated that the person had been forced, tricked, deceived or similar into the arranged sexual relationship. Similarly, qualitative data from key informants suggests that often people are forced into exploitative situations because of family pressure or difficult circumstances, highlighting vulnerabilities and trends related to trafficking into the sex trade.

Figure 38: Persons in the situation best known to respondents who may have been forced, tricked, deceived or similar



Although most respondents did not think that family members were involved in arranging the sexual relationship for the person they knew best, a total of 40 respondents indicated that family members were involved and over half of the respondents indicated that those who arranged the sexual relationship received some form of reward in cash, kind or other payments. Qualitative data also confirms the role of family members in trafficking family members into sexual exploitation.

Figure 39: Involvement of family members in the situation known best to respondents in the sample and AOI

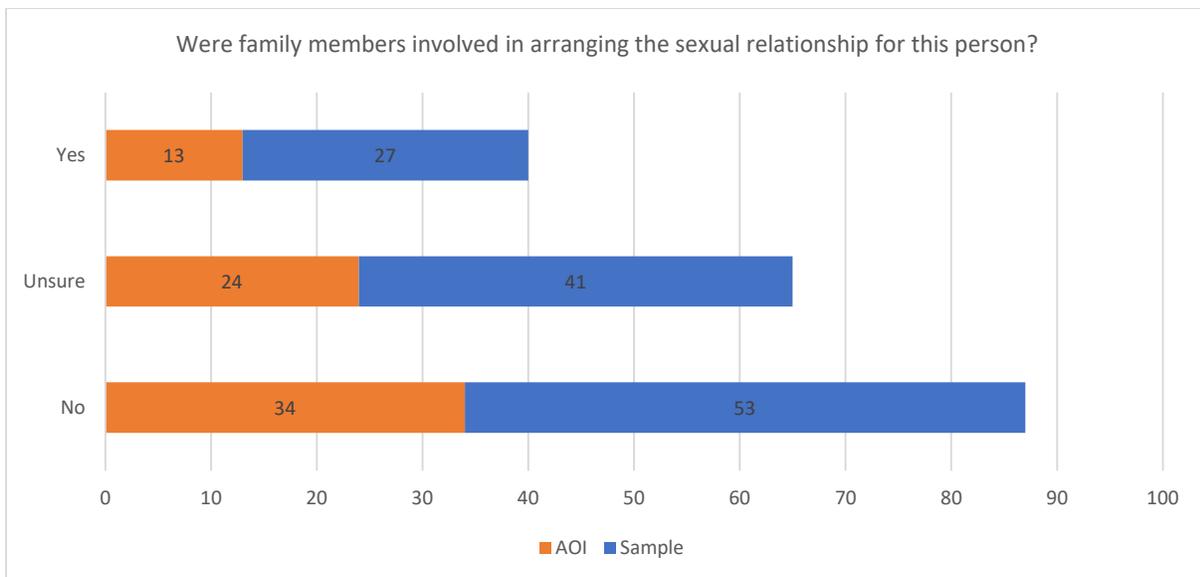
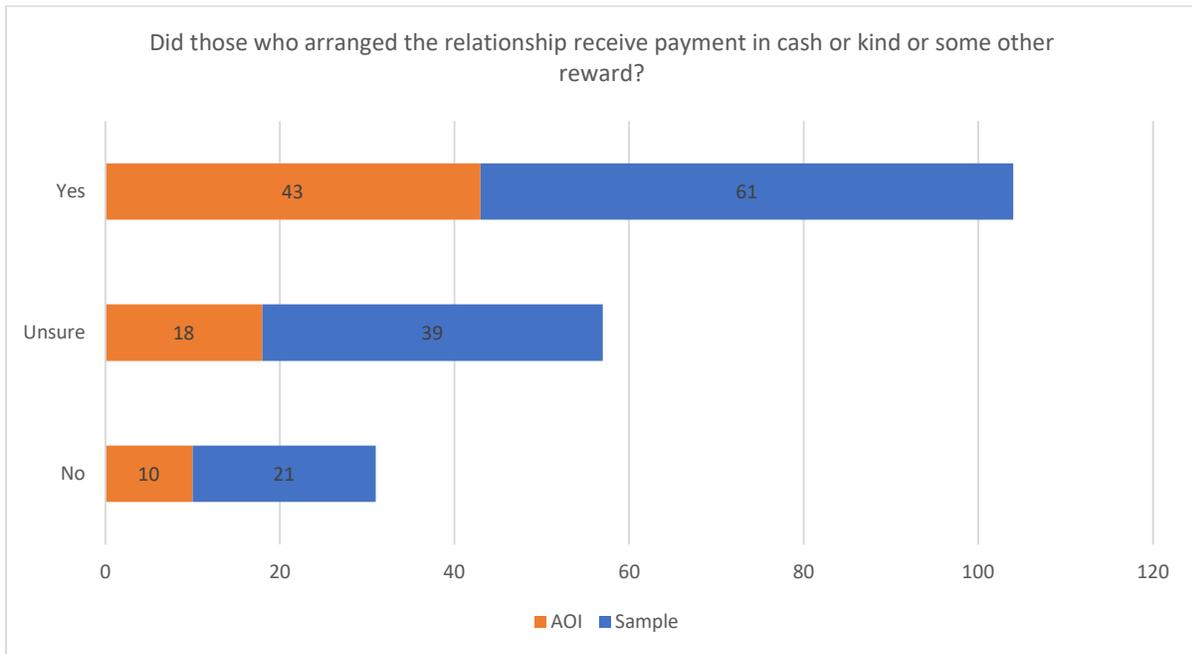


