The Office’s work on combating trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants is directly relevant to Targets 8.7 and 8.8. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are global and widespread crimes that use men, women and children for profit. UNODC strives to eradicate these crimes by dismantling the criminal enterprises that trade in people and through conviction of the main perpetrators. Ultimately, our work safeguards people from the abuse, neglect, exploitation or even death associated with these crimes.

UNODC assists Member States in expanding their capacity to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons to protect trafficking victims and smuggled migrants and ensure that their rights are respected, as well as to promote cooperation between Member States. The Protocols of the Smuggling of Migrants and the Trafficking in Persons under the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime are tools that facilitate cooperation and provide a range of shared actions to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people.

Furthermore, the Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants - Bangladesh (GLO.ACT Bangladesh) is a joint initiative by the European Union (EU) and UNODC, being implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Bangladesh.

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

UN entities work closely together to address the different targets and indicators of the 2030 Agenda.

Target 8.7: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking, and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms

Target 8.8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment
The project builds on a global community of practice set in motion in GLO.ACT I (2015-2019) and assists governmental authorities and civil society organizations in targeted, innovative and demand-driven interventions: sustaining effective strategy and policy development, legislative review and harmonization, capability development and regional and trans-regional cooperation. The project also provides direct assistance to victims of human trafficking and vulnerable migrants through strengthening identification, referral and protection mechanisms.

In 2022, GLO.ACT, in close collaboration with the government of Bangladesh and the International Labour Organization (ILO), spearheaded the creation of the first-ever National Study on Trafficking in Persons in Bangladesh. This ground-breaking study provides a comprehensive national overview of trafficking trends, patterns and flows into and within Bangladesh. The study not only sheds light on trafficking within Bangladesh's borders but also on the movement of victims to other parts of the world. Furthermore, it lays the foundation for establishing a recurring reporting mechanism on human trafficking, a crucial step in the fight against this heinous crime.

With the valuable support of GLO.ACT, the Government of Bangladesh, is now actively engaged in implementing the recommendations stemming from this study, with a particular focus on combatting trafficking for forced labour. These recommendations stress the need to integrate efforts to prevent and address trafficking for forced labour into Bangladesh's broader Development Strategy, recognizing that this issue transcends law enforcement and touches upon socioeconomic development. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of enhancing detection, identification and assistance measures for domestic trafficking in persons cases, ensuring timely support for victims of trafficking for forced labour. This collaborative effort marks a significant stride forward in the ongoing battle against human trafficking in Bangladesh, ensuring the protection and well-being of vulnerable individuals in the region.

In addition, UNODC contributes to the work of Alliance 8.7, a global partnership taking immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour, in accordance with SDG Target 8.7.
The Office is part of the Alliance’s Global Coordinating Group, which sets goals and monitors progress in the implementation of measures to attain Target 8.7 and actively supports States in strengthening their capacity to respond to trafficking in persons. UNODC is paying particular attention to child trafficking, noting that according to recent UNODC research, children comprise 35 per cent of all detected victims of trafficking.

The Office, in partnership with the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago, is also implementing the Tapajos Project to combat forced labour in the gold mining sector in Para, Northern Brazil. The project includes research on forced labour prevalence, its convergence with criminal activities, supply and value chain analysis and the socio-ethnographic profile of miners. The Tapajos Project holds a gender-based response and a cross-cutting indigenous perspective and represents the way forward to better tackle trafficking in persons and forced labour in marginalized regions and sectors across the globe.

Lastly, UNODC’s main research output on trafficking in persons is the biennial Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, which is primarily based on official, national data and analyses the patterns and trends of trafficking globally, regionally and at the country level. UNODC is advancing the work on testing methodologies for estimating the total number of victims of trafficking in persons. Not only will this help uncover the real magnitude of the trafficking, but it will also assist countries in measuring progress toward attaining three SDGs, including SDG 8.