

Human trafficking and migrant smuggling routes from Pakistan to neighboring and distant countries



November 2012

Not for public distribution



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Copyright © United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), October 2012.

This report is an internal UNODC document not meant for wide public distribution. It is part of ongoing expert research undertaken by UNODC to inform the development and management of its programme of assistance. The aim is to identify needs and offer long-term strategic solutions to support Pakistan in areas related to UNODC mandates, including: controlling the demand and supply of illicit drugs and precursors; criminal justice; preventing crime and terrorism; and, related security sector issues.

The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of UNODC or contributory organisations and neither do they imply any endorsement. The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion, whatsoever, on the part of UNODC concerning the legal status of any country, territory or city or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

“Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me **liberty**, or give me **death!**”

~Patrick Henry

Preface

Transnational organised crime, related to Pakistan and the broader region, needs further assessment to quantify its size, nature, and dynamics so that appropriate responses can be developed and implemented. In the current inter-connected world scenario, countering transnational crime becomes a responsibility shared by state actors. International cooperation and integration of regional responses is important. This report is a step towards contextualising the Pakistani and associated regional situation.

Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are on the rise. New global, regional, and national approaches are needed so viable solutions can be pursued. This report briefly describes the global context, then follows with a regional overview. The last section presents the Pakistani situation and highlights important aspects, as well as the challenges of human trafficking and migrant smuggling at the national level.

1 Global perspective

Human trafficking and migrant smuggling continue around the world, posing a challenge to both transnational and national governance. Trafficking and smuggling result in global profits of up to \$32 billion, with 2.4 million victims being trafficked worldwide each year, according to a 2012 estimate by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Various fora, at global and regional levels, exist to combat the effects of this complex phenomena. Almost every country is affected by these crimes. Strongly connected to the global drugs and illegal arms trades, trafficking and smuggling affect the countries of origin, transit, and destination of the victims. Further, the impacts of trafficking and smuggling are exacerbated in countries with weak or challenged governance structures, as well as when the origin, transit, and destination of victims is within the same country.

The international community has identified key factors that cause human trafficking and migrant smuggling. These include: wars and natural calamities; unemployment; gender inequality; economic disparity; civil and ethnic violence; absence of legal instruments to combat trafficking or limited implementation of existing legislation; porous international borders; corruption of border officials; and a lack of substantive information on countries of destination.

The challenge for all countries, rich or poor, is to target the networks that exploit desperate people, and to protect and assist victims of trafficking and migrant smuggling. Many victims suffer extreme physical and emotional abuse while they struggle to achieve a better life for themselves and their families.

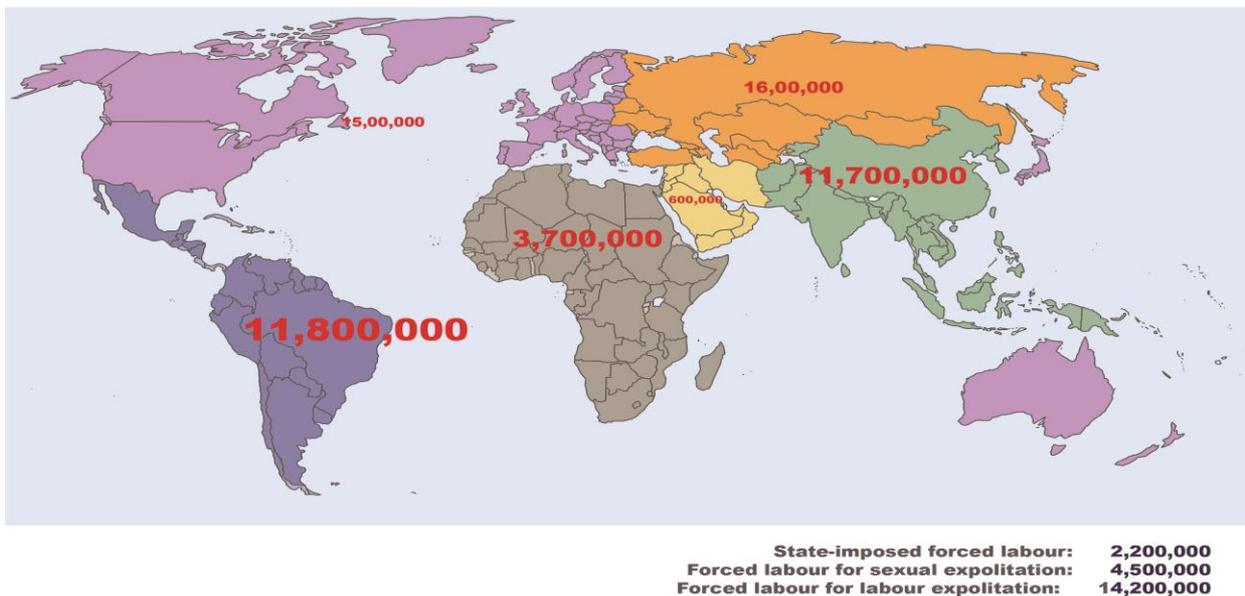
According to the *2012 Trafficking in Persons Report* on worldwide human trafficking and migrant smuggling, the US Department of State estimates that approximately 21 million people are victims of forced labor. The report categorises forced labor into three categories and provides general estimated figures by region. The three categories include state-imposed forced labor, which accounts for 2.2 million people, sexual exploitation (4.5 million people), and labor exploitation (14.2 million people).