Figure 40: Receipt of payment by those who made the arrangements in the situation known best by respondents in the sample and AOI



One key informant’s story of a contact in arranged sexual relationships:

“One woman was sold into sexual exploitation with her sisters when they were still children. She first started making pornography films at home with a foreign friend of her parents before entering into paid sex. When she married, her husband also sold her into sexual exploitation while he stayed home to look after their child. Workers at the hotels in town contact her for their local and foreign guests and her aunt and other friends also organize clients for her. She faces violence from clients and at home. Her younger sister is 16 years old and is also being trafficked for sexual exploitation with four other underage girls working from a motel. They are all into ‘ice’ and alcohol.”

Source: Key informant, TIPV04, 2021, Fiji.

Regarding movement away from home for the person in the arranged sexual relationship, most respondents stated that this was not required, although several (n=47) indicated that the person they knew had to leave home or move to another locality. Movement, however, was mainly internal (domestic) with a few (n=10) required to move out of Fiji as part of their arrangement, and even fewer (n=4) required to move into Fiji as part of their arrangement.

Figure 41: Movement away from home required by those in arranged sexual relationships in the situation known best by respondents in the sample and AOI

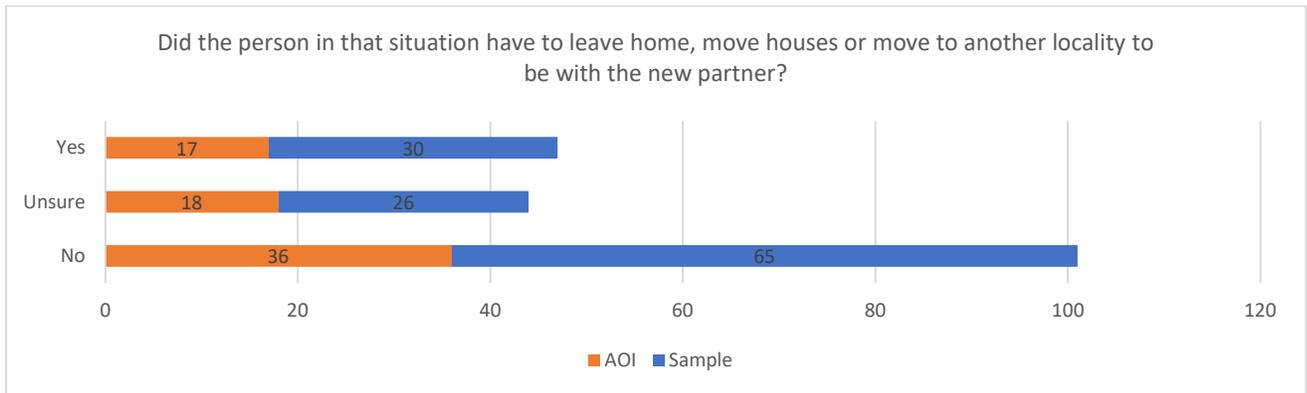


Figure 42: Movement out of or into Fiji by those in arranged sexual relationships in the situation known best by respondents in the sample

