

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

What is Human Trafficking?

According to the United Nations¹, human trafficking is defined as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at the minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of other or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs".

When and how was the Trust Fund established?

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

What is the objective of the Trust Fund?

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

Who is contributing to the Trust Fund and how much?

As of August 2015, the Fund has received US\$ 2.28 million in contributions from a wide range of supporters. These include 19 Member States, 20 private sector organizations and scores of individual donors. Qatar, Australia, Orascom Telecom Holding, France and the UAE are the five largest contributors to the Trust Fund.

How is the Trust Fund helping victims of human trafficking?

In its first grant cycle (2011-2014), 11 NGOs from across the globe were selected through an open and competitive process and were awarded grants for up to three years, totalling US\$ 725,000. In 2014, 19 NGOs were selected to allocate up to US\$ 1.1 million for projects providing tangible assistance to victims of trafficking in persons over the next 3 years. The NGOs, which are based in the local communities where the impact of this crime takes the highest toll, are best suited to provide direct assistance. Around 2,000 victims a year are being provided critical assistance, such as safe shelter, legal support and advice on victims' rights, appropriate treatment for physical and mental abuse, vocational training, establishing small businesses, schooling for children, and basic health services, among others. Fifty projects remain on a reserve list for immediate funding through December 2016, should more contributions be received.

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