The world map is divided into six regions:

- Africa
- Asia and the Pacific
- central and southeastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
- developed economies and the European Union
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- the Middle East

Asia and the Pacific represent the highest incidence of forced labor with an estimated 11.7 million victims, though the region is also the most populous and has a lower prevalence rate of 3.3 per 1,000 people.

Figure 1: Map from the 2012 Trafficking in Persons Report on Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling around the World, the US State Department.



Central and southeastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, which includes the Russian Federation, accounted for only 1.6 million victims, but had the highest prevalence rate of 4.2 per 1,000 people. The ILO estimates that women and girls represented 55 per cent of forced labour victims, and 98 per cent of sex trafficking victims.

1.1 Definitions and terminology

The terms *human trafficking* and *migrant smuggling* are often confused. Trafficking in persons is defined as the acquisition of people by improper means, such as force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them. Whereas, smuggling of migrants involves the procurement of illegal entry of a person into a State, of which that person is not a national or resident, for financial or other material benefit.

1.2 What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking, also referred to as trafficking in persons, is a form of modern-day slavery, and involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit human beings for some type of labour or commercial sex work. Every year around the world, millions of men, women, and children are victims of human trafficking. Victims are often lured with false promises of well-paying jobs or are manipulated by people they trust; forced or coerced into prostitution, domestic servitude, farm or factory labour, or other types of forced labour.

1.3 What is migrant smuggling?

Migrant smuggling, also referred to as smuggling of migrants. It is a business transaction between two willing parties involving movement across borders, usually by illegal means. It occurs with the consent of a person, or people, and the transaction usually ends on arrival.

Despite these differences, smuggled persons may become victims of human trafficking at any point in the smuggling process, which makes initial consent irrelevant for prosecution. These victims can be found in the sex trade industry and massage parlours, or involved in domestic servitude, agricultural work, and child labour.

2 Regional perspective

2.1 Country overview: Turkey

Turkey is a **transit** and **destination** country for illegal trafficking and migrant smuggling. Located at the crossroads of Africa, Asia, and Europe, it is extremely popular amongst the Commonwealth of Independent States. Its main attractions are its favorable geographic placement and its booming economic conditions.



2.1.1 Routes

According to the US Department of State 2009 report on trafficking in persons, internal displacements within Turkey occur for purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labour. The main ports of entry into Turkey for migrants are Istanbul, Antalya, and Trabzon. Victims are legally trafficked into the country with valid 90-day or 180-day tourist visas from source countries, including Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Romania, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Indonesia, and Morocco. The report also suggests that the highest percentage of migrants come from Moldova and Ukraine and the remainder are from the Turkic Republics, that is, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan.

2.1.2 Trends

Turkey is a gateway to Europe and so there is need to control human trafficking at this natural point of transit. The Government of Turkey has enforced strong anti-trafficking laws and prosecution, a testament to their level of commitment. Article 80 of the Penal Code prohibits trafficking for both sexual exploitation and forced labour, and prescribes penalties of ten to 15 years imprisonment, which are sufficiently stringent and commensurate with prescribed penalties.