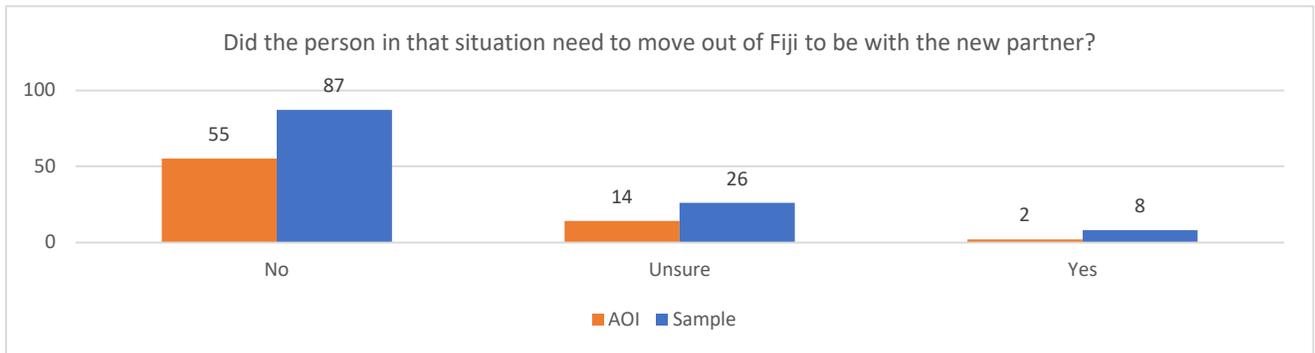
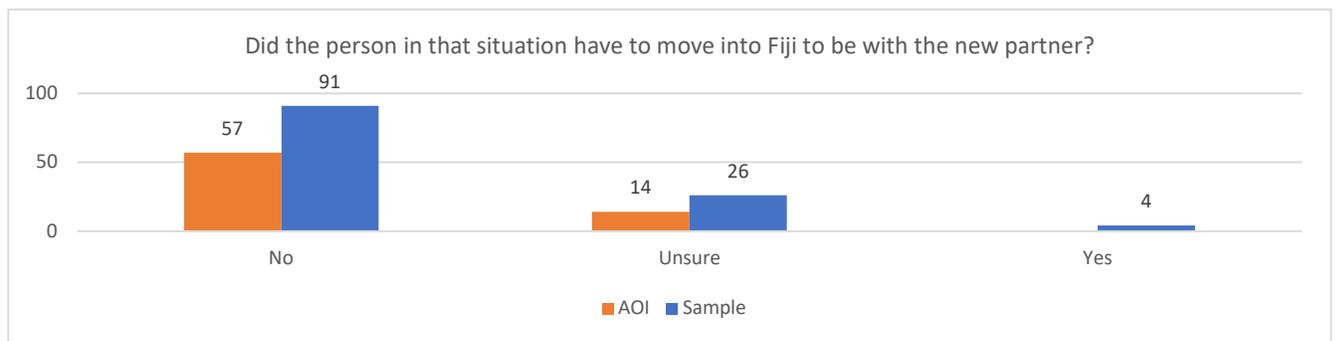


Figure 43: Movement out of or into Fiji by those in arranged sexual relationships in the situation known best by respondents in the AOI



When speaking about the situation they knew best, 47 out of 192 respondents said that there were indications or signs that the person in the arranged sexual relationship felt unsafe physically or psychologically threatened in that relationship. Similarly, 54 out of 192 respondents knew that the person in the arranged relationship was subjected to violence and abuse and a further 37 respondents stated that the persons they knew were unable to freely leave the relationship.

Figure 44: Indications by those in arranged sexual relationships of feeling unsafe or threatened in the situation best known by respondents in the sample and AOI

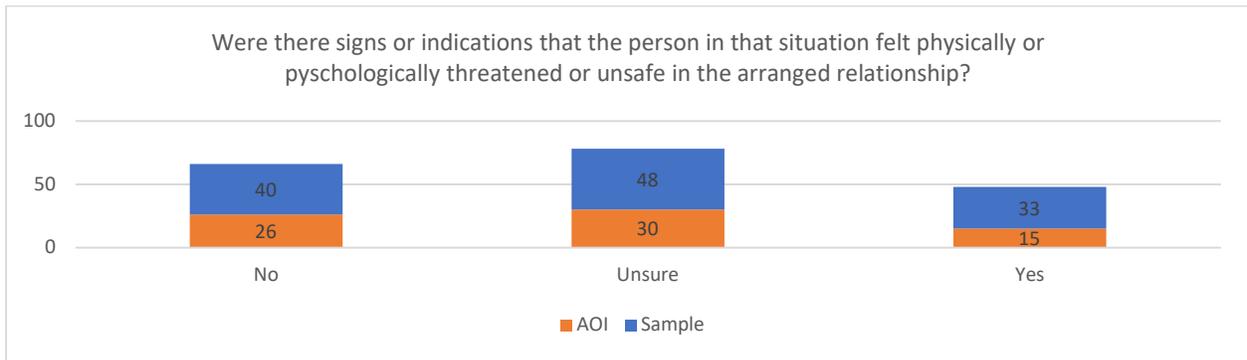


Figure 45: Violence and abuse in the situation best known by respondents in the sample and AOI

