Hello everyone. My name is Philip Reichel and I am professor of criminal justice at the University of Northern Colorado in the United States. I want to thank the organizers of this webinar for asking me to participate and I hope you find my comments to be useful.
The questions I will consider during the next 15 minutes or so include:

**Topics to be covered**

- How is labor exploitation distributed around the world?
- What does the research tell us about the victims and the crime itself?
- What lessons for crime prevention and victim protection can be learned from the research?
For that first topic, the following slides will highlight

How is labor exploitation distributed around the world?

Key statistics covered on the following slides:
   - The number of people who are victims of forced labor today
   - The distribution of those victims around the globe
   - The profits resulting from the crime
• The International Labour Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations and it is considered to have the most reliable statistics available on forced labor exploitation.
• The 2012 ILO global estimate covers the period from 2002 to 2011 and it is that estimate from which these statistics come.
• Forced labor exploitation, which you see comprises the largest category of victims (more than 14 million), includes labor exploitation imposed by private agents and enterprises such agriculture, industry, and services.
• The second largest category is forced sexual exploitation with an estimated 4.5 million victims.
• The third category, with more than 2 million victims, is called “state imposed forced labor” and includes three main subcategories:
  1. Forced labor exacted by the military or by rebel groups
  2. Compulsory participation in public works
  3. Forced prison labor

Chart source: Source: International Labour Organization, 2012 (p. 14. Figure 1)
This map shows absolute numbers of victimization in regions around the world. As you see, the ILO estimates that forced labor victimization is most prevalent in the Asia-Pacific region, then Africa and Latin America. But using absolute numbers sometimes masks important considerations.

### Prevalence of Forced Labor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Numbers*</th>
<th>Rate per 1000 population</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Asia Pacific (56% of the total)</td>
<td>1. Central/South-Eastern Europe &amp; CIS (4.2/1000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Africa (18%)</td>
<td>2. Africa (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Latin America &amp; Caribbean (9%)</td>
<td>3. Middle East (3.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Central/South-Eastern Europe &amp; CIS (7%)</td>
<td>4. Asia Pacific (3.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Developed Economies &amp; EU (7%)</td>
<td>5. Latin America &amp; Caribbean (3.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Middle East (3%)</td>
<td>6. Developed Economies &amp; EU (1.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages are rounded

- As seen on this slide, the absolute numbers help us show the extent of the problem, but a more telling indicator for purposes of action may be the rate per population.
- When that is used, the ILO estimates that the region with the highest prevalence of forced labor are in the areas of Central and South-Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, followed by Africa, Middle East, Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Developed Economies and the EU.
- The rate per 1000 population ranking tells us that although regions such as Central and South-Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the Middle East may not have the biggest problem with forced labor trafficking in terms of raw numbers, the problem is very significant in term of the proportion of their population that is affected. This type of information can be useful, for example, when making difficult decision regarding distribution of services.

• While the human toll of human trafficking is of primary concern, it is also important to understand some of the reasons for labor trafficking’s existence. To that end, economics must certainly be included among—some would say at the very top—of the explanations for this crime’s existence and expansion around the world.
• Put most simply, when demand exists suppliers will operate to meet that demand.
• In 2005 and 2009, ILO estimated that annual profits are at least 32 billion US$ and that victims of forced labor forgo at least 21 billion US$ each year in unpaid wages and illegal recruitment fees.
• ILO plans to study the economics of modern forced labor in greater depth in the coming years.
  • Including analysis of certain industries or economic sectors that seem to be more vulnerable to forced labor practices than others.
  • Based on an initial assessment of the data, ILO notes that the sectors most frequently cited are agriculture, domestic work, construction and manufacturing.

The second topic I want to cover concerns the importance of research. As you know, a goal of this webinar is to highlight the ways that the United Nations and academic scholars work to understand and combat human trafficking. With the next few slides I will focus on 3 topics related to the research component:
First, consider the importance of research:

- Quality research provides sound and testable knowledge that allows us to challenge incorrect assumptions and biases.
- Data are needed in order to raise awareness among the public and policy makers and to thereby increase the ability to mobilize action.
- Data are needed in order to design evidence-based policies. That is, policies that are influenced by more by sound research than by emotions or politics.
- Sound research allows the targeting of limited resources and increases the cost-effectiveness of intervention and programs.