2.1.3 Victim profiles and associated crime

According to IOM, victim profiles and exploitation methods are quite diverse in Turkey. A large percentage of women and girls, mostly mothers, are trafficked into Turkey and then sexually exploited. According to studies, Russian organised crime syndicates engage in trafficking women for prostitution, and women from Russia, Ukraine, and other eastern European countries end up in Turkey. In contrast, men and boys are brought into Turkey for domestic servitude and forced labour. The majority of victims in Turkey are between 18 and 24 years of age.

2.2 Country overview: Iran

Iran is a **source**, **transit**, and **destination** country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation and involuntary servitude.



2.2.1 Routes

Internal trafficking in Iran has tended to focus on vulnerable groups in society, namely women and

children. Iranian and Afghan children are trafficked internally for forced marriages, commercial sexual exploitation, and involuntary servitude as beggars or laborers to pay debts, provide income or support family members that are drug addicts.

Iranian women and girls are also trafficked to Pakistan, Turkey, Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom for commercial sexual exploitation. Men and women from Pakistan, Iraq, and Bangladesh migrate voluntarily or are smuggled to Iran, or through Iran, to other Gulf States, Greece, and Turkey, to seek employment.

There are nearly one million Afghans living in Iran, some as refugees while others as economic migrants, who are vulnerable to human trafficking. The report also suggests that Afghan refugees are subject to forced labour in Iran.

Some trafficked individuals find themselves in situations of involuntary servitude or debt bondage, including restriction of movement, non-payment of wages, and physical or sexual abuse. Press reports indicate that women from Azerbaijan and Tajikistan travel to Iran to find employment and fall victim to forced prostitution. Further, criminal organisations play a significant role in human trafficking to and from Iran - particularly across the borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan - for the purpose of smuggling migrants, or moving drugs and arms amidst the large flows of people.

2.2.2 Trends

A 2004 law prohibits trafficking in persons by: means of the threat or use of force; coercion; and, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability of the victim, for purposes of prostitution, removal of organs, slavery or forced marriage. Further emphasis on enforcement of this law is required, as is analysis of the application of the law to gain a better insight into gaps.

2.2.3 Victim profiles and associated crime

Thousands of people have been arrested in Iran for activities related to illegal human trafficking, although it is not clear what type of exploitation was involved. It may be assumed that there was a mix of human smuggling, female prostitution, and human trafficking. According to a March 2009 report citing UNICEF and provincial authorities in Herat, Afghanistan, more than 1,000 Afghan children deported from Iran in 2008 reported suffering from abuses, including human trafficking.

2.3 Country overview: Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a **source**, **transit**, and **destination** country for men, women, and children subjected to trafficking in persons, specifically for forced labour and forced prostitution. Trafficking within Afghanistan is more prevalent than transnational trafficking, and the majority of victims are children. Afghanistan is a transit country for victims being trafficked between the six bordering countries.



2.3.1 Routes

There is evidence to suggest that young Afghan males are particularly vulnerable to sexual, economic, and criminal exploitation. Afghan men are trafficked for forced labour and debt bondage. They are trafficked to Iran, Pakistan, Greece, the Gulf, and possibly to some Southeast Asian countries for work in the agriculture and construction sectors. Human trafficking between Pakistan and Afghanistan takes place through various locations, including Torkham, Chaman, Nushki, and Chagai. Traffickers take victims to Iran and then on to Europe.

Afghan women and girls are trafficked to Pakistan and Iran, and possibly India, for forced prostitution and forced marriage. Women and girls from Iran, Tajikistan, and possibly even Uganda and China, are forced into prostitution in Afghanistan.

2.3.2 Trends

The Government of Afghanistan is making a significant effort to combat trafficking, such as the continued referral of identified trafficking victims to care facilities. Afghanistan's 2008 *Law Countering Abduction and Human Trafficking* prescribes penalties of life imprisonment for sex trafficking and "maximum term" imprisonment for labour trafficking, which in practice is between eight and 15 years.

2.3.3 Victim profiles and associated crimes

Adult Afghan men, women, and children - of both sexes - are equally vulnerable to abuse. The dimensions of understanding and quantifying physical and emotional abuse are beyond imagination in Afghanistan. The sheer scale and prevalence of such abuse makes it a challenge to profile victims.