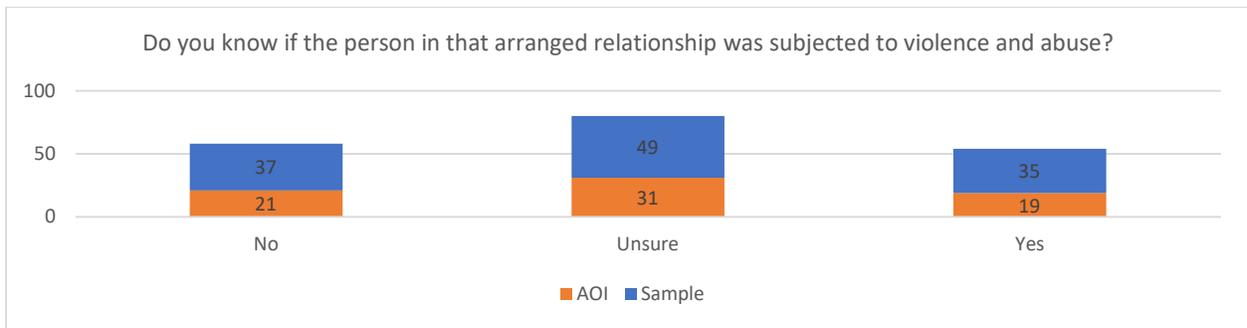
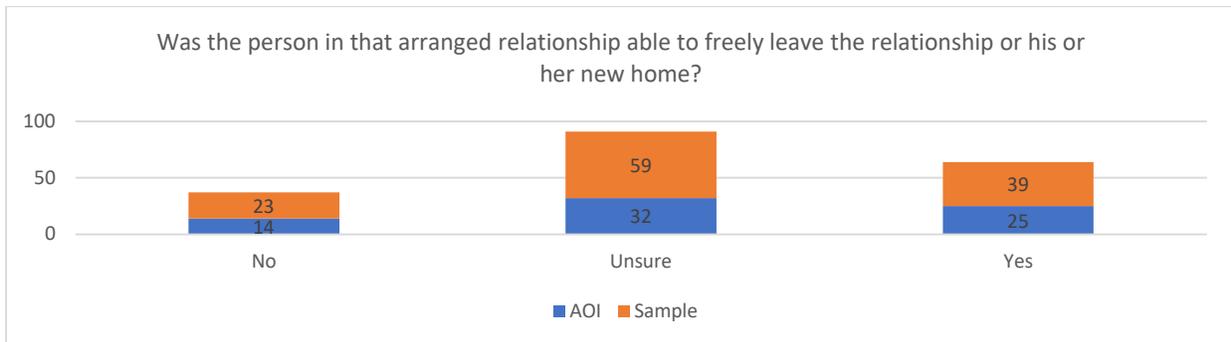


Figure 46: Freedom to leave the relationship in the situation known best by respondents in the sample and AOI



In the situation known best to respondents, a total of 66 persons had been either forced, deceived, tricked or similar into an arranged sexual relationship. Some common combinations experienced by people in this situation, included:

a) The person was forced, deceived, tricked or similar, into this relationship

f) There were signs or indications that the person in that situation felt physically or psychologically threatened or unsafe in his/her relationship

g) The person in that situation was subjected to violence and abuse

N=11

a) The person was forced, deceived, tricked or similar, into this relationship

b) Those who arranged the relationship received payment in cash or kind or some other reward

N=8

a) The person was forced, deceived, tricked or similar, into this relationship

b) Those who arranged the relationship received payment in cash or kind or some other reward

f) There were signs or indications that the person in that situation felt physically or psychologically threatened or unsafe in his/her relationship

g) The person in that situation was subjected to violence and abuse

h) The person in that situation was unable to freely leave the relationship or his/ her new home

N=5

a) The person was forced, deceived, tricked or similar, into this relationship

c) The person in that situation had to leave home, move houses, or move to another locality to be with the new partner

f) There were signs or indications that the person in that situation felt physically or psychologically threatened or unsafe in his/her relationship

g) The person in that situation was subjected to violence and abuse

h) The person in that situation was unable to freely leave the relationship or his/ her new home

N=5

a) The person was forced, deceived, tricked or similar, into this relationship

h) The person in that situation was unable to freely leave the relationship or his/ her new home

N=5

a) The person forced, deceived, tricked or similar, into this relationship

b) Those who arranged the relationship received payment in cash or kind or some other reward

c) The person in that situation had to leave home, move houses, or move to another locality to be with the new partner

h) The person in that situation was unable to freely leave the relationship or his/ her new home

N=4

It is evident from the quantitative and qualitative data that there are victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Fiji. Although the magnitude and scale of trafficking for sexual exploitation is unknown, it is an issue that warrants further examination and the development of relevant policies and programmes to address the issue. Additionally, according to key informants, the situation is expected to worsen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative impact on the livelihoods of families.

One key informant’s view of trends related to trafficking for sexual exploitation

“Over the years, we have worked with several domestic trafficking cases involving women and girls sold by their own family members to others and who have run away from home because of family breakdown, rejection or abuse. Once these girls leave home, they seem to find others who are in a similar situation, many times under the control of pimps who provide sub-par living conditions and meagre rations of food. As the COVID-19 pandemic drags on, we are seeing victims become younger with much more severe trauma attached. The desperation within families seems to be driving them either to trafficking their relatives or severe abuse. Most are recruited through coercion and/or force. According to local communities, there is a growing trend involving boats taking local girls out to fishing vessels and yachts who dock in their waters.”

Source: Key informants, CSO1, 2021, Fiji.

### 3.7 Potential risks of trafficking for organ removal

Most respondents did not know of a situation involving trafficking for organ removal. However, several respondents indicated that they knew someone personally who had been approached and offered money to donate an organ. This included seven girls, three boys, two women and four men. In the situation that respondents knew about, the persons offering the money to donate the organ were family members, strangers, friends and others. It was clear that there is limited knowledge of this type of trafficking in Fiji and further research is recommended.

