

## **ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN UNIVERSALIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL TO PREVENT, SUPPRESS AND PUNISH TRAFFICKING ESPECIALLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

Human Trafficking is gradually becoming overwhelming on a daily basis there are records and report of trafficking in persons which is dominating the news in West Africa and Africa as a whole.

The criminal groups have become more organized in perpetrating this referrious acts by deceiving and luring unsuspecting innocent ones with some attractive offers. Families are broken apart, lives are lost as a result of this. Hence, all stakeholders including the policy makers, opinion molders, state parties and the civil society organizations who hold the trust in public interest should come together and work together to address this menace by getting involved actively in the implementation and domestication of the protocol as a matter of public interest.

*Article 10* recommend training for relevant government officials in the prevention which they say is better than cure and prosecution.

It is important for state parties to cooperate with NGO's and other element of civil society as a matter of public concern.

Civil society provides oversight and hold government accountable to their citizen and one of the primary responsibilities of government is protection of live and property. Consequently, there should be universal approach and in the implementation of the protocol in line with international best standards since trafficking in persons group as become organized operating syndicate especially in West Africa.

Response to this crime should also be more organized in their approach conforming to the international protocols.

There should be mutual understandin, cooperation and communication between the state parties and the civil society organizations.

We therefore recommend the followings

1. Capacity building for all stakeholders especially the the state parties and CSOs.
2. Identifying all the key government stakeholders namely prosecutors,law enforcement agencies, Judicial actors, Immigration Officers and civil society organization and being trained on issues such as victim center approach, victim assistance, identification of trafficking victims, conducting centered investigation and shelter management.

During prosecution, it has been observed that some judges were unfamiliar with the anti-trafficking laws which sometimes hinder the government ability to hold traffickers

accountable for their action and this could most often discourage law enforcement agencies hence, the need for continuous training.

3. Government should provide support for Ngos and enabling environment to provide service to the victim through rehabilitation and reintegration.
4. Public Awareness and sensitization should be organized weekly, monthly and social media program to discuss trafficking topics with targeted audience through media involvement in the production of anti-trafficking television and radio programs in partnership and collaboration with Ngos using print, electronic and social media platform.
5. Conclusively at heart this activities protection of the trafficking victims namely labour trafficking, victims and trafficking victims right should at all time be protected.

*From Rural And Urban Aid For Youth Development Initiatives. Report from the Executive Coordinator FEMI OYEBODE*