Men, women, and children are trafficked internally and externally for prostitution and slavery, or abducted for forced marriages or sold for debt alleviation. Evidence suggests that a high percentage of women and girls are being exchanged for dispute settlements or for sexual and domestic servitude. Studies also suggest that certain extremist groups indoctrinated children aged between 12 and 16 to become suicide bombers, a trend that may be continuing.

2.4 Country overview: United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates, or UAE, is a **transit** and **destination** country for men and women trafficked for the purposes of labour and commercial sexual exploitation.



2.4.1 Routes

Reports suggest that the UAE is a transit country for men being trafficked to Iraq and coerced into involuntary work. In comparison, women are trafficked through the UAE for the purpose of forced labour in Oman.

The UAE is also a significant trafficking destination country. Victims are men and women from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Uganda, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, the Philippines, Iraq, Iran, and Morocco. These victims arrive in the hope of a better economic future.

Women from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, India, Pakistan, Egypt and the Philippines - among many other countries - travel willingly to the UAE to work as domestic servants. Men from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Pakistan are drawn to the UAE to work as labourers.

2.4.2 Trends

The UAE prohibits all forms of trafficking through Federal Law No. 51, which prescribes penalties ranging from one year to life imprisonment. Prescribed penalties under this law are sufficiently stringent and commensurate with those for other grave crimes, such as rape. The UAE's labour law, however, does not sufficiently protect workers in domestic service, making them vulnerable to

forced labour. For instance, the restrictive sponsorship law for foreign domestic workers gives employers immense powers of exploitation.

2.4.3 Victim profiles and associated crime

Migrant workers, who comprise more than 90 per cent of the UAE's private sector workforce, belong to the following countries of origin: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, China, Thailand, Korea, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Philippines. In order to pay off recruitment costs, these workers often find themselves in coercive labour and debt bondage. The recruitment fee can sometimes exceed the equivalent of two years of wages.

Reports suggest that women are recruited to work as secretaries and hotel workers and later coerced into prostitution or domestic servitude. Women from eastern Europe, central Asia, Southeast Asia, the Far East, east Africa, Iraq, Iran, and Morocco are subjected to forced prostitution in the UAE.

During the last year, there were no new reports of children identified as trafficked for the purpose of camel jockeying, and the UAE repatriated at least three former child jockeys to Sudan.

3 Pakistan

Pakistan is a **source, transit, and destination** country for men, women, and children subjected to trafficking and smuggling in persons, specifically forced labour and prostitution.



3.1.1 Routes

Vulnerable Pakistani victims are most often trafficked to the Gulf States, Iran, Turkey, South Africa, Uganda, Greece, North America, Southeast Asian countries, Far East Asian countries and other European countries. Once in the destination country, the victims are subjected to prostitution, domestic servitude, and debt bondage. Pakistan is a destination country for men and women from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, and Iran, who are subjected to forced labour and prostitution.

Most migrants, both Pakistani and those in transit from other countries, are trafficked by land into Iran and then to Turkey so that they can access European countries such as Greece and Spain. The geo-strategic importance of Turkey has already been touched on in this report. Both Spain and Greece are full European Union members and migrants find the common labour market a critical advantage for reaching the rich economies of northern and western Europe.

Traffickers access Oman from Pakistan's southern coast to get to the Middle East. Those who can afford it travel by air, many to Dubai, in the hopes of transiting to other destinations in the Middle East, North America, or Australia.

3.1.2 Trends

Pakistan is a signatory to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) 2000. However, the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children*, has not been ratified. Nor has the *Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air*. However, in 2002, Pakistan promulgated its most important domestic law on trafficking in persons, the *Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance*. This was supplemented by a policy document, released a few years later, the *National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking*.

The main government law enforcement agency handling all matters related to human trafficking and migrant smuggling is the Federal Investigation Agency, or FIA. The FIA works under the authority of the Ministry of Interior. Anti-Human Trafficking Circles have been established in 12 cities across Pakistan.

3.1.3 Victim profiles and associated crime

Bonded labour is the most significant human trafficking issue in Pakistan. Bonded labour is concentrated in Sindh and Punjab provinces in the areas of agriculture and brick making. It also occurs, to a lesser extent, in the mining, carpet making, glass bangle, and fishing industries. Some bonded labour also exists in the fisheries, mining, and agriculture sectors of Balochistan.