Figure 47: Number of respondents who knew someone who had been offered money to donate an organ

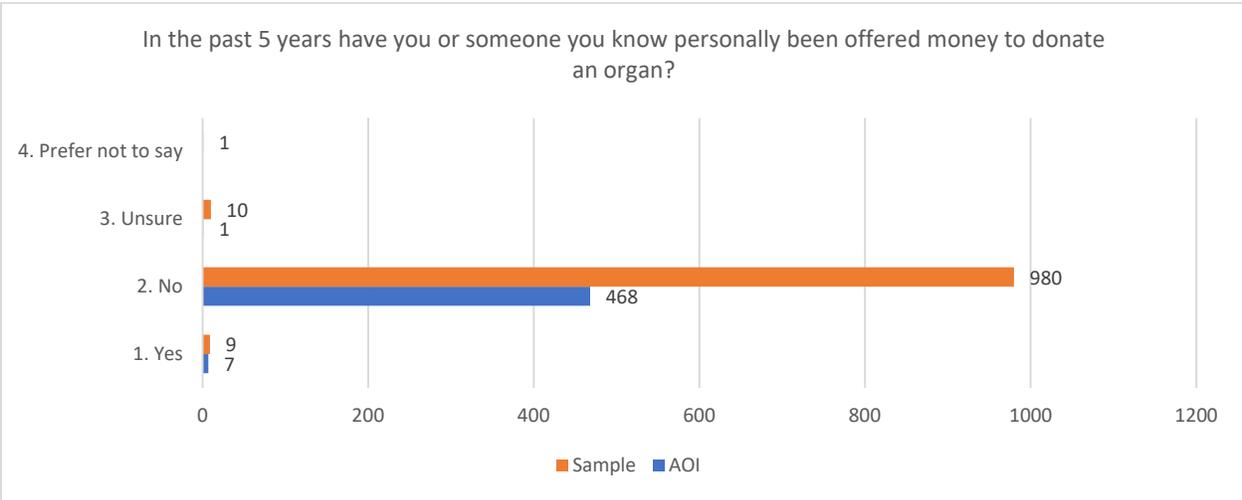


Figure 48: Number of persons who responded in the sample and AOI knew who had been offered money to donate an organ

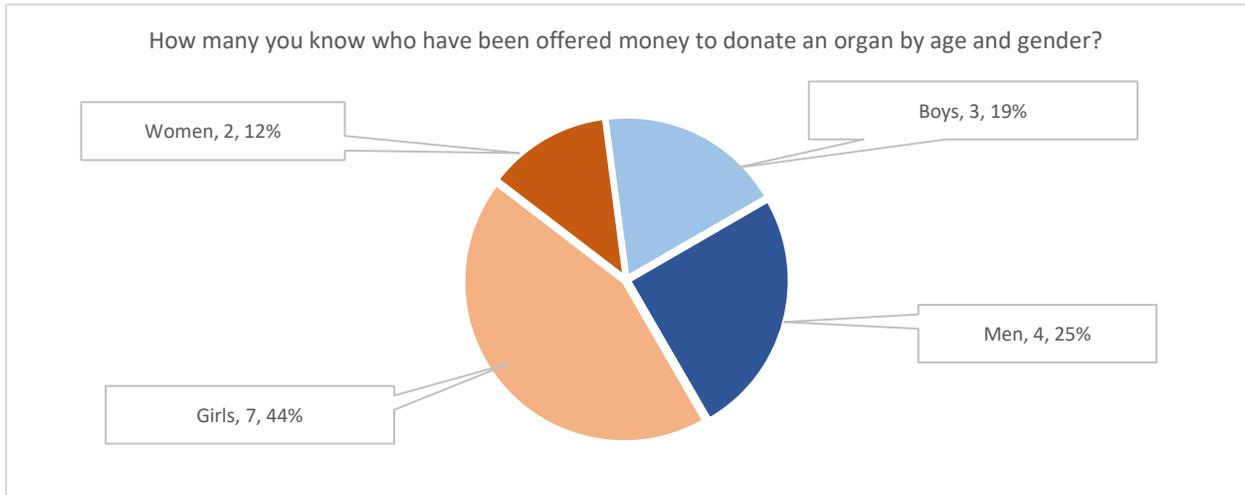
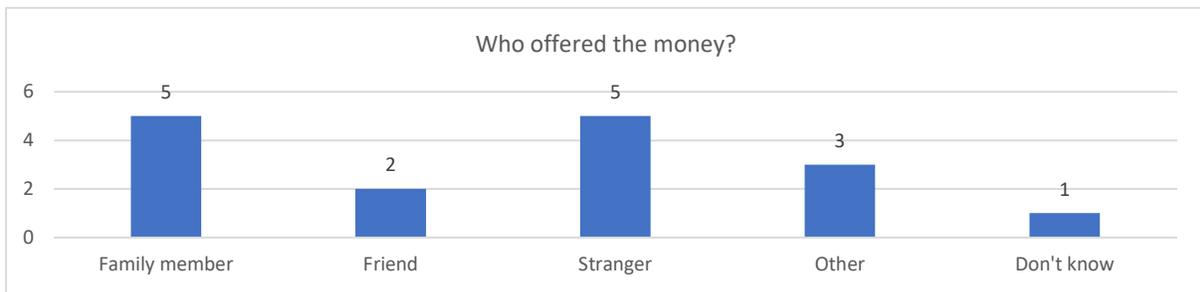