But, the problems associated with research endeavors must also be recognized and hopefully accounted for:

- As with other clandestine criminal activities, researchers have difficulty accessing human trafficking victims and offenders in order to gather data. This may be even more true of forced
labor trafficking than it is of forced sexual exploitation since the former occurs in hidden locations such as agricultural fields, mining camps, and even private homes whereas the latter is more likely to be visible to the general public.

- **Varying definitions** of what constitutes labor trafficking makes it difficult to standardize and compare data and many countries have only recently expanded their definitions of human trafficking to include labor trafficking.

- The lack of knowledge regarding what constitutes labor trafficking, especially on the part of law enforcement and prosecutors, means that victims may be **misidentified** as offenders and that causes considerable problems for data collection and statistics analysis.

- Although there are **ethical concerns** whenever human subject research is conducted, those concerns are highlighted in human trafficking research since the victims are a vulnerable group with minimal legal recourse. Any data collections procedures must include safety measures to protect the research subjects from risk or harm. Providing such safety may compromise data collection and analysis.

Although there are clearly some problems in conducting research on human trafficking generally and forced labor trafficking more specifically, there continue to be some very important studies completed by researchers and practitioners. The results of that research provide information on a variety of topics, but here I mention only a few.

First, consider what we have learned about victim demographics

- Trafficking victims in general are most likely to be young and reasonably healthy people from poor, but not necessarily the poorest, backgrounds
- Victims of forced labor trafficking come from all population groups, but victim demographics vary by region and type of trafficking
  - The ILO estimates that women and girls are slightly more at risk than are men and boys (55% of all victims versus 45%).
  - But U.S., data on confirmed victims of labor trafficking found the victims more likely to be male, older (age 25 or older), and foreign than confirmed victims of sex trafficking.
- This highlights the importance of conducting research in all regions and for different types of human trafficking. The crime is too complex and to variable to allow researchers, practitioners, or policy makers to rely on only a few studies when drawing conclusions or mobilizing action.

Sources: {Bales, 2005 #2} {Banks, 2011 #16} {International Labour Organization,
2012®, June 1 #3}. 
Another topic where research has provided some basic information concerns the crime itself.

For example, we know a little (still not enough) about how victims are recruited:

- Recruitment is particularly effective when traffickers rely on victims whom the traffickers have turned into loyal enforcers or recruiters. Recruitment is also effective when the potential victim’s family members are involved.

We also know that there is sometimes a link between migration and trafficking:

- For example, a person might begin an event believing he or she is voluntarily migrating to (or even agreeing to be smuggled into) another country. However, research tells us that if the experience involves deceit, abuse of a relationship of vulnerability, or even the paying of a fee that could incur a debt relationship, the likelihood of the person ending up in forced labor is increased.

As a final example, I return to the earlier point regarding supply and demand—or, the economics of labor trafficking. Research has made clear that:

- As more textile and garment production has been relocated to lower income countries or subcontracted to small and flexible suppliers, it becomes more difficult to regulate and monitor employment practices.

- In additions, governments are under increasing pressure to cut taxes and to reduce public spending and this has required many countries to reduce or even abolish labor inspection systems.

  - ILO estimates a global shortfall of some 40,000 labor inspectors worldwide (about half of which exists in industrialized economies).
  - Unfortunately, when inspections systems are lacking, unscrupulous employers...
may take advantage of the absent monitoring and could resort to forced labor exploitation.

Sources: {Bales, 2005 #2} {Labour Rights Promotion Network, 2011 #8} {International Labour Organization, 2008 #11}
Although research on human trafficking in general has increased in both quantity and quality during the past decade, there is still considerable room for improvement.

To that end, in 2011, the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Trafficking, International Organization for Migration, and NEXUS Institute hosted a three-day interactive consultation on the state of counter-trafficking research.