Estimates of bonded labour victims vary widely, however, the Asian Development Bank estimates that 1.8 million people, amounting to 1 per cent of the population, are bonded labourers. Male and female children are bought, sold, rented or kidnapped to work in organised begging rings, domestic servitude, and prostitution. Illegal labour agents charge high fees to parents, making false promises of decent work for the children. Those children are later exploited and subjected to domestic servitude and unskilled labour.

Trafficking in persons continues unabated within Pakistan, as well as across its borders. Girls and women are sold into forced marriages; in some cases their husbands move them both inside the country as well as across international borders and force them into prostitution.

Pakistan has suffered from major calamities such as a major earthquake in 2005, conflict, and successive years of flooding over the past few years. These natural and man-made disasters have torn apart the country's social fabric, often resulting in children, women, and girls being survivors of broken families. Such survivors are extremely vulnerable to trafficking and, according to non-government organisations and periodic media reports, there has been an increase in trafficking in Pakistan.

Illegal labour agents, or middlemen, play a significant role in increasing the vulnerabilities of Pakistani migrants who are seeking better economic opportunities. Once abroad, migrants commonly experience restrictions on movement, non-payment of wages, threats, and physical or sexual abuse. Moreover, traffickers use violence, psychological coercion, and isolation, often seizing travel and identification documents as a means to coerce Pakistani women and girls into prostitution in the Middle East.

According to the 2011 US Department of State Report on Trafficking in Persons, child sex trafficking between Iran and Pakistan is also an area of concern that requires further analysis and attention.

Bibliography

Afghanistan – Trafficking in Persons Report 2010, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, US Department of State

Background Paper for the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking. Fighting Human Trafficking: the Forced Labor Dimension. International Labor Organization. Geneva, Switzerland (2008)

Background Paper for the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking. Quantifying Human Trafficking, Its Impact and Responses to It. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Vienna, Austria (2008)

Background Paper for the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking. Transnational Organized Crime: Impact from Source to destination. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Vienna, Austria (2008)

Cacho: Turkey transit route for human trafficking
http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action;jsessionid=83836EDC6300BAE3332CEE8160FEE084?newsId=257842

Haken, Jeremy. Transnational Crime in the Developing World. Global Financial Integrity. p 7-10 (2011)

IOM. Trafficking in Persons Situation Analysis of Pakistan. Islamabad, Pakistan. 2005

Iran – Trafficking in Persons Report 2008, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor US Department of State

Iran – Trafficking in Persons Report 2009, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, US Department of State

Iran – Trafficking in Persons Report 2010, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, US Department of State

Iran- Trafficking in Persons Report 2012, United States Department of State

Kyle, David; Rey Koslowski. Global Human Smuggling: Comparative Perspectives. Johns Hopkins University Press, p 177 (2001)

Pakistan – Trafficking in Persons Report 2010, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, US Department of State

Pakistan – Trafficking in Persons Report 2011 - Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, US Department of State

Report on Human trafficking and Migrant Smuggling around the world 2012, U.S. State Department.

Turkey – Trafficking in Persons Report 2009, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, US Department of State

United Arab Emirates – Trafficking in Persons Report 2008, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, US Department of State

United Arab Emirates – Trafficking in Persons Report 2011 - Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights &

Labor, US Department of State

UNODC. Pakistan's Law Enforcement Response to the Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons. Country Office Pakistan. 2011.

UNODC on Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling. Web link 2011

UNODC Issue Paper. A Short Introduction to Migrant Smuggling. 2010

UNODC Issue Paper. Organized Crime Involvement in Trafficking of Persons and Human Migrant Smuggling. 2010

UNODC Report. Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns. Vienna, Austria (2006)

UNODC Background Paper. An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action. New York (2008)

UNODC & UNICEF. Fact Sheet on the Impact of the Economic Crisis on Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants (2009)



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Plot # 5-11, Diplomatic Enclave, G-5, Islamabad, Pakistan

Tel: +92 51 2601461-2 Fax: +92 51 2601469 Email: fo.pakistan@unodc.org

Website: <http://www.unodc.org/pakistan>