Figure 49: Offer of money for the donation of organs according to respondents in the sample and AOI



## 4. Discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations

### 4.1 Prevalence of victims of trafficking in persons in Fiji

The NSUM was used to calculate the prevalence rate of victims of trafficking in persons in Fiji from 2017 to 2021, based on the results of Section 4, Q11 and Q12 of the questionnaire:

- *In the past 5 years have any of the following happened to someone you know personally in relation to their work?*
- *If yes, how many people did this happen to?*

A total of 165 respondents, 96 in the sample and 69 in AOI, knew people who were potential victims of trafficking. That is, they reached and exceeded the threshold value of 100 using the Trafficking Indicator Weighting Scheme.

The NSUM was applied to these 165 respondents to estimate the respondent's personal network or grade, using the formula:

$\hat{c}_i = \frac{\sum_j m_{ij}}{\sum_j e_j} * t$ , where  $m_{ij}$  is the number of people that the respondent  $i$  knows from the subpopulation  $j$ ,  $e_j$  is the real size of the subpopulation  $j$  and  $t$  is the total size of the population. The total known population size used in the calculation was 884,887 taken from the 2017 Census.<sup>29</sup>

To estimate the number of people in the target population, that is potential victims of trafficking, for the 165 respondents data, the following calculation applied:

$\hat{e}_h = \frac{\sum_i m_{ih}}{\sum_i \hat{c}_i} * t$ , where  $m_{ih}$  is the number of people that the respondent  $i$  knows from the target population  $h$ ,  $\hat{c}_i$  is the grade of the respondent  $i$  and  $t$  is the total size of the population.

The prevalence rate was estimated to be 0.60%, equating to 5,208 hidden victims of trafficking in Fiji in the past five years, from 2017 to 2021.<sup>30</sup> The standard error was estimated at 0.07%.

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<sup>29</sup> The prevalence rate estimations were also calculated using the projected population figure for 2021 of 889,953- this yielded the same results.

<sup>30</sup> Estimates were also calculated separately for the Sample of 1000 households, and Areas of Interest of 476 households. The prevalence rate for the Sample group was estimated at 0.59%, equating to 5196 potential victims of trafficking in Fiji. The prevalence rate for the AOI was estimated at 0.61% equating to 5412 potential victims of trafficking in Fiji.

It should be noted the prevalence estimate was produced based on the number of people who the respondents knew personally, and other covariates such as age, sex and ethnicity of the target group were not captured in the data. Therefore, the prevalence rate per age and sex could not be estimated.

The prevalence estimate was also calculated for the 140 respondents who had also reached and exceeded the threshold value of 100 using the trafficking Indicator Weighting Scheme, based on the results of Section 4, Q2:

- *In the past 5 years have any of the following happened to you in relation to your work?*

The personal network size per respondent was calculated using the NSUM formula. The prevalence rate for the 140 respondents who were themselves identified as hidden victims of trafficking in persons was estimated at 0.59%.<sup>31</sup>

#### 4.1.1 Trafficking for forced labour and sexual exploitation

The prevalence survey found a significant number of hidden victims of domestic and cross-border trafficking, mainly for forced labour, but also for sexual exploitation in Fiji. A total of 165 survey respondents knew at least 860 people in the target group, that is, hidden victims of trafficking. In addition, 140 respondents who participated in the survey were themselves identified as trafficking victims. In both instances, victims experienced a combined range of indicators, for example:

- They received less pay than what they were promised;
- They were working longer hours;
- They were being pressured to do something they were not comfortable with doing;
- They were doing work that was different from what they had been promised;
- They were threatened with violence to themselves or family to perform certain tasks, work longer hours or carry out different tasks;
- They were physically harmed by the employer, supervisor, manager or co-worker; and/or
- They were threatened with not getting paid or getting paid less than agreed to get them to work longer or carry out different tasks.

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<sup>31</sup> Steps followed: (i) Calculate  $c_i$ , people they know from each subpopulation for each respondent, (ii) Calculate  $m_i$ , by the total sum of people they know for each respondent, (iii) Calculate  $e = m_i/c_i$  for each respondent, (iv) Calculate Prevalence rate, by total average of  $e$  and multiplied by 100.

In addition, some respondents were also threatened with being reported to the police, had their passports and documents taken away and prevented from communicating freely with family and others, even outside working hours.

The survey also found victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Fiji. A total of 192 respondents knew 1,126 people who were in, or had been in, an arranged sexual relationship, mainly females, (n=882). Almost half were children, including 404 girls and 141 boys below the age of 18 years.

Based on the situation that respondents knew best, the 192 respondents knew a total of 66 victims who had been forced, deceived, tricked or similar into an arranged sexual relationship. There were also indications that some of these victims were also subjected to violence and abuse, felt physically or psychologically threatened, were unable to leave the organized relationship freely, and that those who arranged the relationship received some form of payment. Friends, relatives, parents, strangers, family friends and others were identified as facilitators of these arranged sexual relationships. Qualitative data suggests that trafficking for sexual exploitation is increasing, and closely linked to drug use and trafficking of methamphetamines.