Participants were supportive of anti-trafficking research in principle and tried to reach consensus on gaps and priorities for that research.

Some of the specific research priorities, gaps, and needs to be jointly addressed in the future are shown here.

For complete information I encourage you to see the SIREN event report titled The State of Counter-Trafficking Research, which can be found at the no-trafficking.org website, but look at least at the 2 I have highlighted on this slide.

Source = http://www.no-trafficking.org/reports_docs/siren/gms-09_en.pdf
The third and final topic to cover in this presentation concerns the link between research and practice. More specifically, how can research studies provide information that can be useful to practitioners. The following slides will give two examples: First, how victim identification can be improved, and second, how research supports the need for multiple approaches to prevention, protection, and prosecution.
More research is certainly needed regarding indicators that may help identify trafficking victims, but we do have some that may be helpful to practitioners. For example when NGO representatives, victim advocates, law enforcement personnel, medical staff, and other persons likely to come in contact with trafficking victims are aware of such findings as these, the possibility of positive intervention is increased.

- We know, for example, that being an unregistered worker is associated with being involved in forced labor in a statistically significant way.
- Researchers have also found that persons living in accommodations co-located with their workplace are at higher trafficking risk than are those living off-site.
- And, should practitioners come into contact with persons who report that they feel unsafe where they live (e.g., afraid of the police or scared of criminals in the area), those practitioners should know that such individuals are at higher risk of both trafficking and forced labor experiences.

Finally, it is important to note how the 3P approach of prevention, protection, and prosecution is benefited by collaborative efforts among various stakeholders across government, private-sector, and civil society.

- For example, law enforcement and prosecution may work to extricate workers from conditions of forced labor exploitation while private-sector and civil society entities work to improve working conditions themselves making it less likely that workers are forced to undertake labor against their will (Labor Rights Promotion Network, 2011).

Just a few examples of where multi-stakeholder collaboration has yielded positive results, include the areas of consumer behavior, media involvement, and corporate action.

- Regarding consumers, we know it is possible to
  - Influence the market by discouraging consumers from purchasing suspect products. Informed consumers (e.g., via product labeling and fair trade initiatives) may refuse to purchase products known to rely on forced labor exploitation.
  - Example of John Schools in several U.S. locations where persons charged with soliciting prostitutes must attend a “John School” where they are sensitized to the working conditions of sex workers and to have challenged the notion that many of them are in the business voluntarily.

- The media can also play an important role
  - Investigative journalism can influence corporate behavior as seen when the CNN Freedom Project looked at the trafficking of Cambodian women into factories within a multinational supply chain manufacturing computer components in
Malaysia which were then sold globally.
  • When higher level brands became aware of the human trafficking occurring upstream in their supply chain, that company successfully pressured the factories to improve working condition and alter employee recruiting policies.
  • Finally, corporations themselves must be included in the equation.
    • Recruitment for employment abroad is a legitimate and much-needed business, but in the worst case it can provide a cover for trafficking activities—especially when monitoring is weak and business standards are lacking (International Labour Organization, 2008 #11).
    • Global business is jeopardized if a company faces sound allegations that it profits from forced labor exploitation. Brand image may be compromised and could even face lawsuits and criminal prosecution.
    • This situation provides motivation for corporate action and can encourage multi-stakeholder collaboration as seen on the next slide.
Here you see just two of many types of collaborative efforts where business sectors are working with other stakeholders in an attempt to bring positive changes that will decrease abusive labor practices around the world and from beginning to end of the production process.
I would like to conclude with a quote from Professor Jay Albanese, a criminologist and former chief of the United States National Institute of Justice International Center. The items in red parenthesis are my additions as I attempt to show how the information from the previous slides relate to Professor Albanese's quote.

I want to thank the audience members for you attention and the organizers for including me in this webinar. And, on a more personal note, I want to thank you practitioners who work to prevent this crime from occurring in the first place, or who try their best to protect those victims when prevention efforts were unsuccessful, and who prosecute the offenders in an attempt to deter future crime and attain some level of justice. Thank you all.
Sources (continued)