#### 4.1.2 Vulnerabilities and risks of child trafficking

Children, especially those living away from home, out of school and unsupervised, are particularly vulnerable to being trafficked for forced labour and sexual exploitation. Based on the situation respondents knew best, a total of 89 respondents knew children living away from home who were expected to earn money while staying in their new home. These children were identified as working in agriculture on sugarcane, dalo, yaqona or vegetable farms, in fishing activities, or as casual farm labourers, selling farm produce and fish from roadside markets. Others were engaged in other services, household activities and food services, mainly in street vending, retail, as kitchen hands and casual labourers in garages, carwashes, garment factories and other industries.

Unfortunately, the survey did not capture information on children's age, nature of work, hours of work, payment conditions, handing equipment and substances, working environment and other conditions, to allow for further analysis into potential child labour and trafficking situations.

Qualitative data suggests that the number of out-of-school children has increased alongside job losses and the growth in financial struggles resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, and that more children are selling on the streets after school hours and are in commercial sexual exploitation, which has become increasingly associated with selling methamphetamines and marijuana.

#### 4.1.3 Vulnerabilities and risks of organ trafficking

Most respondents did not know of a situation involving trafficking for organ removal. However, 16 respondents did know someone personally who had been approached and offered money to

donate an organ. This included 10 children (seven girls and three boys) and six adults (two women and four men), who had been approached and offered money by family members, friends, strangers or others. Although further information on this type of trafficking was unavailable, it would be of interest to further explore the situation known by the 16 respondents.

## 4.2 Barriers and limitations

### 4.2.1 Transmission barriers

According to research conducted on the use of the NSUM, recalling characteristics is not perfect, and if a person lives in a community where trafficking victims are known to be targeted, it is likely that the person knows something about some people, but not everything about everyone the person knows.<sup>32</sup> Another possible limitation is that, considering the small size of Fiji, it is possible that multiple respondents could share information about one trafficking situation, which would lead to an overestimation.

The survey tried to understand the dynamics of information transmission in the respondents' personal networks. The majority of the 165 respondents who knew people in their personal networks who were possible victims of trafficking, said they became aware of the situation when it was happening (n=106) and also shortly after it happened (n=58). Most were told about the situation by the victims themselves (151). However, it is possible that information, when further transmitted by respondents, becomes subjective and influenced by personal bias.

When the 165 respondents were asked who they would confide in if they were in the same situation, most said family members and close personal friends only, although other respondents identified friends, authorities, police, and others. However, this could change if respondents experienced these same situations. The 140 respondents who had been identified themselves as potential victims of trafficking (Section 4, Q2), were also asked who they would confide in when in this situation, and similarly most selected family members and close personal friends only.

### 4.2.2 Sampling limitations

The survey attempted to accommodate requests from stakeholders to extend beyond the 1,000 households in the original sample, to also interview households in AOI where risks for potential trafficking were identified. These AOI were identified as areas characterised by high crime rates, poverty, domestic violence and unemployment, as well as tourist hotspots and islands visited by

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<sup>32</sup> Janie F. Shelton, "Proposed Utilization of the Network Scale-Up Method to Estimate the Prevalence of Trafficked Persons", in UNODC, *Forum on Crime and Society*, Vol. 8, 2015, Special issue: *Researching hidden populations: approaches to and methodologies for generating data on trafficking in persons*.

yachts and fishing vessels. Therefore, an additional 476 households were interviewed from the AOI.

The data for the sample and the AOI were analysed separately. It was found that, although the survey had expanded to households in the AOI, this did not result in a greater number of potential trafficking victims in these areas.

The survey found that even in areas where there were known or suspected victims of trafficking, it did not necessarily mean that people would know victims or their stories. Information shared by the victims varied depending on various factors, including type of exploitation and fear of punishment or stigmatization.

Additionally, as qualitative data indicated that family members were involved in the process of trafficking other family members, especially for sexual exploitation, it is likely that the true nature of the trafficking situation would be known only to the traffickers and victims themselves.

#### 4.2.3 Influence of COVID 19 on responses related to trafficking indicators

The survey was conducted between January and April 2021, at a time when many individuals, families and communities were feeling the social, economic and psychological impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly through the loss of livelihoods, job losses or changes in working conditions, mandated lockdowns and movement restrictions. The influence of the COVID-19 pandemic was in some way reflected in the survey as a high number of respondents, when answering whether they had experienced any of the indicators or knew someone who had, selected four common indicators:

- They received less pay than what they were promised;
- They were working longer hours;
- They were being pressured to do something they were not comfortable with doing; and
- They were doing work that was different from what they had been promised.

Most respondents had experienced these situations in the last 12 months, especially in industries related to accommodation and food services, wholesale, retail, vehicle repair, construction, transportation and storage, agriculture, fisheries and forestry and other service activities. These were also industries that were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Aside from the COVID-19 pandemic, Fiji experienced a series of natural disasters over the past five years. This could also have negatively affected people's livelihood and work and, thus, influenced their responses. Of the 165 respondents who knew potential victims of trafficking, 81 per cent stated that they knew someone whose livelihood or work was affected by the pandemic. Meanwhile, 88 per cent said that they knew someone whose livelihood had been negatively affected by a natural disaster in the last five years.

Of the 140 respondents who were identified as victims of trafficking, 72 percent agreed that their work and livelihood had been affected by the pandemic, and 63 percent said that their livelihood had been negatively affected by natural disasters in the last five years.

Careful consideration was therefore given to the Indicator Weighting Scheme to address this issue and avoid possible bias in identifying potential victims. Respondents selecting these four common indicators, would also need to respond affirmatively to another indicator related to coercion, violence, threats of violence, withholding of salary, being reported to authorities and restrictions on communication, to reach and exceed the threshold value of 100.

## 4.3 Recommendations

### 4.3.1 Promoting regular data collection, analysis and reporting on trafficking in persons

Considering the lack of a mandated centralized data collection framework or data sharing arrangements for trafficking in persons in Fiji, this study recommends that the Ministry of Defence, National Security and Policing, as the coordinating body for the implementation of the Fiji Human Trafficking Strategy and Action Plan, develop a policy for data sharing and reporting. The Ministry should sign a memorandum of understanding with relevant agencies to create a formal mechanism for agencies to share data on potential cases of trafficking in persons, and regularly contribute to the biennial data collection for the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*.

It is also recommended that a periodical reporting mechanism for national trafficking statistics and analysis, for example, through a national trafficking report, and collecting data on key indicators on trafficking victims and offenders should be established.

Finally, a trafficking hotline should be established and coordinated by a central agency, possibly the Ministry of Defence, National Security and Policing or Fiji HTU, to record, screen and refer for further investigation any reported cases of trafficking. A trafficking hotline may also be coordinated by civil society organizations, with data shared with other agencies and reported cases screened for trafficking indicators and referred to the HTU for further investigation.

### 4.3.2 Building capacity and coordination

Continuous training and capacity building of officers in key agencies, especially the Fiji Police and the HTU, Fiji Immigration Department, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Women and Children, and stakeholders in the justice sector, is recommended. Training should focus on understanding relevant legislation, screening for trafficking in persons indicators, conducting investigating into trafficking in persons cases, collecting evidence and drafting charge documents for prosecution, understanding the modus operandi of trafficking and related crimes, and handling of children and victims of trauma.

Capacity should also be strengthened to improve the compliance and monitoring of workplaces, especially with foreign workers, to ensure that workers are not subjected to trafficking and

abuse. This involves financial and resource implications, as agencies such as the Human Trafficking Unit, are restricted from proactively conducting surveillance and investigations into suspected human trafficking cases, due to budget constraints and a critical lack of human resources and equipment, including vehicles.

The Ministry of Defence, National Security and Policing is encouraged to officially appoint focal points within each Ministry responsible for supporting the implementation of anti-human trafficking activities, including collecting and sharing of data and facilitating or participating in training. Additionally joint operations should be launched to ensure that responsible agencies proactively detect and investigate alleged human trafficking cases.

The Ministry of Defence, National Security and Policing is currently developing a case management database and national human trafficking referral mechanism. This should improve coordination and promote information sharing and conducting joint operations among agencies.

The capacity of civil society agencies should be strengthened to empower and support trafficking victims to exercise their rights and access to justice. This should involve developing standardized trafficking screening indicators, standard methods of data collection, and guidelines for referral and coordination with law enforcement, especially the Human Trafficking Unit. Civil society organizations should also receive regular training on various topics on human trafficking and on techniques in advocating for trafficking in persons and skills for creating awareness of the issue with communities.

#### 4.3.3 Conducting further research and analysis

There is a need for further research on trafficking in persons, especially in-depth studies on international trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation and the trafficking of children. It is recommended that a second prevalence study should be conducted using the Multiple Systems Estimation (MSE) method. This will allow for comparison of the prevalence rates between both the NSUM study and MSE.

Additionally, labour market studies should be conducted to identify skills gaps and develop job profiles, including prescribed job descriptions and minimum qualification requirements. This will assist relevant agencies to improve the issuance of work permits based on skill gaps and job profiles. The Fiji Immigration Department has taken a lead role in developing job profiles to assist FID to establish quotas for various sectors where skills are required, strengthen regulations and prevent exploitation of foreign workers.

#### 4.3.4 Expanding awareness to communities and vulnerable groups

Foreign workers and members of known vulnerable groups should be trained on relevant legislation, especially on labour rights and mechanisms for reporting alleged exploitation and breach of working terms and conditions. Awareness campaigns on trafficking should also be

conducted in the tourism and travel industry, especially with staff and clients of hotels, night clubs, bars, restaurants, airlines and public transport.

Generally, there is a need to increase awareness campaigns with all communities to create knowledge of human trafficking, build resilience to trafficking in persons and increase reporting of potential trafficking cases.